

# I'll tell you why I don't like Mondays

*Monday 15th January 2018*

I'm late again. I sprint down the corridor, not worrying about being told off for running. I reach my tutor room and slow to a stop. Cautiously, I push open the door just enough to squeeze through. Everyone's ghostly faces stare vacantly, as the creaking of the rusty hinges fills the silent room ... but they're not staring at me. They're staring at the door behind me, as if I'm not there ... because I'm not there ...

*Monday 9th January 2017*

Alarms ringing in my ears. Heavy breathing all around; under the desks, under the chairs, in the cupboards. Sweat dripping down my face. Hair sticking to my face.

I look around and everyone else is the same; terrified eyes filled with tears; hidden, barely in view.

Then in a couple of classrooms down the corridor, the unmistakable sound of a scream - a high pitched scream of an innocent child - echoes down the corridor. A sudden succession of five shots pummel the air, and then silence. A tense, sickening silence waiting for us to move before it pounced upon us and made us the victims.

Ten minutes passed, and we were still concealed in our little hideouts. Then instantaneously ...

*Thud ... thud ... thud ...*

The unmistakable sound of heavy footsteps trampling down the corridor, heading straight towards our room. Everyone's eyes widen with fear, like a fox caught in the headlights of an oncoming car. Frozen like statues, each person slowly moves their eyes, seeking comfort or some kind of reassurance, but no one is willing to give it. No one can promise such a thing.

I'm sat there too scared to tremble, too scared to shuffle further under the desk. We wait there: our hearts pounding, heads throbbing with tension, waiting for the inevitable to happen.

When the door opens up, I know - we all know - that this is it. There is no way out of this one and most of us just accept our fate.

*Bang ... bang ... bang*

Shots fire into the classroom and deafening screams jump out of every corner. More shots fill the intense atmosphere, as a tall, lanky man dressed all in black advances in. Following him is a shorter, stumpier man. Both men are carrying large guns and don't hesitate before they fire off another round of bullets.

Slowly, a streak of deep red runs under my feet, and instinctively I divert my eyes to the source. I instantly regret it as I see a student from my class sprawled across the floor; head half blown off. I flick my head back down and tears well in my eyes. This had to be a nightmare. It couldn't be real. This just possibly couldn't be real.

I reach down cautiously to a stinging in my side and peel my trembling hand away as it touches something warm and sticky. My heart seems to come to a stop and a sharp intake of breath pierces my lungs. I close my eyes slowly as I realise what this means.

From all the commotion around me I hadn't realised the bullet that had penetrated my side, but now I felt the pain. The excruciating pain that hurt so much, that thinking about it now brings tears to my eyes. Trying to stifle a cry, I bite down on my lip hard, and try to focus on anything but what is happening now.

Then something which could be described as a miracle happened. Sirens blaring out in the distance, coming closer every second. Soon, bright, flashing lights are visible as they reflect through the windows, and the two men run out, racing for cover.

A sigh of relief falls over me as I know now that we are safe. Others in the room feel a slight reassurance too, as they shuffle sideways slightly to get more room, but no one dares to move to far. There is still a sense of jeopardy in the room and no one's ready to make the first treacherous move.

My mind and vision blurs as I slump further down onto the floor; my limbs hang uselessly off my body as I try and prop myself up. The futility of my effort would be enough to kill me, but I continue to try. I could not let this defeat me.

My eyelids flicker as I fight to keep them open and my hands tremble as I feel around for anything to grab onto. But its not enough, and within the next few minutes I've sunk on to the floor, hitting my head on the table leg on the way down.

\* \* \*

A rush of cold air hits me as my body gets carried away in a stretcher, with figures blurring in and out of focus either side of me.

'It's going to be okay. Just hold on there. We're taking you to the hospital, just stay with me...' someone to the left of me says. But it's barely audible as my ears are still pulsating from the gun shots.

Looking around with fading vision, I see other stretchers and more figures huddled at the sides, smothered in blankets. Some sat in the back of the ambulances or police cars, and some speeding off to hospital in need of instant medical attention.

Everyone's faces are as white as ghosts and their eyes filled with fear and shock at what has just happened.

I'm lifted up swiftly on the stretcher into an ambulance, facing the doors. A paramedic comes and sits beside me, speaking to me. But I can't hear a thing.

After waiting for what seemed like hours, the doors shut in front of me at the same time my eyes do too.

\* \* \*

A steady beeping to the side of me. My parents sombrely slouched at the other side of the bed, weeping.

And then ... the sound everyone had been dreading ... bleeeeeeeeep  
And I was gone.

\* \* \*

The next experience was the strangest feeling I've ever had. A weight lifted from my body, like taking off a heavy backpack you've been carrying all day. The ceiling grew closer and closer, and my body grew further and further as I drifted up. My head filled with dizziness and my body emptied of weight and of worries. I felt free, but at the same time desolate.

*Monday 15th January 2018*

I carry on silently into the room, ignoring the stares that penetrate straight through me. I should be used to it now, but it still makes me feel a bit uneasy. How is it that I was there the one minute, but not the next?

I head over to an empty desk, and perch on the edge of a seat, trying not to make a sound.

Many of the others don't bother to turn up. It's just too hard for them to bare. It's painful for me to think about, but I still come everyday; everyday I can.

No one has recovered; no one will ever recover. I still think about it to this day, and realise that it happened over a year ago now, but some things just never fade. They say time is a good healer. I used to believe that, but now I know that that's not true. When something bad happens - and when I say bad, I mean really bad - it can never be healed. It sits there with you the whole time, like a loyal dog waiting for you to leave.