

MIDNIGHT WALK

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NOTE: this piece is hyper-naturalistic. It is set in real time and in real space. When he's in the subway? He's actually in the subway. Nothing is indicative, nothing is presentational. Perhaps it is embedded into an interesting webpage, but nothing within the Facetime streams should be curated *except* for the text and the action. No lights other than the lights on the street, the glow from the phone. No music other than the lo-fi sound of the guitar and the singing voice. Place names may be substituted to represent the real space in which the actors live. Maybe the sounds of the Subway are replaced by the sounds of a van, or a bicyclist. Need textual adjustments? Slide into my DMs: skoaseu@gmail.com



A black webpage, perhaps riddled with stars. A sound. Static. Then, a Recording of THE CHALLENGER EXPLOSION: "Flight controllers here looking very carefully at the situation. Obviously a major malfunction."

+ MAJOR MALFUNCTION +

+MAJOR MALFUNCTION+

+OBVIOUSLY+

+A+

+MAJOR+

+MALFUNCTION+

A clickable button labeled MAJOR MALFUNCTION. The audience clicks through to the major malfunction.

A BOY. He is facetimeing. ANOTHER BOY. He is also facetimeing. They are facetimeing each other. We should only be able to see one stream at a time. The audience either sees A BOY's stream, or ANOTHER BOY'S stream, but not both. The audience can toggle between streams, deciding moment to moment who they would like to watch.

A BOY is on the streets of a city. Night. ANOTHER BOY is in bed.

A BOY

I'm on my way.

ANOTHER BOY

Yay.

A BOY

Should I have showered?

I mean. Whatever you want.

ANOTHER BOY

A long pause. We see a few cars go by. A bus, maybe.

Thanks for bearing with me.

ANOTHER BOY

Don't mention it.

A BOY

I really mean it.

ANOTHER BOY

Thanks.

A BOY

Um.

I'll see you soon.

ANOTHER BOY

Wait.

Can you— can you stay on the line?

A BOY

Um.

Yeah.

Yeah I—

ANOTHER BOY

You don't have to.

A BOY

No, that's not what I meant.

I want to.

ANOTHER BOY

Thanks.

I'm just— you know.

A BOY

I'm thinking about your thighs.

*A really long silence. ANOTHER BOY shifts in bed.
A BOY passes an intersection, a table of people
playing chess, music blasting out of a van.*

I can show you my thighs.

ANOTHER BOY

No, that's okay, lol.
I can wait.

A BOY

Haha. "lol."
You sure?

ANOTHER BOY

I can't— I can't walk with a boner.

A BOY

Don't walk.
Take the bus.

ANOTHER BOY

I can walk
It's not that far.

A BOY

*Maybe an ambulance passes. Maybe we see a
couple walk past. A LOT of silence.*

I can let you go if you want to listen to music or something.

ANOTHER BOY

Wanna play something for me?

A BOY

Play?

ANOTHER BOY

On your guitar.

A BOY

I can't play.

ANOTHER

A BOY

Then why the fuck are you holding a guitar in that pic?

ANOTHER

I can't play tonight.

A BOY

Okay, I'll hang up?

ANOTHER

Don't.

A BOY

Oof.

ANOTHER

What?

A BOY

You know that subway smell?

Sorry— context: I just walked past Hoyt Street.

And it had that subway smell— you know, it was musty?

ANOTHER

Why didn't you take the subway?

A BOY

I like to walk, I like to see the city—

ANOTHER

— Baby New Yorker—

A BOY

— But you know the subway smell, right?

It's musty— no, not musty. Dank?--

ANOTHER

Like, no, I know, it's mechanical.

A BOY

It's—

Hoyt and Schermerhorn.

ANOTHER

HOYT AND SCHERMERHORN!

A BOY

That— water over metal smell.

ANOTHER

Yes! Exactly!!

A BOY

Maybe we hear the subway rattle beneath the street.

Play me a song.

A BOY

It's too late, the neighbors—

ANOTHER

Play me a song.

A BOY

No—

ANOTHER

Woah! Hey!

A BOY

What?

ANOTHER

I'll see you Wednesday?

A BOY

What?

ANOTHER

FUCK yeah!
Trivia KING!

A BOY

What?

ANOTHER

Wooot!

A BOY

Who was that?

ANOTHER

Dude from work.

A BOY

Silence. A BOY walks a few blocks. ANOTHER BOY shows his thighs.

Oookay!

A BOY

ANOTHER BOY shows his belly.

Dude.

A BOY

What.

ANOTHER BOY

I'm— I'm sorry, you're giving me dry mouth.

A BOY

A text message ding. ANOTHER BOY answers his text.

Who?

A BOY

My mom.

ANOTHER BOY

Oh. Do you need to talk to her?

