

Story

“Daniel?” Annabelle’s voice rang with perfect pronunciation and clarity. She seemed genuinely surprised to see me at her door at twelve in the afternoon on a Sunday.

I smiled as I replied, my voice so affable and slurred in comparison. “Whatcha doin’ today?”

“Going to the library. I have a big test tomorrow, remember?”

“Why don’t we walk to the park instead?”

She looked at me like I was stupid. “Because we won’t accomplish anything by walking to the park.”

“Come on, Bells. It’s a beautiful day. Why not?”

“Because we went out to a movie and dinner yesterday, so that leaves only today for studying. I just don’t have the time.”

“So?”

“Time is everything,” she said firmly, as if I had just insulted her most worshiped religion.

“Time is nothing,” I retorted.

She went to say something, but I interrupted. “Time is just a figment of the human mind. Sure, things happen in a sequential order and the sun always comes up and goes down, blah, blah, blah, but if humans didn’t exist, time would be superfluous. We schedule our lives around a system that we, ourselves, made up. We obsessively check our watches and cut corners and sprint towards a more efficient world, but in the end, it’s all pointless. The only clock that matters is the one that’s ticking away inside of us. One day, that clock stops. And then nothing matters. Time ran out inside us, and there’s no matter of efficiency that can change that.” My words die out and I realize that I might not have taken a breath for my entire speech. I gauge Annabelle’s face for a reaction. She stands there, looking simply shocked. “Okay,” I say softly, “that was kind of a lot to just-”

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“No...” she murmurs. “You’re right. Let’s go. Let’s go to the park and live and breathe and pretend that time is just a bad dream...”

I raise my eyebrows in disbelief.

“...At least for today,” she finishes, smiling playfully.

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