



Item Code:

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Participant Code:

105

## SOLITUDE

Cadence growled as he threw his headphones in the couch with irritation. The burnt-out cigarette was still ~~laying~~ lying in the table.

Hours of singing has left his throat sore, but the outcome of his efforts weren't enough.

He was never enough.

It was just another day of helping someone in need. The satisfaction of seeing their joyous faces made him ~~feel~~ feel warm. But here, in his house he was alone.

The 'wannabe-singer' therapist had just saved a child from sinking further in the deadly trauma. It had made him feel less lonely, for a moment. With clients swarming in his office, he hadn't been able to register in the training camp for singing. Cadence, just like the meaning of his name was like a melody; sweet, but complicated.

He believed that mental health was the ~~most~~ most needed thing in a human. They could have any health issues, yet be contented with a healthy mind.

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The clients looked up at him as if he was God, but only he knew what he was.

A broken one with his head filled with regrets and guilt. His three friends, Lawrie, Matt and Mycroft always had told him to follow his passion in music and be a singer. But he wanted to help people. He can't let anyone else suffer even a small bit of what he had endured. He says ~~There~~ "There's more time for that. I'll get in to a training camp and when I'm stable, I'll leave the job here." But all four knew he couldn't stop helping the clients. Sighing, he put his headphones and played a song from his favorite band.

The bell rang. It must be them.

Chuckling at the sounds coming from behind the door, he opened it, revealing three shaggy lads looking down smugly at him.

"Howdy, Cad?" Lawrie, the eldest of them cheekily asked. Cadence just nodded as the boys invited themselves into the dusty, otherwise clean apartment. Mycroft plopped up on the couch with many pillows and asked,

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"Whom did you save today, Superhero?" and Matt laughed out loud. "Sod off," came the reply. Even though he was alone, he didn't ~~feel~~ ~~seem~~ feel so with them. They always made sure he was happy. Matt put the song on speaker and asked Cadence playfully. "Guess who almost walked into a tree today." "Must be Laurie." Snickers echoed around the hall. "Hey!" The said brunette shouted indignantly and threw a pillow at him. And that turned into a mini-war. Things were flying here and there. Cadence groaned as the palovoid hit his head. He picked it up. The very palovoid. It showed two very young, very drunk adults goofing around. Him and Percy. His mind went to the day it was taken by his Percy's sister, Penelope. She had received a call from home and left early. The boys were guffawing at something. A drunk Percy sat in the side-seat of the car while an ~~even~~ ~~more~~ even-more drunk Cadence drove it. Neither knew what they were saying, both under the influence of the ~~drink~~

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drink. Neither knew that they were headed to a huge tree. The only thing they knew was that the singer broke his arm for a few weeks and the dancer beside him lost his leg forever.

He had always vowed to never drink and drive after his childhood was tarnished by his father's death, by drinking.

If he was the one who lost something, he wouldn't have minded. But this time, someone had to give up their dreams because of him.

He loathed himself for that.

The young boy, Percy, had gone mad at his <sup>dreams</sup> ~~dream~~ getting torn. The doctors had firmly said that he would never walk again. He ended up in a mental hospital. Penelope said that he was getting better, mentally, but that piece of information couldn't possibly drive his guilt away.

He never wanted Percy to be in that state. He decided to be a therapist to never let anyone go to such dark areas of life. And he had succeeded.

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He was a hero, who helped the hopeless have faith. He liked to believe that just like rebels ~~made~~ ~~made~~ with a cause, superheroes were too, made with a cause.

He hadn't met the three boys back then. ~~But~~ Penelope always said they weren't real. Maybe that's why he always felt alone. ~~He~~ They had come the week after he last saw Percy. Tears of shame filled his eyes. He was a Therapist, for gods sake!

"They, are you okay?" Matt asked, worried. He opened his eyes. He must've been crying, his eyes were so red. "Yeah, what happened by the way?" He asked, trying to sound casual. "You were looking at the polaroid, and sort of crying... then fainted." Said Mycroft. "You got me worried, mate." Lewis added.

Everyone froze as the bell rang. The three boys scrambled into his room, leaving him alone in the hall. He opened the door, revealing Penelope. "How are you?" She asked, entering the room without permission. She was like an elder sister.

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to him, whom he could look up at.

"Why is there a mess?" She blinked wildly, scanning the house. "Well, they're here. The boys." Cadence replied nonchalantly.

Penelope groaned in frustration. "Haven't I told you? There are no such people. You are just making them up in your mind." She was tired of this.

Heated arguments came back and forth. Penelope sighed and muttered. "He's a Therapist. And he's gone mad himself." And to Cadence, "I know you're upset and guilty about Pece, but we know it ~~want~~ ~~and~~ was an accident. He's okay now. You are hurting yourself. You made these ~~guy~~ guys up. They're not your friends. You know the names of these people, they are in a band. Do you wonder how they come whenever you play their song? You are thinking these singers are your friends."

But Cadence said. "They're in my room, look -" But when he opened the door, it was completely empty. What irony. The psychic therapist is mentally

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unstable.

It had been three days since the incident. He had been travelling around the world. He had seen a senior therapist and sought help. He said "You haven't let go of the past. That is why it haunts you. You had created three characters to be rid of ~~the~~ the loneliness subconsciously. Focus on the present." He had shut down his clinic. He wanted right to ~~that~~ ~~help~~ help people while he, himself needed it.

He played the song once more. The three boys came. Laurie said, "You think of us as nuisance, don't you?" There was no answer. Matt said "It's high time we leave. Leave the past. Be whoever you want." Hal Mysoft nodded. He smiled as the song ended. He decided to be a musician, and shifted to Bethnal Green. He had learned to save himself from the shadows. He could help people with music.

~~Some time, Superheroes don't all need to be perfect.~~

All Superheroes don't need to be perfect. Some battle with villains; some, with themselves.

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