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*No one tells him grief isn't like on television.*

## **Grief**

No one tells him

no one tells him grief isn't like on television. They tell him it's a process but not that it comes in bursts, not that the weight of it makes it hard to breathe even on the best of days.

No one tells him that you're fine

no one tells him that you're fine for days, weeks even, that you'll have time to think you've moved on only to find a reminder in an unexpected place and end up hiding behind a shelf at the grocery store, one with plastic bottles in every colour on the spectrum, pretending not to find what you're searching for while crying your heart out, silently and breathlessly so no one will hear,

no one tells him it comes in bursts unexpectedly and mercilessly and that some days strangers will see you cry.

No one tells him that people stop asking so soon, that some never ask. They don't tell him that people twice your age avert their eyes when meeting you and that months and months later you find out they didn't ask because they were afraid they'd cry if they did. No one tells him that people pretend like nothing's happened because they're afraid of facing their own sorrow.

No one tells him that people are smaller, much younger than they seem, that the people you think are never scared act like they haven't heard the news, says nothing so they won't have to figure out the right thing to say. That some walk on eggshells around you; others walk away.

That somehow, you're not the point of impact, the epicentre from which shock waves spread; impossibly, those standing closest to you walks away unscathed as the worst thing that has ever happened to you takes place, stays whole while you crumble,

and that this is, in a way, a comfort.

No one tells him about how grief ages you. No one tells him that you come out of the dark feeling older, much more so than due to the time that's passed, no one tells him a young heart can feel so worn.

No one tells him time isn't everything.

They don't tell him that grief isn't chronological, that you don't go from the darkest place and up, but that some days you are back to where you started, to where it's raw and new and tearing at your insides like claws – thinking that's what it will always be like.

No one tells him Kübler-Ross' science is wrong, that grief can't be described, can't be measured, can't be read up on in preparation - that it never reaches a point of stasis, stable and predictable from that point onwards.

Does not tell him that grief has no mercy, that it does not wait until you have time, until you can hide away, until you've had time to brace for impact;

that it strikes and strikes and strikes

sometimes in rhythm with your heavy heart,

sometimes entirely out of pace.

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