



*Based off "Automat" by Edward Hopper (1927)*

The cafe is heaven.

The stillness of the room is overbearing for her. On the outside, a bustling, chaotic dilemma. My dilemma. Taxis beeping, car brakes screeching, New York truly is the city that never sleeps... Alone, an empty seat in front of her, her head down with her luscious hair covering her deflated facade, waiting, I hope, for someone to fill that seat. An alien to her surroundings, an otherwise social, bubbly hangout caffeine-filled refuge seemed like a dead concrete dystopia for her. The grinding of the silver spoon against the coffee cup forces her mind to wander, for the rusty cogs in her mind to revolve. I don't know her thoughts as such, though I can only ponder. I'm the little heater in the corner of the room. I can't talk to her, I can't interact, I can't feel her energy, but I can only see her, with the pictures in my room, the letters and the memories, my only memento of her spirit. Though she doesn't spare me any attention, she's unaware of the feelings I so desperately want to express, my only objective is to get to the table..The miss and separation of her breaks me by the day. Ever since her loss a piece of myself had been taken with her.

We were together, in New York, that cafe was our heaven, our escape from the deadly nine to five. Where in an instant all memory, all time, energy and happiness turned to turmoil, the accident which broke us apart. Yet now I am lifeless, helpless and inanimate. We were one, though now it's as if we are separated, on a spiritual dimension. We simply cannot communicate, we are barred. Is she thinking about me at that table? Does she acknowledge me in the room? And most of all, will I ever reunite with her? My mind is a warzone full of panicky anxiety in a shellfire against self doubt and depression these impulsive thoughts were like shots, shots that have grinded through my brain like a steel garbage compactor scraping and rasping these rusty decrepit pieces of metal being disposed of not without the screech and ear bending sound of its dismissal. This has been me, 4 years strong. Solace runs rampant in my life more than my stability. It brought me to my knees, though through my art, I can express my feelings for her and dump my feelings of reminiscence, depressive nostalgia and the everlasting grief I hold. With every stroke of a brush, my miss for her strengthens. With her I felt whole, in this reality I feel shattered, like a broken shard of glass on the floor everyone avoids and leaves jaded.

One final stroke of the brush and my feelings gush out of every pore in my body, like a dam reaching its brink. I sit on the windowsill, curled up, gazing out onto the busy streets. It's lunchtime, I see the rush. The yuppies, prepped up in their costly suits, ready to slave down to Wall Street for another six hours before heading over to their family estate in the Hamptons. A part of me felt wasted. Knowing I couldn't live up to such a lavish lifestyle as them. Funneling money from every adventure capitalist in New York would be an easy job, for some. Though my apartment-turned-art-studio seems to be the place I'd rather be. It's a place where I let my emotions run free. Though this was the first time I'd painted about my soulmate. She was an utterly beautiful woman, the only woman I could be myself around, though four years ago I lost her. It could've been easily avoided however the last four years have been non stop revolutions of the same anxietal thoughts, it drained me as if I'm paralysed from the happiness and joy I once felt.

As I peer down from the window I see it. The cafe, a sense of dread and internal sorrow diminishes within me. The contrast between the outside world and the jivey community in that cafe comforts me, it is a refuge, a place to rest with the ones you care about the most. That cafe really is heaven.