

Montserrat Werner

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Introduction to College Writing 101-18

2 November 2021

### To End is Just to Begin

All endings are just beginnings, though it's hard to see it that way at the time. I can see myself, with the eyes of someone who has seen more, who knows more as well, but is still not fully grown, still not seen everything there is to see, or knows everything there is to know, someone who is still learning.

When I moved to Boston and arrived in front of that huge, stone building ironically named Little Building, my college's freshman residence, the sweltering summer had not yet faded into the chill autumn we all adore and pray for to rescue us from the heat. I had never imagined living in Boston, much less studying here, as I had never really heard much about here because what movies glamorize Boston, none that I've seen, and what songs sweetly and proudly sing of Boston, none that I've hummed, and what stories romanticize or fantasize about Boston, none that I've read, and still to this day, Boston remains in the shadows of the bigger, more beguiling cities that peacock themselves to the bright eyed youth of the world who still wear their rose-colored glasses. Boston is a hidden gem, one that, I must admit, I also missed due to the allure of the west coast that shimmers gold in its eternal summer and sunshine, but I realized that gold was not my color, silver suited me much better, and that the heat that radiates from a sun that forever burns in the hottest season humanity has seen is something I cannot stand as I would rather face the harshest winter with the hopes of seeing snow glitter in the early morning

of a Monday before classes than stand on burning asphalt sweating with the shining sun beating down on me after class in the hopes of visiting the beach.

Because of Boston's anonymity and elusion from the media and art, I believed I would suffer much boredom here as I did not think the exploration of this city would last me more than a weekend. I was wrong evidently as I have resided here for over 2 months and have barely scratched the surface of attractions, though this could also be faulted due to my workload and dedication to school, but I ultimately blame my lack of knowledge as the reason I have not gone out much. I have of course gone out and explored minimally, taking the T, Boston's version of the subway, to wherever as long as it took me somewhere new and exciting like the breezy Carson Beach or the colorful Garment District or the historic Boston's Public Library, or the well-known Harvard Campus, which allows you to cross the ever shimmering Charles River, or even just the Fenway Target. The T in and of itself is an attraction to us bright-eyed youths especially those of us who aren't city slickers that have dominated this steel beast and the labyrinth leading to it. But the T and wherever it can take you cannot compare to the experience of walking and wherever it can take you, at least not to me. I have never walked so much and I probably never will again, but as long as I am here I will walk until my feet numb, my legs shake, my stomach aches, and my heart gives out. I will walk in any weather there is be it a day where the blazing sun that beats down on everyone and everything and cause the heat to be visible like a spirit of old, a dark day where gray storm clouds warn us of what is to come soon enough, a day that is swept up in the winds of the sea which I often forget is only a couple of miles away from me, or a day that is completely white and cold where no amount of light can warm the earth. To me walking brings a sense of paradoxical comfort and adventure, a sense of known and unknown. Walking permitted me to not only uncover this new city, which I must start

to call home, but also familiarize myself with it. I have walked the park and gardens so many times I know it better than I know my own college campus as I could walk blindfolded in the dark and still find the carousel before I could find the Lion's Den, my college's cafe that also serves sushi, with a map in broad daylight. To walk and know a place is to have a home, have a safe space, to have a site of reflection, to have an area to mourn and grieve, to have an ending, and to have a beginning.

My walking led me to the gardens at the beginning of my journey here after of course the so ironically named Little Building where I will not just reside, but I will stay up until 3 in the morning in my neighbors', or better known as my closest friends, room laughing so hard I cannot breathe and bonding over shared shows and movies and admitting our high school secretes, I will constantly get complimented and compliment others on the long elevator rides up and down to the 11th floor, I will watch movies while also writing an essay on Sunday nights in the common room, I will playfully tease and get teased by the RAs during film club, I will film and record my first creative projects, and I will make memories that will keep me warm and accompanied when I am cold and alone and that will last a lifetime, though I knew none of this at the beginning on that sunny August day where I was still dealing with an ending, still mourning and grieving even though I did not want to.

I cried juvenile tears that day under a Willow tree because the gardens are so large and filled with so many strangers that it allows for a sense of privacy where my dorm could not. In the grass, under the branches, near the pond, and surrounded by strangers I was alone for the first time and I could grieve and mourn and sob and realize for the first time since I arrived. I was young, I still am, but I was younger then, and I foolishly fought against the feelings that must accompany an ending and a beginning. I wanted nothing more than to just have a beginning, one

that I had been dreaming of since I was learned what college is, since my freshman year of high school, since I worked at the beginning summer, since the week before my flight, but I did not want the ending that also has to come with it. I did not want the goodbyes, did not want the pictures of my friends together, did not want the videos of these same friends bonding with their new friends, and did not want to have to start over. The bright eyed youth is naive, they must be, they have to be because if they were not, they would never leave, never change, never explore or experience, and never become the wise and jaded adults that keep the world turning for them. I was naive. I ignored the ending and only focused on the beginning, not pretending that it did not exist but that it did not affect me, hurt me as it did. It did, of course, and I was forced to face it because I was alone and there was nowhere and no one to run to, and endings cannot disappear because they are necessary for beginnings, so I let my ending and everything that it brings with it consume me until it began to fade gradually. Fade into my beginning and fade into my now.

My ending became my beginning slowly but surely as the summer became the fall little by little, with each leaf individually changing its color on its own time, with every day becoming a little bit chiller, and with the day inching into night. With my beginning, I grew and learned as I will continue to my whole life because beginnings bring endings just like endings bring beginnings, and just like life brings these chances and opportunities to create beginnings and endings, so I will face many more beginnings and endings, I know, and I will, hopefully, face them with a more cultivated and sophisticated outlook each time.

## Acknowledgments

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