**Infinite Eternities**

“I’d like to move,” I said, after tracking down a waiter. “It’s too cold sitting under this vent.” He grabbed my coffee and my mother’s untouched plate of eggs and we followed him to the back of the restaurant. I sat uncomfortably at a wobbly wooden table.

After what felt like an eternity, I became conscious that my finger was bleeding. I had been biting my nail and staring at my lap for forty-nine minutes. She had been staring at me for fifty. I was sure the people around us had switched and rotated a million times. It felt like everyone else’s world was spinning as her searing eyes burnt through me, as if she knew the infinite amount of thoughts—*doubts—*in my head. My head slowly rose to lock eyes with the woman across from me.

My mouth opened—

*I will say it*

My heart raced inside my chest.

*I will say it*

I could hear each blink of my eyelashes.

*I will say it*

*—*and then shut*.* I didn’t say it.

“I leave for college tomorrow.” Did she even know I was accepted?

She paused for an eternity, no—three eternities—  before saying, “Right. I trust you’re all packed. You’re a smart girl, Jessica.”

“Why didn’t,” I glanced into her cold blue eyes, “Why didn’t you never call me ‘Jess’?” Her burning red hair could slice me in half. I had become numb to the fear, though.

An already nonexistent smile faded from mere possibility, “Your father called you ‘Jess.’ I left that for him.”

Two more eternities.

“I…” I pondered if she even cared about the words leaving my mouth, if she even heard more than just a kaleidoscope of sounds. “I’m majoring in calculus. Did you know that?”

My pondering came to an end.

“Sure, honey.” I had an answer. She didn’t even look up from the eggs on her plate.

My mind wandered endlessly until it found a foothold. Galileo’s Paradox explains that there are equal amounts of square numbers and integers. This would typically make no sense. Yet to me, it’s the only place I’ve found clarity. Within that, the line between mathematics, and philosophy blurred.  If there is an infinite amount of numbers, then there must be an infinite amount of integers, and an infinite amount of square numbers. The same, I’ve found, is true of eternities, and the eternities between my mother and I have gone on far too long.

I was leaving the next day. I won’t return. Yet even still, freedom felt an eternity away. I contemplated telling all this to her sitting across from me.

In a matter of hours our eternity will be cut short;

no, in a matter of minutes;

no, seconds.

I stood up.

I shot my vision into her direction; I was the one burning through her now. “Mother,” A breath got caught in my throat, a wave of second guessing washed me over. No—I will find the shortest eternity.

“Mother, I’m gay.” For infinite eternities I looked into eyes of stone.

I continued, “Dad knew. You must have known too. Soon my friends will all know. I’m done hiding, I’m done being afraid. I already know how you feel. I’m leaving tomorrow and I won’t be visiting much. Goodbye Mom.” I didn’t pause for a single eternity, “I hope one day you can finally learn to accept.”

Left foot, right foot, left foot.

I paused at the entrance of the restaurant.

I glanced at the empty table I’d sat at just eternities ago.

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