

1977

Every Day for Sixteen Years

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Recommended Citation

Turcotte, Vince (1977) "Every Day for Sixteen Years," *Calliope (1954-2001)*: Vol. 1977 , Article 7.
Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/calliope/vol1977/iss1/7>

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Mr. Brenner

EVERY DAY FOR SIXTEEN YEARS

She came down the stairs at 8:15, sharp.
The once white wooden stairs worn smooth
by sixteen years of clockwork morning walks.
Unlike her face, whose lines grew deeper
with time.

She turned the corner, and her heels clicked
rhythmicly down an empty sidewalk in the
morning sun.

Everything was in place, it always was.
The rusting blue mailbox, guarding the
corner of main and maple. Nate the old
shoeshine, setting up shop. And the statue
of General Lee, leading pigeons into battle.

She breathed an automatic "Mornin' Bill"
to the guard at the door of her bank.
8:30 sharp. Time for work.

She filled her place, counter one, window three.
A slow sigh left her. There were always
50 ones, but they had to be counted anyway.
Old Mrs. Daley was the first customer, cashing
her check the government gave her for living.

She ticked with the clock the rest of the day,
feeling each minute drag across her like
a second hand.

Back home it was dinner. Pork and beans on
thursday. An orange Tabby cat ate in the
corner. Old issues of Readers Digest lay
scattered about the room. The steady drone
of the icebox and the clicking of her fork were the
only sounds.

She felt every day for sixteen years was the
same and could never change. she could
not stand anymore.

The empty bottle of pills lay on the floor
next to her. Things had changed.