Dear Journal,

 Well, this is certainly something I haven't done in a while. By that I mean, write my entries in life in a journal. Seriously, not since grade school has this been a thing with me. Mind you, Twilight's been telling me to get this down, if not for me or her, than as a record for "future pony-generations".

Yeah, considering my world's likely fragged by now, certainly not human generations.

Meh, I suppose I should start from the beginning. Might not make a lot of sense, but hey, that's what editors are for in the literary business, I hear.

 First off, my name is Korin Isumo, (*Kor-in Is-U-Mo*) in the English vernacular. Isumo Korin by Japanese...er, Nieghponies vernacular, I suppose. Around here, I just go by the translation of my given name, Advent. And for the record, most just call me Ven, it's less awkward and makes me sound like less of an ass. Not like I'm saying my real name, the one my parents gave me...the real me died back on earth, near as I can tell.

And I suppose that's as good a place as any to start, the day I died. The same day I'm pretty sure the world ended...and if it didn't it certainly left me behind.

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 It was a normal day, normal for me anyway. Winter of 2012 AD, December 20th according to my computer's clock when I logged on with my breakfast. I'd been mostly unemployed for over 5 months now, no new jobs really coming up after a real disappointment with the Dog Hotel across town...granted, I'm allergic, but my bank account sure didn't care given how broke I was at that point. Granted, it was near Christmas time again, so plenty of fun stuff was headed my way. Dear mom was kinda dense, ordering my presents on my own E-Bay account, when those order receipts were sent to me anyway, and I could track them even! Most of the missing Core Medals from my Kamen Rider OOOs collection were coming, only Shouta combo had yet to make it in the house.

 My OOOs collection was my second priority though, it was my Kamen Rider Double collection that I prided myself on. The Double Driver Super Best was a godsend, with my Lost Driver and Eternal Memories coming cheep from a guy on E-bay several months back. With The Trigger Magnum and Fang DX Memory from my last Con visit, I had nearly all the Memories and Belts I wanted. Granted, I still had a long way to go with the Weapons, but so long as I had my main belts, it was all good. I'd had to mod them of course, one with as large a gut as me doesn't fit the standards for those belts...ever...

 I remember looking through my e-mail and IMs, seeing my buddy Drew having sent me a cute message, simply saying this.

"Happy End of the World buddy!! Still on for the bet about how many crazies off themselves today?"

Me, being the spiteful, disillusioned shit I was, replied, "Meh. I'm not risking the cash, plus, we'll get the totals by Christmas, so I think we should save that present for later."

 Normally, I'm not that mean spirited, but given my rash of bad luck with employment, my broke bank thanks to holiday shopping, and the knowledge that some people actually believed another hokey dooms-day prophesy, kinda had my day hosed from the outset. I managed a College degree in Psychology, with honors, with no debt to my name by this point. Naturally, I valued hard work, planning, and intelligence. Seeing so many doing the opposite just hit my buttons something fierce...though usually, that only came out in the privacy of my room. Of course, no debt wasn't going to save me from being a burden to my mom, who still didn't charge me rent so long as I helped her' keep house' like I did. I swear, woman is part saint, part psycho, and all kinds of incredible to put up with me and my siblings.

 Quick aside, yeah, 3 little sisters...and they were all home for the holidays...guess how much estrogen I was swimming in? I hid in my room, just to get away from flaring tempers since no-one wanted to go out today of all days, or so I thought.

I'll never forget the time it was when everything went down.

 2:37PM Eastern Standard time, New Jersey time zone, you know? ...on second thought, no you likely don't. Never mind, it's a human thing. I'd just gotten into a great comedy story when I heard it.

 At first, I thought someone had crashed outside, and I mean massive car crash. Naturally, I ran into the living room and peaked out of the window.

I was half-right.

 A car was smoldering out there, completely blown-up right outside my house. Right there my breath picked up and I called out into the house.

"GUYS!! Seriously, we got a HUGE problem outside right now!!!"

 The youngest two, 14 and 17 respectively, came down the steps rapidly and the older cursed a blue-streak seeing that wreck out front. I knew mom was still at work, over an hour's drive at the main branch of her bank...needless to say, I questioned her sanity heavily, but also knew she was nowhere near this danger for now. I looked to the older of the two, saying, "Ok, cool it a sec, where's T? Isn't she upstairs with you?"

 My stomach sank when she scowled and said, "No, she left with Kev earlier, said they'd be back soon. I swear, things are going insane out there, and she's out with that boy!" Now, mind you, Kev was, is...meh, tense be damned, a complete goof-ball. Well meaning, and he certainly has a good heart, but his upper story can leave something to be desired despite his Nerd cred...in short, he fit into our family like the little brother I never had...and made me sorry I ever wished for one sometimes, all in one fell swoop too.

 I shook my head, "*Mataku*, alright, can you call those two to see if they're ok? Hopefully they'll answer..." I trailed off as I pulled out my cell-phone, shooting off two quick texts while my sisters went to get their own. Afterwards, I dialed T's number, only for it to hit her voicemail. I left a message, and told my sisters to keep trying. By that time, I noticed the time, 2:50Pm.

