

# Crashing Down

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The white noise of silence echoes through the empty lounge as colourful pictures flicker on the muted TV screen. I roll over on the couch and reach for the remote to put an end to the headache-inducing images. Glaring at the ceiling, I watch as tiny, silver dust particles twirl in a beam of yellow light, drifting aimlessly and separately, each on their own little path. I kick my leg up in the air and the dusty flecks disperse, spiralling into another random patch of air. Through the skylight I can see a frail glimmer of moonlight trying to reach me from behind a wall of cloud. It's calling me from lightyears away but all I hear is a faint whisper.

I want a cup of tea but it's as if there's an invisible, heavy duvet over me. I can't get up. My sister is at her second sleepover of the week which is kind of absurd in my opinion. My friends and I don't have sleepovers anymore. It's like we each have a running tap which our energy gushes out of all week and by Friday night there's only a feeble dribble left. I wish I could turn my tap off. I close my eyes but there is a worm of guilt gnawing away in my chest. I should be using this time to work on the growing pile of school work which sits festering in the backyard of my conscious. My brain feels like the green gloop made of flour that we used to play with in kindergarten, squeezing the blobby mess as it dripped through our tiny fingers. I'm worried if I try to focus too hard it will explode out of my ears in sticky streams.

A "ping" pierces the blanket of quiet and suddenly I spring to my feet. Running on tiptoe over to the kitchen island where my phone is sitting, my feet slide in my socks on the slippery tiles. Heart bouncing I flip the cold rectangle over. The little bar of text reads "Mum: Please remember to feed Snuffles the cat biscuits from the blue bag not the green bag. Goodnight xoxo." I sigh and plod back to the living room, phone in hand.

Back in my couch crease, my thumb darts across my phone screen like a magnet to the purple square of that familiar app. I return to the world of Instagram, eyes drifting instinctually over the little faces framed one by one. Smile after beautiful smile of friends having fun. There must be a party tonight. I sift through my memory, is it someone's birthday today? I readjust my fluffy, pink dressing gown sleeve and dust off some residual cat hair as I continue to double tap each flawlessly made-up face, each pretty dress lit up on the blue rectangle.

The tiny white letters at the top of my screen tell me it's only 9pm. That's a reasonable time for an early night. My mind murmurs that catching up on sleep would be a good idea but the weight in my heart is screaming that a seventeen year old girl shouldn't be going to bed at 9pm on a Friday night. I throw my phone at the pillows on the other end of the couch and the little device sits there mocking me. "You're lame," it says.

I'm possessed by the desire to move. I turn on the stereo and vibrant streamers of pop music unravel throughout the empty house. The melody pulses through my veins and I begin to spin. I'm dancing. Twirling with my arms spread wide, my hair tangles in the empty air. The world around me blurs like I'm inside a giant bubble looking out through the glossy film. I'm floating. I jump on the couch in bare feet, tip toeing over the cloud-soft fabric.

I'm like one of those tiny dust particles, twirling in the air but going nowhere. Soaring until, once again, I come crashing down.