

The World Ends in 6 Days - Syakir, Year 10, VIC

Monday

It was a serene Autumn afternoon. The warm sun embraced the world; its heat was offset by a slight cool breeze. The birds were chirping, the neighbourhood cats were docile, even the dogs in the corner house refused to bark at me. Everything was in harmony.

When it happened, I was walking home from school. My earphones blasted meditative lo-fi music whilst I read webcomics on my phone. Then, without warning, the words flashed on my screen:

“The world will end in [6] days.”

Everyone suddenly received the message at the same time. It was a ludicrous statement: they refused to elaborate on the how or why, so how could it be true? Despite the absurdity of it all, I instinctively knew that the message did not lie. Call it instinct or a gut feeling – perhaps you could even say it was divine revelation – it was like a random epiphany you’d suddenly have in the shower. All organic life would disappear from the planet and there was no doubt about it. No way to prevent it.

Maybe the message was a mercy. A secret message meant to say, “you’re going to die, so resolve all your regrets whilst you still can!”

The only thought I had was, “I won’t have to do the maths test next week.”

When I got home, I immediately collapsed on my bed. Fatigued, I idled my time watching the sky outside my window. Before long, the sky had shifted from blue to a resplendent pink, and the sun had set again.

Tuesday

The sun rose again.

When I went to school the next day, little had changed. Frankly it was a little surreal how people chatted with their friends about what they did the night before, about their upcoming assessments, about their overdue homework tasks; although there was something different about the way people spoke which I find difficult to articulate. It was like they were trying to distract themselves from something.

Otherwise, it was a mundane day. I wrote a practice essay during first period to prepare for an assessment I would never have to do, and I completed a biology test on evolution.

After I went home, I worked through the homework my sociology teacher had set for me. It was a chore writing FRO or TEEL paragraphs on socialisation, though I managed to get through it within an hour. By then I was tired, so I retired to bed.

The sun set again.

Wednesday

The sun rose again.

Today was a little more peculiar. Normally timid students became more assertive; people began to do things completely out of character. One student in my English class, let's call him Jeff (I'm ashamed to admit that I never learnt his actual name), normally keeps to himself and rarely interacts with others. Today he walked into class adorned with glasses which look like they belong to John Lennon, a nose piercing and a mohawk. I eavesdropped on a conversation he had with another student who was curious about the change.

"I don't want to die with regrets."

Later in the shower, I deliberated whether I had anything on my bucket list which I desperately wanted crossed off. After several minutes of pensive thought, nothing came up.

Satisfied, I went to bed.

The sun set again.

Thursday

The sun rose again.

11:30 p.m., the middle of second period, I begrudgingly worked through my maths work. To be honest, I could not understand why we were studying for a maths test that wouldn't ever happen. My routine had been largely unphased by the looming apocalypse; although I think I much preferred this calm repetition over the anarchy typical in a dystopian movie. Solving the polynomial mambo-jumbo the math teacher handed out was already enough for me.

"For the equation $y = 4x^2 + 2x + 4$, solve for x ."

"Find the turning point of $y = 3(x-2)^4 + 2$."

I felt as if my brain would explode if I did any more.

When I got home, worn out by the apparently neverending maths revision, I dozed off within two seconds of hitting the pillow.

The sun set again.

Friday

The sun rose again.

Today I decided to go to the local shopping centre after school. With some cash hastily stuffed in my left jacket pocket, I wandered the labyrinthine layout of the complex. I perused the shelves of a bookstore. Sales boldly proclaimed themselves: “buy 1 get 1 free,” or “50% off!” By the time I left, my full pockets had become barren.

I encountered difficulty when trying to evacuate the shopping centre, for it was incredibly crowded; pushing through the dense mass of homo sapiens was more difficult than navigating a storm. I had to squeeze through countless families who tightly grasped each other’s hands and were savouring their time together, romantic couples with a forlorn look, and people carrying a dozen shopping bags who look like they would be frugal in normal circumstances.

After returning home, I asked myself: *is there anything I’d like to do tomorrow before it ends? Should I go on a trip to the city? Hang out with my friends? Try my hand at a new hobby?* I pensively sat looking out the window for half an hour, then an hour, which doubled again to two hours. All the while the sun kept me company, until it sunk below the horizon again.

Saturday

The sun has risen again. I find it hard to believe that soon I won’t ever see that magnificent transition from warm to cool hues again.

A sudden downpour barred me from leaving the house. Feeling the cold air, I decided that today would be perfect for sipping a cup of hot chocolate on the couch, wrapped up in so many layers of blankets that I’d be mistaken for King Tut in his tomb, while watching rain droplets slide down the window. It was calming. Relaxing. Helped to distract my mind from the worries which have begun to gnaw at my mind. It was the same, regular schedule I’d have for any other rainy day, but I saw no issue with it.

I decided to read the book I bought yesterday. Like that, the moon eventually rose above the sun. The sun had set for the last time.

Sunday

The sun rose again today, though I do not know whether it will rise again.

It's the final day, or to phrase it more romantically: the last page of human history – the resolution of our story.

I'm at the local creek; thought I'd spend my last moments somewhere more scenic. I find it breathtaking how the sun reflects off the water's surface: the white speckles of light resemble a school of fish migrating to a new land, perhaps to evade fate.

Today an ominous countdown appeared on my phone.

“5 minutes and 2 seconds.”

“4 minutes and 59 seconds.”

“4 minutes and 52 seconds.”

Every time I look at it, the number gets progressively closer to 0. If I had any regrets, it would be that I only realised the closeness of my mortality just now, and that I hadn't realised how scared I am of the Grim Reaper's cold, indifferent hand now that he is breathing down my neck. But what does that matter? A corpse has no regrets.

“2 minutes and 12 seconds.”

“1 minute and 24 seconds.”

I look up at the sky, the clouds, the sun. One cloud looks like a butterfly, and another looks like a butt, which makes me giggle a little.

“31 seconds.”

I wish I could see the sunset again, those reddish and pinkish hues, that comforting cycle of rising and setting and repeating. It's beautiful.

“1 second.”