

DREW:

[slightly away from microphone, as if adjusting position and settling in]

Alright, I guess I'm doing this.

[directly into microphone]

So, uh. Hi, Helen. This is my first day of... self-isolation? Whatever it's called. You said that I had to do this audio diary thing for you to approve me staying home and self-quarantine-ing, and it's not like Mr. Watson was going to let me out of school without you using your doctor-y authority.

[sigh, pause]

I don't know what I'm supposed to say? I'm an anxious germaphobe, and this whole pandemic thing is spreading quickly. After my meltdown my mom made me talk to you about all this shit. So now I'm out of school.

[another pause, fast forwarding noise]

Alright, that's it. Bye Helen, I hope this is what you were wanting me to do.

[fumbling sounds as she ends the recording]

DREW:

[whispered]

Alright, I *know* I'm supposed to be getting better sleep, I know, but I also need to do this for you, Helen, so I'm sorry. *But* also, this is your fault. I almost forgot to record today, it's day two. It was pretty average, I guess. I went to my regular online classes...

[fast forwarding noise]

[still whispered]

So yeah. I gotta get to bed before mom yells at me, she got bit by a patient at work today and is in a pissy mood. Bye, Helen.

[ends recording]

NATHAN:

[yelling in background]

Oh COME ON! Fuck you, Bradley, I almost had that.

DREW:

[sighs annoyed, says this more to herself than to anyone outside of the room]
Jesus, they never shut up, do they?

MOM:

[yelling in background]
Nathan Edwards! Watch your language!

BRADLEY:

[yelling in background, giggling]
Yeah, *Nathan*, watch your *language*.

DREW:

[yelling to people in the other room]
Can you guys shut up?! I'm trying to do my... homework.

NATHAN:

[At a more normal voice level in the other room]
Yeah, *Bradley*, shut up.

[their voices continue quietly in the background for the rest of this clip]

DREW:

Ugh, finally. Alright, so uh. Today is my... fifth? Yeah, fifth day. I just facetimed Ray, he's got a basketball game later today. He's probably gonna win. I wish I could be there to cheer for him, but... ugh, I don't want to think about all those germs. Who knows how often they wash those bleachers? And who's touched them? Gross.

[sigh, pause]

I guess you heard Bradley and Nathan, playing the Fortnites. Maybe it's just because I'm home all the time now, but it feels like Bradley's been here more often these past few days. He and my brother may be assholes but I hope everything's okay at home for him.

[fast forwarding sound]

Alright, uh, well, that's my day, I guess. Bye, Helen.

[ends recording]

DREW:

Well, uh, I guess I wasn't so crazy to be worried after all.

[dog barking in background]

Batman, shut up!

[dog barks once more defiantly, then shuts up]

Ugh, he's so loud. Anyways, uh. It's day 8. Stuff is shutting down majorly now, school is closed for everyone. Nathan's home, too, and so is dad. Construction work's all been stopped. Luckily mom's still got a job, so hopefully they'll still be able to help pay for CalArts.

[sighs]

I guess-

[door opening sounds, DAD walking into room sounds]

DAD:

Drew, this room is a mess! And did you take your laundry to the laundry room?

[pause]

Is this a new piece you're starting? It looks good!

DREW:

[sighs, irritated]

Yes, Dad. Thanks. I'm in the middle of my... thing. For Helen?

DAD:

Oh. Sorry, kiddo.

[awkward pause]

Just be sure to clean your room when you're done.

DREW:

[irritated]

Okay

DAD:

[leaving]

And don't forget to bring your laundry!

DREW:
[more irritated]
Okay!

[DREW walking to door and closing it forcefully sounds, DREW walking back over to wherever she's recording this sounds]

DREW:
He's been a bit of a pain in my ass these past few days. I know he's just bored too, and wants to feel like he's doing something but... ugh! I just wish he wouldn't bug me so much! I mean, I'm going to *college* next year, you'd think I could handle a little more independence?

[fast forwarding sounds, this is a long rant]

So Max and I are going to do this art thing, where we both do the same prompts each day and send each other the results. I can show you some at our next appointment. I'm really excited about it, actually. I just started mine for today, the prompt is "exotic pet", so I drew Sugar and Cool Whip.

