

My journey home

The bell rings, I pack my bag and cross the narrow corridors with the flickering led lights giving me a headache. Already disappointed in myself for the bad scores I got in today's test results, I was in no mood to speak to my classmates. Lost in thought about my results, I climb down the four floors of staircases. I exit my college building and mount my bicycle.

After riding straight for a few minutes, I turn around the gully of my college and enter the main road full of traffic and honking noises. There are too many vehicles and I know that my journey, like every day is going to take at least forty minutes. The roads are wide and filled with all sorts of vehicles. Vertical buildings of concrete and glass with similar characteristics surround the road on either side. It's too monotonous. It's my everyday view while travelling home. I'm driving but my test results keep coming in my head. This isn't the first time, and my parents aren't happy. I know that there's no way they're going to let me off this time. Anxiety builds up in me and the traffic noises intensify. I want a reprieve from these thoughts, a place to turn to. I look around, there is no place to hide. No place to turn to. I try to control my mind and take over my body, but my hands slip on the break and the motorcycle skids. The last thing I remember is darkness before the world shifts.

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I ride straight for a few minutes and then take a turn main road. This is my daily route, but it doesn't look like every other day I travelled. The sound of the vehicles is present but not as blaring as ever. There are few private vehicles and whatever sound they are making is muted to my ears as I admire the lush green of the avenue of trees to my side. Streetlights light up the lane. The entire street is paved with a mosaic pattern. Ahead, there are kids shouting and running around an older woman who is seated on a bench. A couple is doing a jog while chatting with each other. As I bike further, I come to an alley with unique buildings. Multi-storeyed with various clothing and food shops on the ground floors. The smells of the fast-food wafts in the air making its way to my nose. My eye catches on the display of various collections and I slow my bike down on the tiled path to admire the items. Parking my bike nearby, I get down and go to one of the food shops and buy an ice cream and sit down. Soaking in the scenery, and unaware of the happenings around me, I try to clear my head and eat. Right now, it was a private moment between me and my thoughts. My head cleared a little and I climbed back on my bike. Further up, the wall is lined with art from various people depicting various scenes in various styles and I ride into a plaza where there's some sort of activity happening. Students who seemed to be around my age are gathered over there and socializing with each other, sharing their hobbies. It is an open event, and the music draws to me. I sit near the fountain in the plaza, the sounds of the flowing water, soothing to my soul. Sounds of the music that was playing starts wafting in louder, from the centre and almost all the thoughts I had before are melting away. The entire plaza space encourages people to gather and bring their talent out. It's a socialization point. The people and the activities that are happening surrounding me, help me vent out my feelings and release the pressures off my mind.

The journey home doesn't take long and the crafted visuals along with the scents and bustling noises of the city activities, that are on the eye level, stimulate my senses, grounding my thoughts. Without me knowing, this new journey home created positiveness and at some point, the deprecating

thoughts had been pushed to the far end of my mind until it was unavoidable to face them. Moulding into what I want, the city can become a private haven of my own and at the same time, a place that reminds me I'm not alone by showing me all the other souls living here. Not just surviving but living their life.

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