

In the darkness of the night, a man walked down a vacant road. Hidden by shadows, the man whispered to himself about all his problems and how much he despises the world. His misanthropy struck him like lightning hating everyone and everything the world has to offer.

He took a left off the street and padded down the sidewalk. His footsteps echoed and the atmosphere smelled of rain. The coldness struck the man and he shivered.

He walked into his apartment. He threw his bag down and walked into his kitchen. The man grabbed a beer and took off his sweater. He sat down on his couch and took off the cap to his beer. The man sighed before taking a sip.

He soon began to fall asleep.



“Andrew!” a voice shouted. “Get your ass up! It’s time for work!”

Andrew groaned. He teaches English for 9th graders at Hollow High School. He hates his job. He wanted to be something that challenges his potential. Instead, he’s stuck teaching basic grammar to these petty freshmen.

“I’m not kidding, Andrew, get the hell up!” demanded Andrew’s roommate, Chris.

“Alright, alright,” groaned Andrew. “I’m up.” Chris walked into his room and left Andrew by himself. He got up and walked into the bathroom. He looked in the mirror.

His skin was pale. His blue eyes were dull and his black hair greasy. He rubbed his small prickly beard. He scoffed and walked away.

For being 26 years old, Andrew already realized how meaningless his life has become; having to take handfuls of anti-depressants and anti-psychotics every morning. He’s on the brink of suicide. But no one needs to know that.

You’re a loser, Andrew. I can’t believe you’re even trying to go on with your life. It’s futile.

“Fuck off,” He replied to Josh; the voice inside his head.

You know you can’t get rid of me. I’m you. And there’s nothing we can do about it.

Andrew walked into the kitchen and opened the fridge. There was more beer and some vodka.

"I might not be able to get rid of you but I can drown you out in alcohol," Andrew opened the lid to the vodka and drank it straight. After a while, Josh began to subside.

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Andrew pulled up into the teachers parking at Hollow High School. He tossed his cigarette out of the window and stepped on it before going inside.

He stumbled into the plaza and walked into his class. It was a small class with posters of English material and bands like *Nirvana* and *Pearl Jam* on the wall. He opened his desk and took a shot of Smirnoff before assorting his papers.

The bell rang. Students began to pile into the class. They continued to talk until Andrew walked in front of the class and told everyone to sit and quiet down.

"Okay. Everyone do your warm-up for this week. I know it's Monday and you're all tired," he paused. He mumbled under his breath, "I mean, so am I," his voice rose to normal again, "But today's your test and—Hey! Stop talking! Anyway, today's your test and I really hope you guys all studied because this test is a real pain in the ass.

Andrew began to handout the test. When everyone got one, he sat down at his desk and put his head down. He began to dose off into unconsciousness.

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You're an idiot, you know that? You have absolutely nothing to live for. You're a total loser and I can't believe how you manage to stay alive. I hope you—

"Oh my god, will you leave me *alone!*" Andrew shouted waking himself up in the middle of his class. All the students stared at him and Andrew felt his face growing red. "Er, go back to work, guys. Everything's cool," they hesitated but went back to the test. Some kids were done and asleep while others have yet to even begin the test.

When the class finally ended, Andrew went outside, smoked a cigarette, and thought about his life. He thought about all the failures he's come to make. He thought about all the promises and dreams that he has broken. But it was all hard to think about with Josh scolding him in the background.

Andrew walked inside the class again, began to sort out his papers and the newly arrived tests. He sighed. He looked down at the papers with a blank expression. He stared for what felt like hours.

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Andrews's life was a repetition of misery and depression. He and Josh both hated who they've become. They much rather be dead. Andrew believes he has much more potential than to be a 9th grade English teacher. He believes he can provide so much more for the world. But he's stuck. He doesn't know what to do. He's had enough of depending on medicine. He's had enough of drinking to get rid of Josh. He's had enough of his life.

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I still don't understand how you manage to deal with yourself. You're a total loser. You're a complete fuck-up. You realize the only way you can ignore me is to get drunk? That's pathetic. You need help. You need to kill yourself. You need to—

"Stop! Stop! Leave me alone!" Andrew shouted at his bathroom mirror. "You're not real! *Get the fuck out of my head!*" Andrew's face began to grow red. He was livid. He doesn't want to end his life, but he doesn't want to deal with it either. He's lost and confused. His mind is a maze full of angry walls.

After a while, Andrew was relaxed and apathetic. He walked out of the bathroom with a blank stare. He sat on the couch and drank. No TV. No radio. Nothing. He was by himself. Well. He was with Josh. But he didn't consider him anything positive.

"Let's go for a walk," Andrew told Josh. Josh didn't respond. It was raining outside and Andrew was drunk. But he didn't care.

Andrew opened his door and walked outside. He put on his hoodie and walked down the road and into the busy city of Seattle.

Step by step, head down, watching his feet. He padded to the library. But before he could reach it, there was an alleyway on his left where he heard what sounded like a dog's cry.

What the hell is a dog doing out here in this rain? Andrew thought.

He took a left and walked down the alleyway. All was dark but his eyes began to adjust.

The crying grew louder. Andrew's heart began to beat a little faster. Finally, he reached a cardboard box. Under one of the flaps, there was a small puppy, helpless and lost. It was a Siberian husky.

“Hey, little guy,” Andrew whispered and forced a smile. The puppy whimpered and took a few steps back. “Don’t worry, I won’t hurt you,” Andrew put his hand out and allowed the puppy to smell his scent. The puppy put its paw on top of on top of Andrews hand and for the first time in months, Andrew was able to let out a real smile.

“Why don’t you come home with me. It’s better than being out here in the rain, don’t you think?” The puppy blinked. Andrew grabbed the puppy gently and began to walk home with it in his arms.



“Here, this is my home,” Andrew put the puppy down. “I know it’s a mess, but... It’s what it is,” the puppy began to pant and wag it’s tiny tail. “Here,” Andrew walked to his room and the puppy followed. “This is my room. You can stay in here,” Andrew looked at the puppy and it cocked its head to the side. “Mind if I check to see what sex you are?” No response. Andrew looked underneath the puppy and didn’t see anything. “You’re a girl, huh?” The puppy wagged her tail. “I’ll take that as a yes.”

“I bet you’re hungry huh. Here; follow me,” Andrew walked into the kitchen and opened his fridge.

“Beer, beer, beer, rum, vodka. Oh, here,” Andrew pushed the liquor away and behind it was some refrigerated steak. He put it in the microwave and when it was done he cut it up and walked back to his room. He put it on the floor and the puppy began to eat vigorously.

“Wow, you must’ve been starving. Here, I’ll get you something to drink too,” Andrew walked back into the kitchen and opened the fridge.

Give her vodka.

“I’m not giving her vodka, Josh. Screw off,” His buzz was wearing off. He pushed the vodka out of the way and grabbed a water bottle. He walked back into his room and poured the water into a bowl. “There you go, girl,” He smiled. “Now I’m going to go to bed. I have to work tomorrow,” He sighed. *Work.*

Andrew hopped on his bed and began to doze off. Just before he could, the puppy crawled onto his bed and slept right under his arm. He smiled and went to bed with one of the most peaceful rests he’s had in a very long time.