

Thirst

By: Phillip Arloro

An eight-ounce glass of iced coffee from this morning sits on my desk, untouched. As much as I may have craved the refreshing taste of chilled caffeine on a hot day, I was not motivated to leave the safety of my warm bed to retrieve it. The ice had melted by this point, washing away the delicious flavor this cup may have once contained. Thirsty, alone, and afraid, I just couldn't risk it.

It had been days of temptation, and I somehow remained strong. It began as a tall glass of water, dripping with condensation, and day after day, it changed into more refreshing beverages that suited my temptations. I wouldn't let him win. I would remain strong.

My eyes shut, and for a second, I could imagine the taste of a refreshing drink washing over my lips as I knocked it back. When I reopened them, however, the delicious-looking iced coffee had become a tall glass of chocolate milk, which I was craving more than anything for some reason. I don't think I have much more time. Humans can't last long without drinking.

Before I can even imagine the taste of the brown-chocolatey beverage gracing my lips, I blink, and it changes again. This time, it wasn't anything new, but instead back to an ice-cold glass of water. The condensation dripped on the outside of the glass, even more, this time, with ice up to the brim, and a colored straw floating on the edge. I can feel my spirit breaking as my tongue attempts to wet my chapped lips. I give up.

My feet gently touch the hard, wooden floor as I hang my head in shame. The walk to the glass of water felt long and tiring but reaching it was like finding the answer to life's most curious question. I stretch my arm towards the glass and prepare to finally satisfy the thirst that has cursed me for so long. As my hand touches the glass, it disappears, revealing it as an illusion.

"Did you forget?" a strange, haunting, voice asks me, "There is no water down here."