

*Story about a boy's strange morning
and subsequent day...*

Original story by:
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Part I

Today, I woke up after a bad evening last night... The dog incident. Found information on that jerk neighbour of mine: *Pepijn*... I need to deal with that... Then mom blew up, oh well I acted like the bigger man.

Woke up and all was fine, I took a 30 minutes shower because I could afford it time-wise, I started at 9:15AM.

At 8:53 I leave the house, say bye to my mom and the dogs, get on my bike and start riding, Not far gone and I slip on the ice and fall. I hit the ground hard. I get up immediately and look around as if to see if anyone has seen me. Knowing where I live, someone somewhere always sees you. I am embarrassed and feel weird because guess what I got into an accident on Tuesday 22nd on my bike so this was two for two in the space of two day's. Anyways, I get on my way but I'm concerned about my laptop which is in my bag. Regardless of my concern, I keep going and then Eve show's up, having not spoken to her in a while, it was kinda awkward. I had asked her something by text last night, but I acted as if I didn't see her and stayed in front of her.

Later, I realise my hand is bothering me. I brush it against my thigh, I see that my pants have blood on them now. I had cut my finger in 2 places, small cuts, lots of blood. I think about where this could have happened, oh yes I fell. I feel even weirder and to be honest, worse. I keep going and tell myself that I will stop somewhere to get myself COMPOSED.

I stop under a bridge, Eve goes by. I stop and get off, I'm cold and feeling strange, I draw attention to how un-usual this sequence of events is for me. Having stopped, I tell myself I have time because it must only be 8:55 now so I have 20 minutes left to get to school on time. I grab a snow ball and place it on my cuts. The snow turned red. I get scared for no reason. I rip the now dead skin off, it hurts. I take out my handkerchief from my right back pocket and make a sort of tournake on my now heavily bleeding left index which is hurting when typing this story.

I lean over to put my bag on the ground to check on my laptop, the ground is dirty and so are my hands, I don't want to check my laptop so I leave my bag on. I get back on my bike standing up. Make my first full pedal motion. My pedal drops downwards and I hear a loud, klunk. Look down and my chain had snapped in two. I am shocked I don't know how to react so I don't, I stay silent. I get off, put my bike aside. I am really shocked. I think about how this bike is 10 years old and when we got it, it was my dad's bike. I remember thinking how it was such a big bike. I get nostalgic thinking of a warm summer's Saturday in Waterloo, Belgium biking with the whole family to our favorite spot in the *forest de Soigne* or *Cambre*, I can't remember which is which now days. I get really frustrated.

I take out some gloves from my left back pocket which I had put there to prove to my mom I had gloves because she is concerned about how cold it is. I didn't and still don't wear them

and I don't know why, maybe because I want to prove I'm cool and don't need gloves. Maybe because I want to prove to those around me that I can afford to ride my bike without hands and put them in my pockets to keep them warm which I had been doing for the whole winter period. I don't know and don't care to be frank but my hands were cold and felt weird as well as my hands cracking and being super dry.

Cracking, that reminded me of how the blood from my fingers reminded me about how last night when I came home after the dog incident I had blood on my hands and I don't think it was mine. I couldn't understand whose it was. Anyways. I wrapped my now broken chain around the main frame of my bike with my gloves now on, they got really oiled up so I picked up some snow in an effort to either freeze the oil so it wouldn't spread or to get it off my gloves.

Then I stopped and thought about what I should do now, I didn't think to call or text anyone, I knew I was gonna be late at this point regardless for my second period Environmental studies class with Sophie and Maxence only Maxence of which I really enjoy. I remembered how that morning at home I was already dreading the environmental classes's revision session we were gonna have that day.

I started to walk to school even though I was about 200m away from home where my mom would have been happy to drive me. I got pretty far and crossed the traffic light. This whole time I should mention I see some other people that I know biking past, I'm embarrassed to ask them for help so I just smile. Also, some soft piano music is playing in my new wireless cheap headphones I got for Christmas which are really uncomfortable and don't sound good but HEY they last long and are wireless being the new and up-and-coming trend right. The piano kinda soothes me, it's a song recommended by a good friend of mine which I had illegally downloaded onto my phone from youtube. I then spit some flemme out of my mouth which dried my lips a little, I always have dry lips during winter and I am tired of it. But I look down and I see the spit has fallen on my pants.

Still not getting frustrated, I stop and pick up some more snow. The path or sidewalk portion of the path on the way to school which I was on at that moment did not have a lot of snow. I pick up some leftovers from the salting and rubbed it against the spit. At this moment I was embarrassed for acting as I say 'big' for spitting and now for looking like a maniac by rubbing snow on my pants which not to mention made my legs cold. Nevertheless, I keep going and that's when I get a phone call.