 I sometimes had an odd fixation with time, though other times, I ignored it entirely. When something was interesting, it had my whole attention, world be damned. Other times, I'd be stuck checking the clock compulsively, especially when stressed. As for right now, I watched helplessly, as my sisters sent texts and alternated calling their cells. Honestly, I went back into my room then, typing off a quick message to my buddy.

"Dude, somebody CAREBOMBED my STREET!! Right in front of my HOUSE!! Seriously, I thought the crazies stayed in the cities!"

His reply was less than re-assuring, "Get the fuck in the basement dude! If they're that close, then you don't want them knowing where you are!"

 I was scared, nothing like this ever happened. I lived in the closest thing to Ponyville New Jersey had as far as I knew. A small little nowhere town, with the only traffic coming from being near the highway. Nothing big ever happened here, and nowhere near as often with the small or medium things. Granted, it had its problems, but I'd never had to deal with anything like this!

Moving from my computer, I looked to my cell. 2:55PM.

 Moving to my closet, I picked out black cloths: T-shirt, sweatpants, sneakers, and a jacket to go over it. I paused, and put my Lost Driver on too. I wasn't an idiot, I knew nothing would change with it on, but the weight around my middle was comforting. I picked up my Fang memory, which had no batteries at the time, and transformed it, slotting it into the driver. I struck a nervous pose, "Heh, Kamen Rider Fang, *Kenzan!*" I chuckled a bit, feeling silly, but desperate to laugh. Zipping up my jacket, I moved to the living room and called to my sisters.

"Guys, keep trying to get them, and let mom know what happened. I'm gunna hoof it to Kev's place, see if I can get a hold of them and bring them back. I've got my key, so stay in the basement until I get back with them. Should be easy with his car."

 I didn't wait for a reply, already knowing this was a stupid idea. I ran out using the back door, making sure it was locked before making my way to the sidewalk. I was moving at a decent walk, knowing I'd tire out a lot sooner if I went full tilt, and just make a more noticeable target. Normally, I'd have had my I-Pod in my ears, but I had them perked for even the faintest sound of life around me. Looking around, no one else was on the road at all. No cars, no sounds of traffic, and certainly no one as terminally stupid as me walking, dead silence.

 The walk was longer than I remembered, going for what felt like an hour, counting the hill, before I got to Kev's street. I'd only been there a couple times, but his place was familiar to me, and his car stuck out. Nice little junker, hard to miss given that so many of the kids around town had new stuff due to rich parents or abuse of credit.

 As I got to his house though, I knew something was wrong. The front door was OPEN! No one, not even Kev and T were that foolish. I crept up through the doorway, ears peeled for anything. It wasn't five steps in before I head thumping, crashing objects, and yelling from upstairs. I moved as quietly as I could, surprisingly so for a big guy like me. I soon found the disturbance, three older teens were harassing T and Kev, one with a crowbar and the other two without viewable weapons. It didn't take a rocket scientist to figure out what they were after, given how Kev was beaten up and T was huddle in the corner, seemingly unhurt but terrified.

 I can't honestly say what I was thinking passed that point. They didn't see me coming, and while I'm hardly strong, it doesn't take a lot of strength to crack someone's head against the wall enough to stun them. The first one went down easily, bleeding from the head, I remember that much. The second guy shouted, but I'd already had his head in a lock and I heaved hard, twisting until I felt something pop. The third guy had the crowbar, but I took the blow with my left arm. Mind you, pretty sure it broke, but I've had that before and still was hungry enough to have my family feed me two hot dogs before heading to the ER. Here...I was hungry for justice...or my equivalent at the time. I soon had the crowbar in my own right hand, after a swift kick between his legs. I swung hard and knocked him into the wall as well. I remember heaving, I couldn't feel my left arm, but I could have cared less. I looked to my sister, my voice was rough, and I could barely register speaking.

 "Grab him and get going, head for the house, and don't stop for anything." I dropped the bar and fished out my key, handing it to her and getting her out of there. Her strength was enough to get Kev on his feet and hobble out. Meanwhile, I picked the bar back up and moved to follow. I think I made it past the front yard before I lost my rush and shock wore off. I hurt worse than anything I could remember, the previous arm injury couldn't have been this bad, if the pain was any judge. It felt like everything, muscles and bone were in little pieces, and I swear I nearly lost my sight it was so bad. I was barley hobbling, and my other senses were shot. I was lucky I wasn't screaming by that point, and I'd like to think some part of my didn't want to, so that T wouldn't turn around trying to help me when she already had Kev to worry about.

 It might have been a few minutes, or an hour, all I knew was that not long after, an impact hit me from behind. I was stunned again, shock was coming over me, but I could only look down. My gut felt hot, and my driver was wet with my blood and fat. In no way was I prepared for this, my mind had all but shut-down. I remember turning enough to see what looked like someone from Kev's house. My guess is, one of them woke up and had a gun. Needless to say, I wasn't going much further.

