

No connection

Carrie

Carrie pulled up to the curb of their tiny ranch styled home, and turned on the car lights. She slouched back in the driver's seat and turned on the orange dim light on the ceiling of her car. It hurt her eyes a little bit but her head hurt too much to do anything about it. It was another rainy night, and another double shift at the hospital. Once she had collected herself she got out of the car and slowly walked up to their house, rain splashing on her scrubs. She jiggled her keys into the lock hole until they fit, and slowly opened the door because she didn't want to wake her sleeping son with the loud creaks of their old rusty door. She places her work bag by the side of the door and flopped onto the couch, falling fast asleep.

Luca

By the time Luca woke up, his mom was already gone at work. He doesn't get to see her as often now that she works extra. He was excited today though. It was the first time his mom would get to come to his track meet. She was getting off work early and had just enough time to make it before Luca started his race. When he got to school he met up with his friend, Mason.

“Hey Luca, you excited for today?” he said.

“Yeah, I think I'll do good.” Luca replied. “How about you, do you think you're ready?”

“I'm not sure, I'm excited though but my grandma is coming to watch me today, she might embarrass me to death.”

Luca just smiled, as Mason began to complain about how embarrassing it is to have your family cheering for you in front of the whole school.

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“You're so lucky that no one comes to watch you, it saves you from the humiliation.”

Lucas' smile faded as he agreed awkwardly, even though he was thinking the complete opposite. Luca never had his mom come to the meets. He hated watching all the other parents run to their kids after they finished the race and he hated that all the competitors felt bothered by that. Did they realize what a privilege it is to have someone support you and feel proud of you?

After school luca got changed and walked down to the track, he made sure to get there a little early so he could scout out his mom. Although his mom was supposed to be there at 4:30 and it was only 4:15, he kinda thought she would be there early to surprise him. He began to stretch and watch the school committee put up a bright yellow banner with the words “first meet of 2022” in red dripping paint, obviously made by the students. After that families and athletes slowly started to trickle in. He decided to call his mom just to check in, but it went straight to voicemail.

Carrie

During her lunch break she found herself dozing off and zoning in and out. When Carrie was little she always wanted to work in the healthcare field and she knew the sacrifices she'd have to make. But it was becoming a lot to handle. When she woke up from what she thought was a quick 5 minute rest she realized her lunch break had been over for an hour. She quickly collected all her stuff and ran back across the street to the hospital. She tried to hurry back into her assigned room but her boss, Mary, was waiting outside the door. Carrier let out a little sigh as she walked up to her boss.

“We need to talk,” Mary said. Carre nodded and followed Mary to her office. Carrie knew exactly what was coming. She's been dreading it but all the mistakes she's been making add up, and just like that she was fired. She tried to keep a brave face as she walked out of the hospital but it began to break when she got in the car and thought of luca. Tears filled her eyes as she pulled out onto the main road. Her vision foggy and her tears making a shield over her eyes. She blinked heavily to get rid of the tears, not noticing that she was driving through a red light. Suddenly a red pick up truck sped right into the side of the car. The truck made the car fold in half, Carrie's side hanging off and spinning on the ground. Her windows shattered and her body stretched across the front half of the car. Her head felt like it was twisting and her heart felt like it flew out. No feelings to feel, no pain anymore, just an empty soul as she faded and blacked out.

Luca

His race started in 10 minutes, and luca was panicking. He tried calling his mom but once again it went to voicemail. Luca felt like he was being silenced. But the silence was too loud in his head. How could he hold so much in when there was so much to say, so many feelings to show.

Soon after it was time for his 400 meter race. He lined up at the starting block and crouched into the starting position. Once he heard the gunshot go off he sprinted down the track. Each step gets faster and faster. The faster he went the more anger he let out. His competitors were far behind him as he crossed the finish line and won first place.

Carrie

Carrie woke up to herself laying in the back of an ambulance. She wasn't fully conscious but she was still worrying about Luca. "I...I need to call him, I need to call my son," she said. "Give me the phone." The medics in the back of the ambulance told her it was going to be ok and that her son was probably fine. "Please I just need to let him know." Carrie was desperate. The medic began to say, "We need you to stay calm, we can alert your son as soon as we get to the hospital." "Please! I just need to call him. I'm begging you." Carrie was getting frustrated with the medics. She said that if she got one call she would finally calm down, so the medics gave in. Carrie entered Luca's number into the phone and waited as it rang. Tears rolled down her face once again as she realized he wasn't going to pick up. She waited for the "beep" and left a voice message. "Hi Luca, it's mom. I know I haven't been around lately and I'm very sorry. I try so hard to give you a perfect life, the life I never got to have. Instead of helping, I tore everything apart. I miss how close we used to be and I miss you. Good luck during your race, I know you'll do amazing." She decided not to tell Luca about the accident because she didn't want to mess him up for the race.