[pause, thinking]

People think it's weird I have rats when I'm a germaphobe, but they're actually really clean animals. Plus, I pay Nathan to clean the cage, so I don't have to deal with their shit or anything. I've been trying to talk to the people at CalArts to see if they'll let me bring them, but they say I'd need to have an emotional support animal letter thing. I guess I can ask you about that at our next appointment, Helen. Um, I think that's actually it. So, uh, bye Helen!

[recording ends]

DREW:
Wow, okay, uh. Weirdly, I have news.

[rushed]
Oh, right! It's day 10.

[not rushed anymore]

Nathan... Nathan came out to me last night? He made me do this stupid TikTok thing with him, and then he just like... I don't know how to explain it. So, uh, I guess my brother's gay. He's been hiding in his room all day today, I think he might feel awkward about it. But I was chill about it! I'm proud of him, I hope my reaction was okay. I mean, some of Jack and Ruby's theater friends are gay, it's not like I've never met a gay person before. I just... I've never had

someone close to me come out to me. I just want him to know that it doesn't change anything, you know? He's still my little brother, and he's still a little fart but I still love him.

[fast forwarding sounds]

So, today's art thing is "flowers", so I, well... I decided to do some rainbow flowers, and give it to Nathan, to show him I support him. I told Max, I know I shouldn't tell anyone but she's my best friend so I had to, and she agreed to do the same, so I'll print her's out for him, too. Her stuff is so cool, I can't imagine drawing on a screen like she does. Maybe we'll try to do a medium swap?

[chuckles a little]

No, I don't have the fancy technology stuff she does, and I doubt she has the right paper for pastels. Um, I've also started dabbling in charcoal a little, it feels more right for the current situation and my mood. We'll see how that goes. Um, I guess that's it for today. Bye, Helen!

[end recording]

[vague yelling in background, DAD about "responsibility" and "chores" (could be specific chores, could not be) and NATHAN about "just a minute" and "get off my ass about this" kinda stuff]

DREW:

Ugh, Dad and Nathan have been going at it for, like, an hour now. If Nathan would actually do anything around the house maybe it wouldn't be so bad... But it's not like Dad has to be so loud and uptight about it.

[sighs]

Anyways, uh, today is day 13. Unlucky number 13. It's been getting really hard, not being able to see people. I really miss Ray and Max, and Bella, and Ruby, and Jack, and Avery, and everybody. Ray and I can FaceTime sometimes, and Max and I swap art, but it's just... not the same, you know? I want to kiss my boyfriend. I want to hug my friends. I want to lay on my best friend's bed and complain about my parents while I pet her cat. I want to cuddle with my boyfriend while he tells me about his basketball stuff and I pretend like I understand half of what he's talking about. I just...

[frustration noises maybe? It's a pause, and she is frustrated which is causing the pause, interpret that how you will]

I miss people, you know?

[another pause, a little sad]

Well, uh. Anyways. Today I finished that essay for Lang, um... I... [can improvise here a little as it trails off, if necessary]

[fast forwarding noises]

I guess there isn't much to report. Uh, the art thing today was crystals. I did it in charcoal again, it's good to practice my shading. I'm starting to enjoy charcoal a lot more. So yeah. Bye, I guess.

[ends recording]

DREW:

So, it's day 17. Mom says I've been too reclusive and moody, but I'm really mostly just bored. I guess I've been sleeping more, but like... who can blame me? It's not like I have anything else to do.

[frustrated sigh]

I'm so sick of hearing Nathan play his stupid videogames. He's still hiding in his room a lot, but the walls here are pretty damn thin. Mom's annoyingly snappy when she's home from work, and Dad keeps hovering and coming in to "check on me" at least once every *hour*. It's infuriating!

[fast forwarding noises]

I guess I'm just... I don't know.

[dog barking in background]

Batman, shut up!

[other family members are also yelling at him almost simultaneously]

DAD:

[yelling to Drew from another room]

Hey, Drew, hun, why don't you take him on a walk?

DREW:

[annoyed sigh, then yelling to DAD]

It's supposed to be Nathan's day to do that.

NATHAN:

[from yet another room]

No, I walked him yesterday! I'm in the middle of a game, anyways.

