

Robin at Dawn's Darkness

by Redza Remea

[A dark room that is barely visible. The only source of light is from a dimly lit computer screen with pages of online forums and "happy quotes" on Tumblr.]

DAWN: Where's Papa? Ever since Mama and him had the fight, these four walls haven't been the same. It's cold. Scary. It's like he's around... but not.

[DAWN picks up a family photo of her and her parents. The picture was taken nearly four years ago, when she was thirteen years old. She sets it back down, where she found it, untouched. Representative of the people behind the glass sheet.]

DAWN: I miss our old life. When Mama was around to play with us. Now Papa has been really cold and scary. He's always busy with work and he never has time for us.

ROBIN *[calling from the door downstairs]*: Dawn? I'm going to work. Make sure that you have everything packed and ready for school. Call me if you need anything, I have a meeting today so I'll be home late.

DAWN: Okay Papa! *[She begins running down the stairs to meet ROBIN.]* Wait, Papa! I need to give you-

[The door slams shut in front of DAWN and the sound of a car engine revs up as ROBIN moves out from the driveway. DAWN watches from the peeping hole of the door, the morning light slowly fades in as dawn rises. A robin can be heard chirping happily.]

DAWN: I wish that Papa would just stop to listen to me. I'm *sure* he has a reason for being like that, he's probably just busy. I don't want to be a burden.

[As she's packing her school bag, she pulls out a blue card with the message "Happy birthday to the best Papa" written on the front. The card is decorated with colourful buttons, childlike interpretations of a happy family and cut-out pieces of paper in green, red, yellow and every colour that exists in the figment of one's imagination. The horn and silent growl of a school bus can be heard, drowning out the pleasant chirps of the robins.]

DAWN: I'm coming!

[She picks up her bag and a packet of coca cola gummies from the countertop and runs towards the bus. The rest of the school day was filled with the regular monotonous unpacking and packing of notebooks, endless roll calls of high school kids' names which would be forgotten and the ringing of bells at the end of time. DAWN walks into English class, the last class of the day and pulls out a chair to sit.]

ADRIAN *[loudly]*: Dawn! What's up with you?

DAWN *[startled]*: Huh, me? Nothing! Was this your place? I'm sorry, I'll go over there.

[She begins to walk away but ADRIAN steps in front of her].

ADRIAN: Hey, calm down, I didn't mean to scare you. Is something wrong?

DAWN *[quietly]*: I mean, I've just been a little tired. *[She looks down to her feet, hair covering her face.]* Nothing much *really*, just really tired.

[DAWN eyes an empty seat at the back of the classroom and once again, ADRIAN steps in front of her with an air of concern and sympathy.]

ADRIAN: Hey look, it seems like you're really stressed about something. How about me and you hang out later? Calm those nerves of yours or something, you get me?

DAWN *[nervous but visibly curious]*: I mean, yeah sure. Why not. I'll see you later then.

[Without a word more being said, ADRIAN pulls DAWN in for a hug. She attempts to push him away at first but she quickly becomes acclimatized to the warm feeling of his embrace. A feeling which fills the void that existed not too long ago, was now filled with chirps of happiness...]

Months pass, ADRIAN can be seen handing DAWN a rose, DAWN laying on his chest, the two smiling and laughing. In a dark room that is barely visible, DAWN is asleep.]

ADRIAN *[shrilly]*: I can't do this no more, I can't do this no more. *[He begins rocking back and forth in the bathroom. He presses his shirt against his arms, soaking red.]* I don't want to do this no more. It's all too much!

DAWN *[sleepily]*: Adrian? *[She reaches around but notices that he is missing.]*
Sweetheart, where are you?

[With the room barely visible, the only source of light being from a dimly lit computer screen with a notepad open. A gunshot rings throughout the house.]

DAWN *[afraid]*: Adrian? Adrian?

[She runs towards the bathroom and finds the boy, she falls to her knees.]

DAWN *[panicking]*: No, no, no, please no. Adrian? Adrian? Do you hear me? Please say something. Please... I need you. *You* told me you wouldn't leave. *You* told me that I wouldn't need to be alone ever again. *You* told me that we would make it out of here together. Adrian. *Please* wake up. I know you're still there. You have to be there.

[DAWN falls into his chest. Screaming. Suddenly, she stops. At that moment, there is an eerie silence. Not a single chirp or sob can be heard.]

DAWN *[coldly]*: What am I thinking? We can still be together.

[In a dark room that is barely visible. The only source of light dies.]