

Chris

Chris looked down at the papers that he had just spilled coffee on. *Terminal*, it read on it.

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He had just gone to the doctor's office the day before to see what the problem was. He felt like his body was deteriorating for the past couple of months and it kept getting worse. Chris didn't want to tell his wife, May, because he didn't want to make her feel worried about him and the child that has been forming in her for the past 8 and a half months. As soon as May started to notice Chris's difficulties that came with this sickness, (he had trouble sleeping, walking, and even trying to think was a problem) he finally got his act together to get himself checked out.

When he got home from the doctor's office he decided to rest after a long day of worrying. He felt better than usual the next morning, he even slept an extra 30 more minutes than most days when he woke up to cough up blood. He walked to the kitchen to whip up some coffee for him and his wife. He heard a knock on the door so he walked over a few feet to the door still tired from the nice sleep. At the doorstep he was greeted with a letter from his doctor's office. He was somewhat worried about the results but tried to stay hopeful. He took his freshly made coffee and hopped on a seat tearing the envelope open. When he slowly slid the paper out of the envelope his eyes immediately locked on to the word terminal then moved to the left a millimeter seeing the terrifying word called cancer. His heart fell to the floor as well as his coffee cup and the coffee. He didn't hear the coffee cup shatter into a billion pieces, in fact he didn't hear anything. Everything went silent. He was so hyper focused on the paper that he could have sworn it spoke to him. Saying the words Terminal Cancer over and over again.

He didn't think that his sickness was that bad, especially not terminal cancer bad. He thought that maybe if he got himself looked at earlier then maybe his life would have been

salvageable. But the more he dove deeper into the rabbit hole of worries the more his stomach felt like it was being lit on fire. He didn't know what to do or say.

May

May rose up from her bed very slowly but with an urgency due to hearing a loud sound of shattering on the floor, she turned to her left hoping to see her beloved husband beside her but of course he wasn't, she hasn't woken up to him lying beside her for many months, so many her memories of when she woke up next to him were starting to fade. She got up as fast as she could and waddled over to the kitchen with her stomach, the size of a watermelon popping out of her like when a child shoved a balloon up their shirt. She turned into the kitchen to see Chris looking down at a paper covered in a shattered ceramic mug as well as coffee that looked to be still hot noticing the steam coming up from where the coffee is.

“Chris? What are you doing?” she saw him look up, scared.

“Oh, um,” there was a large pause as if he didn't even know what he was doing, “no nothing, nothing at all. The mug was just really hot. That's all.”

“Sure, and what's with paper?” May asked, waving her hand in the area of the spill.

“That, that's from work.”

“Work?” May knew that the paper wasn't from work but she was too exhausted to question Chris any longer.

Chris

Chris drove into the doctor's office only a few hours after getting his letter in the mail. He wanted to feel reassured, he wanted to know if the doctor made a mistake in saying that he had terminal cancer, or maybe the cancer was treatable and forgot to type it onto the letter.

Once he got there he rushed past the check in when the nurse yelled at him, “Hey!” she said urgently, “where do you think you're going.”

Chris ignored her. He began to run because he could feel her eyes on the back of his head that the nurse was trying to catch up to him. It became a game of tag, the nurse was it and trying to desperately catch up to Chris while Chris, despite himself bolted away from the nurse and was almost at his doctor's door.

He knocked. No one answered. The doctor was right beside him, “Chris? What are you doing here, I don't remember scheduling an appointment.”

The nurse came up behind him out of breath, “He didn't. He walked right past the desk,” The nurse said, seemingly disappointed in herself for not catching up to him in time.

The doctor looked him in the eyes with a bit of guilt spilling out of him, “It's alright, I'm not too busy,” his doctor said, leading Chris into the office.

The door shut and there was a full minute of silence before the doctor spoke. The room felt empty and cold. Chris had no clue what to say. He couldn't get the words out of him so he just looked around waiting for the doctor to speak.

“So,” the doctor sighed, “I suppose you're here because of the letter I mailed last night?”

The room got colder after the doctor had said that. “Yea, yep, I just wanted to confirm these results,” he raised the paper up from his lap showing the doctor, “maybe you mis-typed something.”

“I can double check the results but sadly I-”

“Yea that would be great,” he said, his voice a little unsteady after thinking about what the doctor would have said if he didn't interrupt him.

The doctor nodded his head and started to walk out of his office to look at the results leaving Chris all alone to weep.

The doctor came in 10 minutes later with a face that looked like it was about to deliver the worst news of Chris's life and that's exactly what that face did.

May

May has known Chris for over 10 years of her life and never has anything felt off to her about him until these past few months, especially this past week. The house felt emptier, like someone she loved very dearly had left her.

She felt that once before with her mom and dad, they left her when she was just a child but it hurts to think about so she pushed that feeling deep into the back of her head and besides she will soon have the greatest family she could ever wish for with a baby on the way and an amazing husband. Or so she thought.

The door opened and Chris walked in, "Where were you?" May asked. Chris ignored her walking straight into the bedroom. He looked pale as if he had just heard the worst news of his life. May could recognize that face anywhere she had been there before.

She sprinted as fast as she could to the bedroom despite herself. When she got there he was already in bed looking to be asleep but just to make sure, she tapped him. He didn't wake up. She slapped and punched him. He didn't wake up.

The ambulance came in under 10 minutes and took him away. Later that day Chris woke up. May was so fed up, with so many things to say but the only words she could spit out were, "So the doctors told me about your cancer," she said in a snarky tone but she didn't mean it that way. She wanted him to regret not telling her but couldn't because she regretted not noticing earlier.

Chris

Chris noticed May's eyes become glossy, so glossy he could see his own reflection in them. A tear slipped out of her left eye and fell on to the rough blankets given to him by the nurse. She opened her mouth, hesitant. He thought he should say something first.

“I know, I should have said something way earli-” she cut him off.

“No.” May said very softly, “no, don't put the blame on yourself. Not now,” Chris could hear sympathy in her voice.

“But if I told you and the doctors I felt sick earlier on then maybe-” May cut him off again.

“Stop! This isn't the time.”

“Maybe I would be able to see our son grow up, if I wasn't such an idiot,” he said more urgently watching his May slowly deteriorate from the inside. May truly cared for Chris way more than he ever cared for her, if he did care for May then he would have told her about his illness before he found out it was terminal cancer.

At that moment he realized that he found his family, the one he always wanted, the one he never realized he had, and now it is being stripped away from him.