DAD:

[not as loud, yelling to NATHAN]

You're always in the middle of a game, Nathan, why don't you ever leave your room anymore?

You and your sister hardly ever talk to anybody.

DREW:

[yelling to both of them]

I heard that!

[to mic]

Ugh, I've gotta go deal with Dad or else he'll be on my ass all week. Bye.

[quickly ends recording]

DREW:

Alright, uh, well. Day 21. I have not seen anyone other than family members and Bradley for three whole weeks. I hate this. *God*, I hate this *so fucking much*. I miss my friends.

[sigh]

I guess, well. I'm not doing great. I just... I really miss interacting with people, you know? I miss goofing around in art class with Max, and Mrs. Jason letting it slide because she knows how much art we already do. I miss going on movie dates with Ray and not knowing what happened half the movie because we were making out the whole time. I miss hearing Jack talk about his latest drama shows, and Avery complaining about how much her toes hurt from those damn pointe shoes. I miss visiting Max's cat when she wasn't home and surprising her when she got there, I miss her hugs. I miss watching my boyfriend play basketball and not understanding a thing about the game but using the excuse to look at him. I miss him listening to my rants about random art history shit and that bastard Anish Kapoor even though he doesn't know what the hell I'm talking about half the time. I miss going to San Fran MoMA and de Young and the Cartoon Art Museum with Max and talking about how we could do half the stuff there, and how we would try to make our own when we got home.

[another pause]

I don't even know why I'm still doing this, it's not like I even need your note to get out of school or anything.

[punches pillow and exclaims in frustration sounds]

I don't know anymore. I just... I just don't know. I'm done with this all. This is stupid. I'm done.

[ends recording]

Content Warning: the next part is a s*icide note.

DREW:

Um, alright. Hi Helen. I know I haven't made a recording in a while, uh... Things have gotten pretty bad. I'm sorry, but I couldn't think of a better way to do this. Um, I know HIPAA is a thing and everything, so I'm giving you my permission to share this one with everyone. I've been in isolation for almost two months now, I can't take it anymore.

[deep breath/sigh]

Um. So. I guess this is goodbye.

[brief pause]

Um, mom and dad, I want you to know that this isn't your fault. And I love you. A lot. I'm grateful for everything you've done for me and Nathan, and when he decides to tell you what he told me recently, I hope that you take it well. Um. So, yeah. Please don't blame yourselves, or each other. I love you.

[pause]

Alright, um, I guess Nathan is next. You're a royal pain in my ass, but I love you, too. You're so brave, and I'm so proud of you. Hopefully you'll follow in my footsteps and go to CalArts, you're such a good artist, but I also hope you don't follow me down this path. You're strong, you can make it.

[sigh, pause]

To Ray, I just want to say that I love you. I know I never told you that, but it's true. Hopefully you can move on from me. I know you're going to be a great basketball player, and a great physical therapist, and a great person.

[starting to get choked up a bit]

Max, uh. Max. You're the best friend a girl could ask for. You were always there for me, through thick and thin. You're gonna be the next, fucking, Van Gogh. Wait, no, he wasn't

famous while he was alive, uh... Da Vinci. Monet? We'll go with Monet. Anyways, you're talented. You're amazing. Um...

[takes another deep breath, maybe a sob or two?]

Alright, um. I'm not... maybe I shouldn't do this. Um. I've gotta think about this. So just, uh, ignore this, for now. Bye Helen.

[recording ends]

end of cw

DREW:

Alright, mom says after... everything that happened, I have to start doing these again or she'll take away my phone. Which is stupid, at least I actually help her do stuff around the house and shit. If anyone, she should be punishing Nathan for being an obnoxious little brat. I don't think it's really fair to punish me for... everything.

[pause, sigh]

I don't want to talk about that though. I know now it was a mistake. Um, so. I'm gonna talk about my day.

[pause]

I don't even know what day it is anymore, or how long I've been at this. Today was just like every other day. I slept til, like, noon, then did some art stuff. Took Batman on a walk on the roof, since we're not allowed to leave the building for non-essentials anymore, and apparently walking the dog isn't deemed an "essential", but gun shops are. Gotta love america. Hopefully this will help slow the spread, and we can get back to normal soon. I miss my friends...

