



TWO UNIVERSES

Did you ever wake up and feel like the person in your body isn't you anymore?
Like someone else is living your life, wearing your face, saying your lines - and you're just watching from somewhere far away?

It doesn't start that way.

No - it starts quietly.

You get tired. You stop caring about small things... the messages, the plans, the little joys.

You think you're just burnt out. "I just need a rest," you tell yourself.

But the rest never ends.

Days start to melt together.

The world fades around the edges.

And before you realise, you're not living in life anymore - you're standing beside it.

Then one day - it hits.

Not a slide - a crash.

A violent, unstoppable collapse.

All the emotions you've been outrunning slam into you at once.

Guilt, grief, fear, shame - it's like the floor gives way beneath you,
and you drop into something bottomless... dark.

That's when I found myself in the cave.

Five miles underground.

No sound. No light. No time.

Just... black.

Thick, living blackness that presses against your skin and whispers things in your ear.

I tried to scream, but the sound just dissolved before it left my mouth.

So I stopped trying.

Down there, you stop being a person.

You become weight.

You become shadow.

You start to forget what light even looked like.

And then - after what felt like years, maybe even centuries - there was a flicker.

A shimmer.

A breath of something that didn't belong to the cave.

At first, I thought it was hope.

But it wasn't hope. It was... something else.

A tear in the darkness.

An opening.

And through it - another world.

A world where light existed.
Where laughter wasn't foreign.
Where I looked alive again.
But it wasn't me... it was another version of me.
Someone who could breathe easier. Someone who didn't flinch at their own reflection.
Someone who hadn't fallen five miles underground.

And I realised then...
I wasn't climbing toward salvation.
I was looking into an alternate universe.

Now, I live in both.
Two realities.
In one, I'm still in the cave - still feeling the damp walls, still fighting to remember who I used to be.
In the other, there's that flicker - that thin, trembling light that might simply be my imagination.
Maybe it's mercy. Maybe it's madness. I can't tell anymore.

Some days, the universes blur.
I'll catch a glimpse of the light, and hear laughter, smell rain, feel warmth on my face -
and then it's gone.
Ripped away.
The cave swallows it whole, and I'm back to black again.

And yet... I can't let go of it.
Even if it isn't real.
Even if that light belongs to another me.
Because without it - without the idea of something - I think the cave would finally win.

So I juggle them.
Two worlds.
Two versions of myself.
The one who's still lost, and the one who might not even exist.

And sometimes, I forget which one I'm in.
I'll look around and think I see the light, think I hear laughter —
but it's just the cave playing tricks again.
Mocking me with the memory of a world I can't reach.

I don't know which universe is real anymore.
Maybe they both are.
Maybe neither.
Maybe I died a long time ago and just haven't realised it yet.

People talk about “finding the light,”
but what if the light isn’t salvation?
What if it’s just another illusion —
a cruel mirage to keep you crawling toward something that isn’t there?

I used to think the cave was the punishment.
Now I think it’s the truth.
The light is the lie - a dream my brain invented to stop me from giving up.

So I stay here.
Half in the dark, half pretending there’s something more.
The flicker still taunts me from the edge —
so close I can almost touch it,
but I never do.

Because maybe...
if I ever reached it,
if I ever stepped fully into that other universe...
I’d find it’s just another cave.
Another layer down.

And so, I wait.
Listening to the echoes of a man who might’ve been me.
Watching the flicker fade and return, fade and return, fade and return -
a pulse in the dark,
a reminder that even illusions can hurt.

Maybe this is it.
Maybe this is all there ever was.

The cave.
The flicker.
The silence.

(A long, hollow pause.)

And me.
Still here.
Still waiting for the light
to go out.