I pick up, I get a scrambled voice on the other end, the person whoever it was tells me an 'Eddy-malou' joke which is making fun of a French-Congolese self-acclaimed scientist and I laugh. I then make out the voice of my brother George who is currently in Geneva doing a mission for my church for two years. I tell myself I cannot be because he is on his mission where he cannot reach me or contact me in any way shape or form except for emails. So I speak out and ask who the person was, the other line scrambles and hangs up. I then, I, then I. Then. ...

I started to choke up my throat and eyes got all tense and I thought I might cry, but I would die before I let anyone except myself see that. So I stopped myself with my

revolutionary techniques of twitching my nose which immediately according to me gets rid of all my facial emotions. I continued on my way to school.

Finally, I got there, that monster of a building that sticks out like a sore thumb, the International school. I walked past all these familiar buildings and spots I have either messed around in our spit on. I pass the gate where I wave HELLO to the guard. I walked towards the bike parking, I passed the new building, looked inside, there was a lot of glass. It looked great, really. Spacious and modern looking maybe also a little minimalistic in design. I have a good friend who is the one responsible for this aesthetic analysis. He is a strange lad and looks goofy but he is minimalistic and taught me what that means. I now have a new-found appreciation for the word and like it. I really didn't use to. I walk past the windows where the class I was supposed to go is taking place with some students and a new teacher because the old one left to get her new adopted son which she has been trying to get for 20+ years. I also passed the smokers, one of whose names is Gregory who I had previously accused of stealing my friends expensive headphones. He didn't, he was a good guy and just has a terrible exterior shell.

End of Part I

Start of Part II

I walked in, past reception I didn't even look at those ladies, I know I am supposed to get what they call late-slip for being late to class. I didn't plan on going to class. I left and entered the main square, saw some familiar faces but they were not familiar because that word would associate positive connotations to those faces. So I saw, recognisable faces. I went straight for the bathroom.

In an effort to clean myself up I washed my hands twice for 30 seconds each. I put some moisturiser cream on, blew my nose, wiped the blood off my pants, took a leak and washed my hands again, brushed my hair then proceeded to pour excessive amounts of alcohol gel on my cuts. It burned for a few seconds and this burning sensation triggered a memory which wasn't a pleasant one. In hindsight now thinking about that memory, it is positive because those were simpler times. Writing now more memories are coming to me but I remembered a few specific times while in primary school when I would play in the playground I would sometimes scrape my knee caps, yes, my knee caps and get the whole thing opened up. This horrible lady we called the *Warden* of the playground would take you to this tiny medical cabinet hung on the wall and take out disinfectant. She would clean your wounds and it would burn and I always felt like I was strong because I would never cry or express out loud the pain from the sting of the alcohol even though she always said before she did it, 'it's gonna burn'. I could write a book about my time there. If I ever read this text back I want to remember how my friend Christian had this bloody and super infected knee cap once. Also, the time I hit and swung my best friend and around and let him go while he went flying and had a bloody nose because of me and I blamed it on someone else and all because

he asked nicely for the swing. Come to think about it I was this kid's bully. I was a hypocrite and a bipolar, I regret it deeply.

Following the bathroom, I went to my locker to put my dirty coat away and my fake Gucci scarf in it. Near my locker this girl named Stella and this tall Russian idiot were studying, Stella triggered the memories of how I tried to flirt with her but it didn't work. This all reminded me of how I didn't like this girl. I walked around and found myself at the canteen. I tried to muster the courage to go in there and ask for bills of cash in exchange for all my coins. Which I was still carrying around from this one bake sale I did because I had incurred a lot of debt about these tickets I bought through a friend. The bake sale was great, I made 270€ from it with 140 brownies my mom made, I was proud of that, that I did that. I probably never will again, it was a blind act of faith and it worked. I didn't even have the faith.

I went on as to not look like I had no direction or purpose and found myself at the gyms, I remembered how I had had such a good day there yesterday with this great and maybe getting to good of a friend, Jude an old girlfriend of mine who is a tennis protege. I took her there in a desperate attempt to talk to her quietly. We went to the audience stands and talked all sorts of things, it's this calm and usually open area. I felt like I was in High-School-Musical or something. That was our last hour together that day and I really felt like I inspired her to work harder and how to deal with her distraction. This made me feel good because I, through this, was able to feel better about myself even though the advice I had given her I don't even use on myself. I guess this makes me a hypocrite but I would rather help others in the ways I can than just continue being this guy who has never worked a day in his life. But that's something else really that's a long story for another day when I feel like insulting myself. I found the spectator area to be busy with other classes. So I went down with viger to head to my original thinking being the M.D.A which is the theater. On the way down I got some water and drank it quickly.

When I crossed the canteen again, I had now, my mind being filled with thoughts of Jude, gotten the courage to go get my pennies exchanged. I asked the woman who didn't speak good english to change my coins she accepted. I emptied out this sack which I was carrying all of them in on the counter. I felt like I was some 4 year old emptying his whole life's savings in an attempt to buy something he wanted, it looked pathetic but all those around me were occupied so I didn't mind. I had some foreign currency and other things in that sack like paper clips which got emptied too adding to the feeling of a 4 year old with some old buttons or something. Turns out I had 15€ of coins left and she didn't even take it all.

