

Broken Blinds: Esther Micena Matos

Light seeps through the broken shade, casting a warm golden glow across my half-shut eyelids. Simply a reminder that the night has ended and a new day has begun. It's also another reminder to fix that goddamn shade.

My oversized dog grumbles as I shift to my side, disturbing his dreams of running in fields or catching the cat next door, or whatever it is dogs dream about. He's quickly up and trampling over my body to remind me that he has been waiting for breakfast since last night's supper. It would make me laugh if the overwhelming wave of responsibilities hadn't already crashed into me the second the blinds let the light slip past.

My dad says I'm too young to be jaded, my mom tells me to burn more sage. My doctor prescribes all the right things to fix a brain with 'high-functioning' depression. All that means is if I decide to kill myself, I'll make sure to choose a day that I'm not rostered on for work so as to not cause any inconveniences. Is this adulthood? A never-ending cycle of miserable jobs that we pretend to like but actually resent? Does everyone grin and bear it the same? Good thing I chose a career in nursing, just in time for a world-altering pandemic. That thought does make me laugh a little.

My partner rolls over to face me with a sleepy smile as he gently runs a hand down my arm, another reminder that he's here and he understands. I've changed a lot in the last seven years. With all my sadness and medication changes that never quite work, his faith in me has not wavered once. I'm not sure how, since my own faith has0. b bh toppled over, stomped on, and crushed to bits.

My dog lays his head across my stomach to remind me he's still waiting for breakfast. Just a few more minutes, I think, before the regular busyness of the morning. Just a few more minutes of perfect stillness. Another reminder that this, out of everything, I can control. My breathing, my thoughts, my emotions. All in check, all aligned for the time being.

The sun rises higher, the room brightens. A reminder of a new day. A reminder to be happy, even if for just a few minutes longer than yesterday.

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