

The mirror showed a vague silhouette that Jay assumed must be himself, but it was warped and scuffed and dull in a way that reminded him of a funhouse. A funhouse mirror in a nuthouse bathroom, he thought.

12 days. No handles, no doorknobs, no metal bars or sharp corners or plastic knives allowed. No towels in his room, no bare feet outside his room, no phone calls during group time, no cigarettes at all. No needles, no dope, no cigarettes, just some suboxone to quell the shakes. 12 nights sweating through white sheets that wrapped around a mattress that reminded Jay of bunks at a summer camp.

He woke up early this morning to claim the first spot in line. His clammy skin stuck to the vinyl chair. He knew that when he stood up his legs would peel off the seat like velcro.

The heavy door to his right opened. “You're up early, Jay. Are you excited?” inquired the doctor. “Nervous” muttered Jay.

The heavy door to his right opened. Jay smiled and nodded, meeting the driver's eyes in the rear view mirror. He stepped out onto the pavement, shut the door behind him, and listened as the car rolled away. He gazed at rows and rows of stone names. Below him were mothers, babies, friends, people who died happy, people who died alone. As he walked by he sang their names to himself. Until he stopped, and sat.

“I fuckin hate detox. This one wasn't that bad though.” ... “You would hate it. It was non-smoking, because technically it was a psych ward.” ... “I don't think the fight is worth it without you here. I'm supposed to have survivor's guilt, but it feels more like envy.” ... “I don't understand why I woke up and you didn't. It's not fair.”

A breeze blew over the green, green grass. There was bliss in its peacefulness. The way it swirled a leaf around his name etched in stone, stone that was cold to the cheek.