Luca

When he crossed the finish line his teammates and coaches ran over to congratulate him. Luca was panting and crouched over while everyone was huddled around him cheering. At the time nothing else seemed to matter to Luca. It was like he was in his own little world where everyone listened to him and everyone praised him. "Well done Luca, that's the fastest I've seen anyone on my team ever run, I didn't know you had it in you." his coach told him. At the end of the meet the coach gathered all of his team together on the track for a picture. "Hold on, we're missing an important part, guys go grab your parents and tell them to get down here in the picture!." Luca's heart shattered, he watched all his teammates run up to the stands and hug their parents. He got

angry again and ran off the track, he grabbed his stuff and took the back way out of the field so know one could see him leave. He snuck behind the bleachers and peaked through the openings to see his team gathered together for the picture. No one was looking for him, did anyone even notice he was gone? His 5 seconds of glory was over and he was back to the normal sad luca. He felt so many different emotions at once and couldn't keep them in anymore. He recorded a voice message to his mom. "You missed my race...again. I did good if you care to know. I don't see why you care though. You don't call, or even text me. You just leave. It's my fault, it was silly to think that you would show up. Everyday I wait for you to come home and everyday I think that maybe you'll walk through the door happy to see me. I don't care for your excuses anymore. I DON'T CARE THAT YOU WORK DOUBLE SHIFTS, I DON'T CARE THAT YOUR A SINGLE MOM, AND I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOU." Luca shouted into his phone and cried. As he walked home he listened to the voicemail over and over again. Of course he wasn't going to send it but he felt like his mother deserved to hear it. As he listened to the voicemail he noticed an unopened one that was sent to him from a Philadelphia hospital number. He opened it and listened to the sad soft voice of his mother and regretted everything he had said.

PART 2

When Luca got to the hospital he ran up to his mother's room faster than how he ran in his race. He saw his mother laying on the hospital bed with bruises and scratches all over her face. He went over to hug her for the first time in a while. Her touch was so gentle even though she felt so broken. "I'm sorry, I'm so sorry." She whispered. "I love you so much mom, and I always will. I never stopped loving you. Please remember that."

Artist statement

In my story, “No Connection,” I decided to make two different perspectives. One for Carrie, a single mom, and one for Luca, the son. These two have very different ideas of what it means to be a family. Carrie thinks working hard and providing for her family to have a perfect life is more important while Luca wants to focus on spending more quality time with his mom. By using these characters it sets up a problem that needs to be faced in order for the characters to figure out what family truly means. Carrie and Luca have an emotion reuniting at the hospital where they discover the most important thing is the love they have for each other. Even though they have their disagreements and sacrifices they have to make, they never stop loving each other.

There are many different important parts of the story that help move the story along, one of them being dramatic irony. We can see this occur on page 3 in Lucas' chapter when he tries to call his mom. The audience knows that Carrie got into a car accident and doesn't have access to her phone, but Luca does not. This leads Luca to get angry and assume his mom is abandoning him, which affects Luca's character feeling throughout most of the story.

Other important techniques are Thoughtshot, Snapshot, and dialogue. “She tried to keep a brave face as she walked out of the hospital but it began to break when she got in the car and thought of Luca. Tears filled her eyes as she pulled out onto the main road.” is an important snapshot because it shows how much Carrie loves Luca. This also ties back to the essential question, “what does it mean to be a family?”, and how they both interpret that in different ways.

Snapshots are used to stretch out and exaggerate a scene. This can happen on page 3 in Carrie's chapter. “Suddenly a red pickup truck sped right into the side of the car. The truck made the car

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fold in half, Carrie's side hanging off and spinning on the ground. Her windows shattered and her body stretched across the front half of the car. Her head felt like it was twisting and her heart felt like it flew out. No feelings to feel, no pain anymore, just an empty soul as she faded and blacked out." I choose to exaggerate this part because this scene is the most important and dramatic part of the story. By using this as a snapshot it helps emphasize the impact it has on the story

The last technique is dialogue. There is lots of dialogue in this story but an important one is when Luca is recording the voice message to his mom. "You missed my race...again. I did good if you care to know. I don't see why you care though. You don't call, or even text me. You just leave. It's my fault, it was silly to think that you would show up. Everyday I wait for you to come home and everyday I think that maybe you'll walk through the door happy to see me. I don't care for your excuses anymore. I DON'T CARE THAT YOU WORK DOUBLE SHIFTS, I DON'T CARE THAT YOU'RE A SINGLE MOM, AND I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOU." This shows all the emotions Luca has been building up through the story and how he chooses to show them. This also relates to the motif of feeling disconnected.

A motif I choose for my story is disconnection, which has many meanings relating to the story. The most obvious reason being, Luca can't properly express his feelings to his mom because of how their relationship and bond has faded. They both feel like because they aren't close anymore, they can't talk to each other directly about how they're feeling. This is one of the reasons they communicate through voice mail. This can also be a play on words relating to the title. The motif can show how both of their phones go straight to voicemail, like there's no connection/ reception.