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One Lonely Push

My popsicle-shaped skateboard was designed inside many metallic walls of multiple different skate companies located in Santa Cruz, California. The metal chunk that holds the wheels to the board; the trucks, were molded and measured perfectly to the millimeter, followed by the wheels, which were constructed with liquid plastic and accompanied by top-grade bearings. The eight by thirty-three-inch deck, came to existence through seven plies of thin strong wood being compressed in a huge hydraulic press; strong enough to support up to two hundred pounds of anger and fury. All shipped to one of the only skate shops in the Metro Vancouver Area: Zumiez, located in Coquitlam Centre.

In the spring of grade 10, I strode into the shop, eager to dive into the world of skateboarding, but my strides swiftly revamped into small paces as my eyes darted across the room. On the left of the shop was nearly every Vans shoe that existed; the right side filled with hoodies with the words *Thrasher* lit on fire, and in front of me stood a maze of fake jewelry and accessories. The entire shop looked like a place that was dunked in flames; the middle of hell, but without the actual heat.

Regardless, the employee helped assemble life into my first skateboard. To begin, cylindrical shoes were roughly inserted into the big T-shaped metallic feet. Without the shoes, the board could not run. Organ by organ, the pieces were stitched together: the wood, followed by the trucks, and finally the bolts. Lastly, he patched a layer of skin in the form of black sandpaper over the meaty wood and handed the board to me. “Enjoy!” he said while enthusiastically waving goodbye.

During the first few weeks of our relationship, my board travelled lots with me. It felt like dating someone for the first time: unique, enjoyable, but uncomfortable at times. From slipping out to being pummeled by small cracks; it took time to get used to. Over time, board control became more natural. Soon it was time to jump onto the next stage: trying to get the board off the ground. For the next few weeks, my board and I would be imprisoned inside the garage as I fell, over and over and over. Despite the devil calling on me to go back to gaming, my love for skating made getting up way too easy.

Deep down in the depths of my skating, everyone and everything disappeared. I lived in my own world. Earbuds go in, streams of music slam the door on the outside world. Push by push, the problems of life disappear one by one. One push to forget about homework; two to forget about fake friends; three to stop thinking about that cute nerdy girl in math class. Pop a kickflip and immediately the rest of my problems flow down my spine, exiting from the feet and cemented down to the rough pavement through the wheels; gone until I come back home.

In the midst of fall, school had started to matter more. We couldn’t arrange times to hangout as much. Slowly, our limerence faded and by winter break of 2018, we decided to take a break from each other. We tried our best to roll with the rain and snow, but things were just not working out. By spring of 2019, the roots that were holding me from soaring began to release their hold. After finding out what I had missed, I decided to give skating another shot.

Whether it was school, exploring downtown with other skaters, or even hanging out with my regular friends, my board was always there with me. I often found more memorable moments with my skateboard than any other object. For six months, I had the satisfaction of cruising home from school knowing that I was worth being loved. Dirt and moisture creeped into the rusted bearings of the wheels when it third-wheeled on the grass to watch as she kissed me for the first time. When she came over, it was left sitting outside the door while the lights from my TV could be seen flashing underneath the door. Eventually, drops of time rolled away from the board; until the night when chips of wood splashed into a million angles; pummeling into the concrete after I broke up with her. Large bruises had formed on the nose of the deck from the separated plies of wood.

From that time on, my board had gone from a best friend to a tool to cope with anger. Every day, plies of wood continued to split, and wood endured repeated fractures when my board couldn’t be commanded to my desire. The tail end had been dangerously sharpened due to constantly popping off the ground. Next were the metal trucks, which had been grinded down to the bolts. More bruises and blemishes had begun to appear. Much like the blurs of life, those marks never went away; they only kept showing up; the more I skated, the more I felt lonely.

Here I was, the last month of Grade 11, unable to fall asleep in bed with thoughts of the past year reappearing; the skating I did with my friends, the awkward moments when I was late for class, and the times I didn’t know how to ask someone to help me*.* The clock beside me shows a 2:00 AM, but my head answers 2:00 PM. The rest of my body responding with 12:00 AM. I had a new deck sitting across my bed, beside the door; ready to replace the old roughed-up plywood. It’s been quite a year with the old board. Despite the cuts and chisels, it’s managed to stay intact. New experiences were picked up and old ones left behind, much like this skateboard.

I decide to go practice. It's astonishing how loud a skateboard could sound at night; having the ability to annoy everyone in my neighbourhood, including my homeroom teacher. Pushing the last bits of energy into my arms and legs, I manage to get up; sparks of electricity beginning to flow through my body. I plop my earbuds in and throw my board down out for one last ride.