

I Should Go Back - Lulu, Year 10, QLD

Lately, I've been thinking about buying a new pair of leather boots and killing my boyfriend.

I should wait until the sales start in the new year.

The street is stained with blue in the early morning, like a poisonous toxin is filtering the city. The ravens mock me as usual, they know something I don't. Their eyes pierce me just like everyone else's.

I envy their wings. I have thought about this a lot. When I was in that room for so long all I did was think about where all the birds were flying.

I wish I could fly.

Maybe I should go back. My roommate would have woken up by now, she told me not to wander around or else the cops may think I'm a drunk.

I'm not drunk. Just sad.

Because when your mum jokes that she's nervous you are going to put your head in the oven like Sylvia Plath, you begin to question who actually cares.

Maybe I should go back.

Not to my apartment, back home.

The city has become so stifling and repulsive that I can no longer remember why I ever took that bus here.

Why does my mind work this way?

Why do I keep doing this to myself?

In the third grade, my closest friend and I decided to scale the girls we were friends with by how pretty they were, I felt so rotten when the teacher told me that it wasn't a nice thing to do. I think about this at least four times a week. Who was that person who was so ruthless? Nostalgia should be considered a form of self-harm. I can't bear the feeling that that little girl is now scrawling for cigarettes on the cold concrete while the homeless men ogle in awe of her bare legs.

I wonder what my boyfriend is doing.

My boyfriend is a nice guy. Though people always use the word 'nice' for people who are boring.

But truly I do think my boyfriend is nice.

Sometimes I think about killing people who are too nice.

He enjoys being with someone like me. As if I am a dinner party anecdote that makes him seem like a deeper and more thoughtful man for liking a girl who sat in the bathtub for six hours yesterday.

'Yeah, she's just going through a realization of who she is. It's pretty interesting, Albert Camus writes about it a lot. Also, did you read that article in the New York Times yesterday about how we are defined by our parents' philosophies at birth?'

He reads Jack Kerouac and Nietzsche and pretends to understand and diagnose my existential tendencies. To him, I am a concept in a Sofia Coppola storyboard.

Maybe I should go back.

Colossal scientists in labs recently brought back dire wolves, using their ancestors' DNA to replicate their characteristics. My boyfriend said it was an incredible marvel of biology, like in Jurassic Park.

I told him it was cruel.

I told him that in centuries to come when women have been eradicated from the planet, he better not replicate my cells. I don't want to come back into existence; it's been too hard the first time.

I wish I had stayed in college for longer and completed my degree. But that town is filled with too many phantoms. Phantoms that want to suck out my soul like monsters in an overrated fantasy novel.

When I was twenty-one, my professor told me I could be a writer. I suppose I had the raw, palpable knowledge to replicate characters' thoughts and analyse Shakespeare. But when I thought I saw the ghost of my dad in the quadrangle, and threw a pair of scissors at another student, everyone seemed to shake their heads in disbelief.

'I always thought she was so level-headed' they said. 'And that paper she wrote on post-colonial literature was great.'

Maybe I should go back.

I wish I could walk so far until the stinky wool of my body unravels and shows the stained murky mush inside.

What would have happened if I hadn't gone to that party when I was seventeen? Would I still have tried those pearly white pills?

That decision, like all others, led to chaos, I would prefer to make none at all.

Everything suddenly seems so unnecessary. Why should I be constantly forced to do things I don't want to do? Why did those scientists force dire wolves to live once more?

All the stores are still barren and hollow, my favorite café seems lifeless, as if it has been empty for eternity.

Maybe I will climb those high steps to see the view of the city once again, maybe then I can pretend I can fly like the ravens. When I got to the top, I would think about the girl who went to Europe with her family when she was fifteen. The girl who didn't talk to her sister for three years for no real reason at all.

It's the strangest feeling that inhabits my body when I am in a mood like this. As if my flesh could grow and stretch, and I would not care. I would only wish to find something buried deep inside, like the satin hearts placed into toy bears. As the seams that hold my soul together are pried away, maybe I could finally see why I do what I do. I could hold in my palm this shriveled and jarring explanation for why I chose to walk here today.

To live here today.

To make it to this age today.

Maybe I should go back.

Maybe I should go back to that suburban nightmare, back to those people, bypassing those phantoms and trying harder next time.

For when the sun finally comes up, and the ghostly city is filled with colorful minds, I will finally be able to rest, and hope that eventually I will make it home.