[sigh]

Well, uh. She never said how long they had to be. I don't have much else to report, so that'll be it for today. Bye, Helen.

[ends recording]

DREW:

Hey, Helen! Just another update. Uh, Max has been calling every day, so has Ray.

[pause]

Uh, Jack and Rose and Bella have been calling every few days, too. And Avery's been sending me videos of her dancing, which is sweet of her. Bella's sent a few skating videos, too. It's still not the same as seeing them, but it's nice.

[pause]

Max has been sending me a lot of her art, she's trying to get me to get back into it. I'm not sure I'm quite ready yet, but I've been doing a little bit of doodling. We've done some little stuff together, on calls, too. Um. Ray and I have been just kinda chilling together over FaceTime. Since school is over there isn't a whole bunch to do. It would have been nice to have an actual graduation, but I probably would have had another nervous breakdown if we did. Not as bad as... Well. That's behind me now, I'm trying to move on from it. I mean, mom's face when I woke up in the hospital?

[sad sigh]

Um, anyways. I guess that's it. Bye, Helen.

[ends recording]

[end of episode]

Character name: Drew Edwards
Brother is Nathan Edwards (he gay)
Therapist is Helen
School principal is Mr. Watson

Family pet(s): Rats and dog

Albino rats- named Sugar and Cool Whip

Family dog - named Batman Robin Edwards (just called Batman) - Golden Retriever

Art challenge: <https://bybun.com/art/april-30-day-drawing-challenge/>

(day 2 of challenge = day 8 of her quarantine)

Characterization:

- Isolating from beginning
 - Started earlier than other people
 - Wanted to be apart from other people but now other people want to be apart from her
- Germ anxiety- OCD? Anxiety?
- Very social
 - Friends?
 - Isabella- sk8r girl, taking a gap year
 - Ruby- really nice and friendly, going to City College of San Francisco, wants to be a Nurse but didn't get in to where she wanted to go so will transfer later, theater kid (but not really that committed)
 - Avery- really into dance, wants to be ballerina, going to CalArts (wants to room together, Drew absolutely Does Not want that)
 - Jack- only got into 1 safety school so far (1 of 5), top 2 ideal schools said no, (waiting to hear from 6 other schools, some in range schools and some reach schools), theater kid (really bummed about not having senior play)
 - Max- lesbian? Befriended each other in primary school bc both teased for masculine names. Still doesn't know where she's going, got in to everywhere she applied and now doesn't know what to do. Into digital art and tech. Got into CalArts, Cal Tech, and others
 - Interests?
 - Art (traditional)
 - Preferred medium is pastels
 - Art starts getting darker and more abstract
 - Parent or brother makes comment about it in background
 - Moves to charcoal
 - Boyfriend
 - Start to drift apart
 - Raymond (Ray for short) Wilson
 - Likes the sports balls
 - Hoopy ball
 - Golden State Warriors
 - Likes Steph Curry
 - Going to college on basketball scholarship
 - UCSB

- Majoring in sports medicine
 - Tol mans
 - Mom is a single mom
 - Heidi
 - Colleges are close so they're gonna try long-distance
- Senior
 - Live with family
 - Gay brother (closeted but comes out)
 - Best friend who spends a lot of time at their house
 - Bradley
 - They play video games together
 - Fortnite
 - Only plays it bc Bradley likes it
 - Family at home more the farther along it gets
 - Dog barking
 - Parent complaining about cleanliness of room
 - Family friend or sibling's friend talking in background
 - Neighbors?
 - College
 - Decisions
 - Cal Arts
 - Paying for it???
 - Family financial situation?
 - Lower middle class
 - Mom is dental hygienist
 - Dad works in construction
 - How impacted over time?
 - Mom still has job
 - Dad does not
 - Unemployment up to \$450/wk
 - Less than that tho bc mom makes money
 - \$200/wk (= \$10400/yr if continues for a whole year)
 - Tension
 - Not devastating financially, but is ~30% of their income
 - Senior trip cancelled
 - Graduation???
 -
- Audio diary
 - Assignment from therapist
 - Enforced by parents
- San Francisco
 - 3 bedroom apartment

■ Neighbors?

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