

## Time to Survive!

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**Abstract:** Jasper Yangchareon is a 34-year-old first-generation graduate student at Cal State LA. As a longtime musician and budding songwriter, he is constantly searching for ways to marry his academic life with his passions. The origin of this poem lies in an attempt to craft a song that touched upon the themes of nostalgia, aging, loneliness, and the crisis of identity unique to his first-gen experience.

I missed the summers at the beach and the long nights in the bar  
I'll never have a home in Beverly Glen with a luxury car  
Where were those girls with whom I'd share the laughter?  
Do they feel like I do now, lost in the ever after?  
Although I've left it all behind, it still feels incomplete  
Now the taste of innocence turns bittersweet  
The good days have ended, adulthood has arrived  
Forget about living, it's time to survive!

Thank you Mom and Dad for your love and sacrifice  
How could my daydreams have been so imprecise?  
Now I'm spending money I don't have to tailor-make my brain  
Reading facts and figures trapped behind a windowpane  
Caught between a waste of time and a weight on your shoulder.  
There's no turning back and there's no moving forward  
I had years to spend, but I forgot to thrive  
Don't think of living, it's time to survive!

Been told tales of salvation and the promise of a new tomorrow  
But I'm trading memories for an immobile sorrow  
Now and then, I'll see someone young who still matters  
Whose spirit has yet to find itself in tatters  
I'm not an entrepreneur and I'm no viral king  
I'm a parasitic bookworm but I don't know anything.

Don't need a million viewers, but one day I'd love to be seen  
Or breathe the air of some place I've never been  
Send me a postcard from Athens to East L.A.  
You can mock me from the comfort of a lovely day  
I could be where you are, but I never took the dive  
While you're having fun, I'm learning to survive!

The more I learn, the less I yearn to live this way  
The dreams you own, you've got to give them up, they say  
In the end, I'll tack on a smile and carry on,  
Because honestly, dreaming big takes too damn long

I'm a wanderer doomed to wander, but I'm lucky to be alive  
One of these days I'll shut up and learn to survive!