I was feeling good about that because I could now pay off some other friends I owed money too as well, one for a movie ticket, *Creed II*, great film really motivational and the other was a ticket for a really good abdn which does this *Hard Bass* genre of music which I am gonna go see soon. I am excited to see them but also worried because that genre and it's subsequent dancing requires a lot of energy and if there's one thing I know about events it's

that it's better to last to the end than give it all and be cool in the first hours or so. Anyways, I enter the M.D.A, its pitch black, I go to the back.

I sit myself down and put my headphones on which I had previously taken off in the bathroom. I put this song on, this one intellectual kid had shown me on Monday it's called 'O Superman' by Laurie Anderson, for some reason I can easily remember that name. It's a 70's song and apparently was famous then, it's 8m long and is really original, so not a normal song. I love it, it soothes me because of her constant and continuous voice in the background. I wait there in the dark. Some kids come in because this theater is also kinda like a hallway, it connects many different parts of the school. The kids put on some phone flashlights and rave music, they obviously have been doing this hallway thing for a while. But I don't mind, I do the same and mess around in here with some friends pretty often so... They see me and get scared and start saying stupid crap like 'OMG you scared me', I don't reply. They get downstairs when Leon enters and start dancing with them. I had called Leon in the hope that he would pick up so he could meet me at the back of the theater. I wanted to tell him about this whole pointless story I am writing to get his thoughts of the sequence of events.

End of Part II

Start of Part III

It's been 2 days since I last wrote, I don't want to talk about the past two days, except for one particular event which if I chose to share might be new knowledge to those who will read this. If I chose not to share it will remain an experience that I will keep just for myself. However, to continue where I left off I called Leon an acquaintance of mine (tone changed as in act two I would have said good friend), he didn't pick up. I wasn't that bothered. I knew it was break time and people would walk through the M.D.A however the mood and feeling at that moment is one familiar to me as I experience it often. It is a mood of slothfulness and of an odd desire to stay put wherever that might be and wait for consequence to fall upon you which in most cases means being late for class. Leon comes, I tell him of my morning he sort of laughs. I know he doesn't get it but I don't mind because this story will sort that out for all who will read it. I want to make others understand how this morning deeply impacted me and changed my perception of how STRANGE can have different meanings and outlets.

I later went to the library without saying a word to anyone I passed on the way. I saw HER, I knew she was going there but what she had told me yesterday troubled me because she said it in a way that implied, "HEY Seb happy to see you but I can't afford your distractions right now because I need to study for these exams that are stressing me out and I do this to make me feel less stressed". Nobody thinks like that though right, we all put pressure on each other for exams but don't realise you just study to feel less pressure because you then feel prepared. I naturally don't get very stressed so naturally it isn't studying that is going to relax me.

At the library I found some familiar faces waiting for the same math class as me, we started to small-talk and I replied to their pointless comments. We talked about how the snow was annoying to bike in, if only they knew. I also mentioned these drawings I had commissioned from a friend of mine who had done a series of exquisite illustrations for me and this anime project I was developing, they were impressed.

These pointless conversations made me feel pointless, so normal, and made the day achieve a 'normal tone' making me feel like I was back to feeling like Myself. The way I saw that morning, I thought it might have been a challenge especially made for me and put in this journey we call life. However, the creator of the challenge didn't take into account the fact that Myself will break the rules, I don't get bound by everyday rules of responsibilities or other social pressures. Something weird happened, Do You Understand?

So I went on to keep making it strange because strangeness by definition is something unfamiliar to us which all my actions that day until the start of the math class were. I considered these challenges were consequences for how the night previous to this day had gone down. It wasn't a good ending, I should have handled it differently.

That same afternoon I blew off a friend called Rick, I knew we were supposed to talk and discuss things but it has been so long since I wrote this I do not remember what I blew him off for. However, I wrote it down as a parting thought to develop on so it must have been relevant to that special day.

It's been at least one month since I wrote this and I still think about this day as that day has marked my memory and still think the events mentioned have impacted me as I think about them as I bike past the locations described in this story. Especially due to the new developments with regards to my missionary brother. However, as mentioned I may come back to me but for the moment, I blew off Jim that day and I do not know why.

Now that I know many more people have read this document I might start censoring myself in the future. This as opposed to my free splurge of a story I had originally written when this whole era started, but that would defeat the purpose and my message which is to say, I am starting to sound like I am looking back which I am not.

I have no regrets. And so I must press on, it eluded me then and it eludes me now. That is of no matter however, for tomorrow we will run faster, stretch our arms out further and on one fine morning.

So you beat on individuals against the currents, borne back seamlessly into meaning and purpose...

End of Part III

End.

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