

## Room 3115

Allen sat in his room in Scottish Rite Hospital for Children. He looked out at the Dallas skyline thinking about that night 3 months ago when the bad man took his Mommy, and put him in the hospital. As much as he wanted to think about his Mommy, he couldn't help but be sad that he had didn't have his leg anymore.

He remembered that he cried when he was told about her. He had a hard time accepting that Mommy was dead. He had never lost anyone before, the closest he had come was when he his family dog went to go and live with that family that had the farm last year.

David looked over at the seven year old Allen wondering what could be going on in his mind. He felt sorry for the kid. He couldn't even begin to imagine what it would be like to have lost his mother, his mother being such a strong and important part of his life and his recovery for as long as he could remember. He felt sorry for the kid and wanted to try to reach out to him in some way.

In the other bed of the room slept Douglas. David really couldn't believe that he was stuck in the same room as that one. Douglas was loud, annoying, obnoxious, and worst of all, two. Why the hell would they place a two year old kid in a room with a thirteen year old? A seven year old was bad enough, but two? Okay, so the hospital was pretty full, but still it was annoying to have him there.

Right as David was thinking of Allen, Allen started crying in his usual loud voice. "Guess sleeping is out of the question now." thought Allen as he tried to roll over. In doing so he hurt his hip that had been operated on the previous day. He called the nurse for some pain medication.

David almost laughed at Allen's response to Douglas' yells of "Not again! If you stop holding it in, you'll stop hurting ya baby! Then maybe we could get some sleep."

The nighttime nurse came and gave David his injection for the pain, and then went to attend to Douglas who was still screaming. "Well," David thought as he was drifting off, "the pain meds kill the pain, and let me sleep through that kid."

David woke up to the morning rounds. He didn't particularly like his Doctor. He knew he was good. He just hated the way the Doctor treated him like a piece of meat and referred to him as if he wasn't there.

"This patient's hip surgery went well; we had to break the bone to replace..." The Doctor started.

"The patient has a name you know." David said rudely.

"Yes of course Daniel, so post-op views of the..." Daniel basically tuned out the Doctor at this point and turned his attention to Allen who was staring out the window again. "He sure seems to like to look out the window a lot. Guess the poor kid has a lot on his mind."

Doctor went over to Douglas, who as usual started crying immediately. "So how has this patient getting along?"

Nurse Nancy answered, "His chart states he has been crying a lot due to severe constipation. We haven't been able to get him to go on his own for several days now. It shouldn't be related to his neurological issues. His parents stated that he didn't have this problem before his surgery a couple of weeks ago."

"Give him some strong laxatives to force him to go, if that doesn't work by tomorrow morning give him an enema." Douglas understood enema and began to cry even harder and screamed, "I don't wanna go! Don't hafta go! Won't go! No! No! No!"

David rolled his eyes and Allen pulled the pillow back over his head and groaning said, "Why did you have to tell him *that*?" Nurse Nancy went over to Douglas and gave him comforting pat on the back and followed Doctor out of the room. Douglas continued to cry uncontrollably.

"Shut up you baby!" Allen called out.

"He's just a little kid Allen, he doesn't understand. Besides you cry here too sometimes"

"Not loudly." Allen said quietly. "Want to go to the game room and get out of here?"

"Sure." Allen got into his wheelchair while David got into his wheeled cart that allowed him to roll around while not upsetting his aching hip. "How have you been getting along in P.T.?"

“I’m getting along okay I guess. Missy told me that I could be ready to go home in few weeks. Daddy is making sure that the new place will be okay for me. Bigger doors and ramps and things for my wheeling chair.”

“My parents keep telling me that they will have to do that for me too. They keep telling me that I won’t be walking again. But, come one we know the doctors can be wrong.”

“Yeah, just like when Daddy says Mommy won’t be coming back because she will. I just hope that when my Mommy gets back she will find our new place.”

David stopped rolling his cart and looked over at David who was looking at the full game room with a disappointed look on his face.

“Allen, your mother, well, she isn’t coming back. She’s dead.”

