

Nothing At All

⊙

0:00
him

Well how many of our ideas do you think are actually brand new to this world? Or is everything just repeating already?"

"Maybe, but I don't think it matters so much. It's all just..."

0:15 My eyelids flit open just enough to recognise the early afternoon sun streaming through cracks in the blinds, illuminating dust particles as they traverse the river of light.

I can't say for sure whether I was dreaming or remembering, but I feel like either way she was definitely in the middle of telling me something important.

Now, as my mind melds back with reality, its first thought is to check my phone – surely she'd messaged while I had been asleep. How long was I out?

0:23 “I'll send you that song I was talking about” she'd said as I finished putting my number in her phone and handed it back. For the name, I'd put *Lake Boy*.

The song was an orchestral piece. I had always been jealous of kids who had been exposed to orchestral music - my school only ever had an old drum set and some cheap guitars for us to use. I hadn't even heard of an oboe until I got to uni. So I've still got plenty of catching up to do.

0:55 Dawn had been illuminating the landscape, slowly bringing the colours back into the trees, and lighting up the glassy surface of the lake with its fiery palette.

We said our goodbyes and I picked my way back through the bush towards my van, feeling as if I was walking on air. I jumped straight in but didn't start the engine – just sat staring at the trees, going over the night in my head.

It had been one of those rare occasions where you open your mouth and everything comes out - the little stuff, and the big stuff too. Where every idea discussed branches out to ten others, and all the time in the world mightn't be enough to fit in everything you want to talk about.

I eventually catch myself daydreaming and turn on the ignition, letting the hum of the engine drown out the morning chorus and blanket my wandering mind.

On my way back out to the highway I drove back past those cabins – still resting quietly, nestled amongst the trees. It wasn't until I'd got home, exhausted and ready to lay my head on the pillow, that I realised I'd forgotten to go on the hike.

1:18 'For Ana'
her

Just a short phone recording – two minutes and twelve seconds to be exact. But I've never been more attached to anything I've played before. This is what I had been aching for all this time. Something of my own. From my own soul, telling my own story. It feels like a real beginning.

Finally.

1:54 We had stayed by the lake talking about nothing and everything, until the night drew to a close and dawn chased the stars back out into the universe. Though I hadn't slept, I felt my mind buzzing as though the air around it was electrified.

We parted ways in a daze as the first rays of light touched the far edges of the lake. He disappeared into the bush, guitar strapped to his back, following some unseen path back to the clearing where he'd left his van.

I wove back along my lonely path to the quiet cabin, moving carefully as if I could disturb the morning chorus as it clattered throughout the canopy above me.

2:16 But I couldn't sleep, I kept picturing the effortless way he played guitar, perched precariously above the lake. He'd told me he was just playing and singing whatever came to his mind, weaving together melodies over ever evolving chord progressions until it all melded into one long train-of-thought composition. *Pure, simple expression.*

I had not been able to name the ache I'd been carrying for so long, but that was it. I wanted that freedom.

So, with my mind still buzzing in that in-between state that it reaches after greeting a new day without any sleep, I head back out to the dusty piano.

This time it flows easily, immediately.

I play freely for a while - morphing through phrases, allowing my body to feel each note - until I realise there's one quiet yet complex motif I keep returning to.

So, for the first time ever, I get out my phone and hit record, actually excited to hear what comes out on the other side.

2:53 hey
him

No. Delete.

good mor...

It was already the afternoon. Delete.

This is silly - she'll message you when she's ready. If she wants. When she wants. Maybe she's still asleep? Maybe she went for a walk and didn't take her phone - people do that.

I jump out of bed, throw on some shorts from the pile on the floor and head out to the living room to find some breakfast - or lunch I guess.

Mum and Nan have gone off together down the coast for a couple of days, so the house is strangely quiet - and a little bit cool for once with no fire going.

After scoffing a few pieces of toast, I sit staring out at the ocean. It's as still as a lake today. The water is lapping peacefully at the shore, in stark contrast to a few days ago when I lay gasping for air with Rory's broken board by my side. That feels like a lifetime ago.

It's crazy how dense your days can feel when you are chasing connection - be it with family, your past, or new people. That feeling can stretch moments out into memories.

3:24
them

Hey

Hey!

Sorry for not getting back to you sooner,
I had quite the morning nap - just woke up!

All good, only just got up myself.
Guess today's a write off

Yeah, well I definitely wasn't planning
on pulling an all nighter last night

Fair call - glad we did though! It's all been a
bit of a blur since then. Did you make it back
to your creaky cabin in the woods alright?

Yeah, it was pretty bright by the time I left haha.
How was your drive home? You really probably
shouldn't have done that...

I survived! Think I got my second
wind when the sun came up :)

...

So, um... when can I see you again?

I'm free tonight?

That works for me! It'll have to be somewhere in
between our places though. I gotta be back home early
tomorrow, so no all nighters this time :(

I think I know just the spot

5:13