 I want to say I pulled one last one-liner. Or even charged him with my last breath. Hell, I'd have settled for just one good glare to send the fucker off as I died. Instead, the only thing on my mind, the only thing I could think of as I fell to the ground, face stunned as I lay dying was this.

'Gods above, I hope they made it home safe.'

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I'm no saint, and a lot of people back home are big into religion. Me, I have a simple policy that worked for me for a good chunk of my life.

Fact 1.) People, by and large are stupid. Either by lack of knowledge, or willful misuse and abuse of it.

Fact 2.) Further back into history you get, the more ignorant stupid you get.

Fact 3.) The more modern day you get, the more willful stupid there is.

Fact 4.) Anything that holds "Secrets beyond life" from the past, assume it's connected to Fact 2.

Fact 5.) Any "Secrets from beyond" in modern day, assume it pertains to Fact 3 and move on.

 I took what I needed of morality, of trying to be a good person, and wishing well on others, and applied it without adhering to any belief system other than my five facts. I figured any benevolent creator would forgive me for not trusting my fellow man who'd dropped the ball too many times over the centuries. And one who wasn't...well, then I'd flip him the bird as I roasted, simple as that. And in the event of no God? Meh, I'd be dead, if I somehow was able to worry about that then? Nothing I did in life was gunna change that, I'd wager.

Now, imagine my surprise at waking up...no seriously, I woke up. I got up off my back, belt somehow still around my waste, blood covered and all. But the gut wound was gone...I checked my pockets...nothing else in them, no wallet, cell-phone, or even my I-Pod I brought with me. I still felt my back being a pain, as I figured I was asleep on what felt like stone. My cloths had a hole in them, and I could see my fat gut, slightly hairy, but still intact, no scar even. Looking around, there was nothing but white. I couldn't see anything but white, and myself. Needless to say, my shoes became the second most interesting thing I'd witnessed, my hands being the first. I moved into a crawling position, attempting not to be sick, and crawled forward...I think. I wasn't sure why I was moving, only that I had tears streaming down my face. It hurt to breath, it hurt to think, it hurt to be alive when I knew for a fact I shouldn't be. It wasn't long before I started heaving, my body was shaking as I sobbed, confused as all get out as I was stuck in the white space. You'd cry too if you'd just been shot, died while hoping against hope someone you loved had gotten away to safety. I didn't feel any meal coming up though, which made little sense because I know I had breakfast.

 Last I checked, it had been a little after 3:30Pm before the whole thing at Kev's happened. So, by all rights, I should have been puking something. I think I lost consciousness for a time, because I woke up, all cried out, and still in the white place. My front was crusty, dried blood and such would do that. I had nothing to change into, and of course, I was a bit beyond fashion in a pure white zone that hurt my eyes to look at. Slowing my breathing, I sat down, crossed my legs, and closed my eyes. Meditation was not something I did often, but I'd learned to do it as one of my later courses in Psychology, found out I was pretty good at it too. I was, at this point, simply putting all thought out of my head, trying to get back my center. Naturally, that was not working so well, every cell of my body ached, though from what I could tell, I was in normal health for me. Granted, my right wrist was having a bad day with my arthritis...at age 23...but still, better than some days.

 When I opened my eyes again...well, there was an outline. Mind you, a white on white outline isn't much to go on. In fact, I'd go so far as to say it was only my own vision being used to the white expanse so far, that got me to notice it. I moved towards it, crawling as I had to avoid the dizziness, and felt it. It was, in fact wood from what I could feel. And I could just make out a knob. Naturally, I turned the sucker, thinking I'd found a way out. And I certainly did...

Right out into the freaking blue sky that looked like a cartoon.

 Naturally, I stared in stunned fascination, I was so far past scared I couldn't feel fear anymore. After you die, you tend to get that surreal feeling like nothing could possibly top what you just experienced. I could feel the wind; cold, crisp, and rather sweet if thin. I have never had the best sight, but I could tell I was above cloud level, and the expanse of it stretched well beyond my horizon. Looking out at it all, I had a good grip on the knob with my right hand. So when I felt that push knocking me forward, I should have been able to pull myself back in before I lost all balance.

 Naturally, my wrist decided to bum out on me and I let go, falling right out into the sky. I'll spare you the details of how much cursing, screaming, and generally a mess I made of myself. I'll just say I had enough presence of mind to spread myself out like skydivers do and try to slow myself...also, I found fear again. Funny, never thought I'd die a second time in less than a few hours of the first. Also..high up? I had a jacket for winter...I was still freezing cold and lost feeling in my face about the same time I found I couldn't scream much given the air quality. My eyes were shut quickly, and I could feel tears cooling rapidly before the wind took them away as I fell.

I'm pretty sure my last sensation was being tackled in mid-air...and passing out again. This time, my final thought was rather ironic, given it was the same thought a plant in Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy had.

'Oh no, not again.'