

Finding Today

July Calendar is panicking. She can't find Tomorrow.

Her house is completely ransacked. Beige throw pillows are flung everywhere. All the food previously packed neatly in her wooden pantry, is now scattered all over the floor. The collections of books from the tall bookshelf are abandoned in piles throughout the house.

'Tomorrow! Where are you?'

Thoughts chase each, competing for first place.

Could Tomorrow have been stolen? Did Tomorrow run away?

July feels her heart pounding.

Or has she just been careless? Living in yesterday?

She is in a frenzy, breathing too fast.

Today was the same as any other day. Walking down the same street, passing the same houses, shopping at the same corner store, buying the same groceries and coming back to the same house. She unpacked, organised, and stowed all the food. She methodically composted the scraps from the day before. She left for work and came back. She went to the same park to do the same exercises. Just the same as every other day.

July calls for Tomorrow again. She starts to shake. What if this is it? Tomorrow has just left. She has been too selfish, too unfocused, too short-sighted, too busy looking back to remember to look forward.

Every day is identical. The same routine, the same structure. For what purpose? No difference, no challenge, no risk. Always taking Tomorrow for granted. And now, it has all finally caught up with her.

July runs outside to look. It is becoming difficult to see in the fading light. Her house looks as it always does, never changing in the years she has lived there. The sad, drooping little tree in front, surrounded by dull olive-coloured bushes. The small, white picket fence, with its peeling paint. The faded ugly brown door she never gets around to painting, encased in a bland brown brick wall.

As she feels more and more hopeless, July looks up and down the street, but she knows it is pointless. The clouded dark sky sends her back inside. Tears begin to form in her eyes, as she continues her search.

Underneath her desk, below her bed, in her wardrobe. She looks everywhere throughout her home. Any hiding place, any forgotten nook. It takes hours.

When the sky starts to lighten, she gives up. Exhausted, she slumps down into her dishevelled home.

Slowly, July starts to think.

If she is really honest with herself, she knows why Tomorrow has left. She knows she won't find Tomorrow. At least not like this.

So, if she has no Tomorrow then she might as well cherish today. She stands up. An idea is forming.

Now the sun has fully risen, she begins. After tidying her house, she looks through her kitchen, and she realises she has a perfectly fine amount of food. No need to go to the store. Sitting on a counter, she finds a book she was gifted and never read. July goes to the park every day to exercise, not to sit there and enjoy herself as she reads. So, she does.

The sky is peaceful with birds chirping. The old, rusted bench surrounded by perfumed flowers is picturesque. The children running and laughing as they play fill her with joy.

After a few chapters, and then a few more, she goes to the store. Or rather, *a* store. A store she has never been to. July buys the two things she actually needs. Supplies for something she has always wanted to do.

Back at home she puts on an old shirt and carefully cracks open the tight metal lid. Dipping her new brush, she starts to paint. The old brown door disappears replaced with bold cherry red. Not perfect, but fine for now.

The sad, drooping little tree suddenly looks lively and green. The dull olive-coloured bushes appear vibrant and bright. The small, white picket fence, almost by magic, seems sweet and classic. The brown brick wall in turn, becomes friendly and reassuring.

July stands back to admire what she has done.

A thought suddenly pops into her head. Tomorrow! She has forgotten she lost Tomorrow. Yet she is still here, still breathing. Because maybe she never really needed tomorrow, all she truly needed was Today.