A BOY

ANOTHER BOY

Yeah. I probably should. Can you—?

A BOY

I'm still on my way.

ANOTHER BOY hangs up his video. A BOY hangs up his video.

A Grindr Chat. Give the audience some time with this. My hope is that they will be able to scroll through this chat on their own. The pre-existing messages say:

=====

Hey cutie, whatsup?

Pic?

[a pic of a boy holding a guitar]

Lol, Kev, what's up?

I thought that was you.

It me.

You wanna come over?

Location?

[pin dropped]

—————a week later—————

Hey cutie.

listen
Probably not tonight
I'm having a... period of grief?
not trying to be dramatic.

No p. Hope everything's okay.

a week later

Hey, sorry, I just read that message from last week and like, I ~fully~ acknowledge how crazy that was.
do you want to come over?
i know it's late

I'm already on my way.

hope you weren't asleep.

I already have my shoes on.

NEW MESSAGES begin to appear

is everything okay?

as good as it could be

Am I still good to come over?

ya. obvi!

Can you— hop on when you're done talking to her?

listen to music!

i am.

2 what?

Beyonce.

Queen!

No, not Queen, Beyonce.
;)

a long pause. really long. a facetime ring.

facetime resumes

Is everything okay?

BOY

As good as it could be.
What Beyonce song?

ANOTHER BOY

Her best one.

BOY

A really long silence. BOY continues to walk.

Listen.
Um.
Not to give you whiplash but.
Maybe we should cancel.

ANOTHER BOY

Oh.
Okay.
Um.
I understand.

BOY

It's just
You know.

ANOTHER BOY

I know.

BOY

Maybe we can try again another night?
This is truly just a me thing and
Oh god.
I know I made you walk—

ANOTHER BOY

I didn't have to walk.

BOY

I know, but you did, and I—

ANOTHER BOY

No, it's no problem
I get it.
I want to give you space if you
Need
It.

BOY

*A long silence. Cars pass on the street. ANOTHER
shifts in bed.*

I like you.
I don't even know your last name.

ANOTHER BOY

Carter.

BOY

OH, cool.

ANOTHER BOY

Now you know it.

BOY

Thanks, but I.
I just don't want to burden you with this right now but maybe later.

ANOTHER BOY

NO!
No— it's— it's not a burden.
But also like.
Space.

BOY

Space.

ANOTHER BOY

Your space.

BOY

ANOTHER BOY

Yeah. No, I get it. Yeah. My space.

BOY

Understood. No hard feelings.

So.

Okay.

I'll go. Um.

Bye.

ANOTHER BOY

Um. Bye.

The facetime call ends.

Black. A long long pause. And then. The video call again. BOY descending the stairs to the subway.

BOY

Look.

I'm getting on the subway.

It's coming in [x] minutes.

BOY shows the ETA of the subway.

I know you said you need space.

And like, yes, I want to give it to you.

I don't want to be pushy if this is just a sex thing to you

Not just a sex thing, I mean, just sex with you is awesome on its own, I don't want to imply that

I'm not down for just sex what I mean is—

I don't know what this "grief" is.

I don't know what it is and you don't need to tell me.

I'm not entitled to know.

But—

When I was eight years old I lost my grandmother.

And it was really hard.

Silence.

I don't know what to say besides that.

It was hard.

Like, it sucked.

It really sucked.

"it sucked" Jesus fucking CHRIST.

And— well, I understand needing space.
But I want you to know that like, this, to me, is NOT a burden.
It's— it sucks.
It just sucks.
So.
Yeah.
Okay, that's all I wanted to say.
Please rest and get good sleep and.
I'll see you later.

ANOTHER BOY

Come over.

We see BOY run up the stairs, through the turnstile, across the street, to the building. He buzzes in. ANOTHER gets out of bed, buzzes him up. We see BOY bound up the stairs. ANOTHER takes off his shirt. ANOTHER is just in his underwear. Both phone cameras see each other. They finally see the same space. And then.

BOY

Hi.

ANOTHER BOY

Hi.

BOY

Guess what song.

ANOTHER BOY picks up his guitar.

ANOTHER BOY

Your love is bright as ever
Even in the shadows
Baby kiss me
Before they turn the lights out

Your heart is glowing
And I'm crashing into you
Baby kiss me
Before they turn the lights out
Before they turn the lights out

Baby love me lights out

In the darkest night hour
I'll search through the crowd
Your face is all that I see
I'll give you everything
Baby love me lights out
Baby love me lights out
You can turn my lights out.

A long silence. ANOTHER starts weeping.

A BOY

That's— that's it.

BOY kisses ANOTHER BOY. Laughter. They both turn their cameras off. Black webpage, riddled with stars. A final sound cue: the rattles of the subway.

END