“Uh-uh. Daddy just said that the bad man took her. She’ll come back!”

“Um... what your father meant by that was that your mother died in the car crash. Come on, you know that’s true. How many times have we told you that?”

“No, the bad man just took her. She’ll be back.” Then Allen rolled off much faster than David could keep up.

“Your father meant that the driver of the other car killed her! That’s what taking her meant! Allen! Damn it I can’t go that fast in this thing.”

“David watch your language!”

“Sorry Nurse Nancy. It’s just Allen can’t accept that his mother is dead.”

“Well honey, sometimes it is hard for us to not accept things when they are staring us in the face. We just don’t want to accept them. Even if we know deep down that it’s true. Allen knows somewhere that she isn’t coming back. Just like somewhere in you, you know that...”

“I know what?”

“Uh. Well, you know that what Doctor says is true about you.”

“Doctors have been known to be wrong. Doctor was even wrong about me before, when he said that I wouldn’t be back for more hip surgeries.”

“And now we know why you needed more surgeries, David we have gone over this. You are older than Allen; you should know it is true.”

“What that I’m never going to walk again? That I’m stuck in a wheelchair forever? We don’t know that. Although I will admit that it doesn’t look likely. I’m not going to give up.”

“It’s not about giving up. It’s about accepting. You broke your hip again when you were trying to walk. You know it takes months for that to heal up. Plus you are missing school and breaking your mother’s heart when she sees you like this.”

“But, give up? Quit? I’ve never quit anything!”

“It isn’t quitting. It’s just acceptance.”

“Once I accept it, I also accept that this will be it, no more changes.”

Nurse Nancy looked at David sadly, as she walked away she said, “True, but you constantly won’t be hurting yourself either.”

Okay, so I won’t stop hurting myself. That would be nice. Not having to put the people I love through this seeing me go through this would be great. I wouldn’t spend so much time here either.

All of those thoughts were going through David’s mind as he went back to his giving up trying to catch up with Allen who could be anywhere in the hospital by now. When he got in his room the curtain was around Douglas’ bed. It didn’t smell good in his room and a nurse was cooing to Douglas about what a good boy he was. David guessed that the threat of an enema scared Douglas into finally going. “Thank God.”

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Allen had managed to find the little chapel in the hospital. He rolled off to a corner and began to cry. Somewhere within him he knew that David was right. He really didn’t want to admit it. “Dead means, I’ll never see Mommy again. She can’t be dead. I wanna see her again.” He looked up at the cross on the wall. He remembered something that he had heard in church at one point. Something about someone who believed in God, would not die, but have everlasting life in heaven.

What does everlasting mean? Does that mean forever? I think it does. If it does then I can see Mommy again!

“It won’t be for a long time though.” Allen said while sniffing.

“What won’t be for a long time son?” said a voice from beside Allen.

Allen looked at his father and said, “Until I see Mommy again, but I will get to see her again. I mean, I’ll get to see her in heaven right?”

“Of course you can Son, of course you can.” Allen’s father took his son in his arms and held for quite a long time.

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David was lying on his bed half-heartedly watching the TV. He couldn’t help but smile when he heard Douglas giggling in his bed. A nice change to get to listen to him laugh instead of screaming and crying, the kid was actually kind of cute when his face wasn’t all scrunched up in tears.

He had been lying there for quite some time thinking some things over in his mind. He had called his mother at work and talked with her. She told him how hard it was to watch him try to walk. It hurt her a lot to watch him fall.

He had been thinking about everything that had happened to him over the past couple of years. He was now a year behind in school. He had just spent too much time in the hospital. He didn’t like the idea of being help back again

It was during this thought process that the physical therapist came into the room. “Are you ready to go to therapy today David.”

David looked at his therapist and smiled at him and said, “No. No I don’t think I’ll be going back there anymore, but thank you for coming to help me.”

He hadn’t really come to a decision; it was pretty much what came to his mind when he was asked. He knew it was true and that he didn’t want to go anymore. He had come to a decision. He was going to learn how to live the rest of his life in a wheelchair.