

The Dark Room

By SP Wright

It couldn't be real!

There is no way this is really happening!

I ...

The events of the evening kept scrolling through my head endlessly, and yet still the reality of it had not yet fully sunk in.

I remember getting the call at work and spending the next hour in the break room, making call after call of my own to try and figure out what was happening.

Now, sitting in my room, huddled under the blankets in the dark, I felt ashamed. I should not have wasted so much time before talking to my boss. I should have left immediately when I found out something was wrong. Once I realized that I was getting nowhere on the phone I went to the manager and received permission to leave the building, but it wasn't until I was outside that I realized I wasn't done with my phone yet as I needed to call for someone to come pick me up in my car.

As the darkness surrounded me and swallowed my soul I realized how horribly, laughably sad it was that my own car had been unavailable to pick me up from work and take me to the hospital. After waiting outside for more than thirty minutes I realized that my family was not coming to get me, and that it would be faster to simply walk. Even in my daze I took a moment to determine the fastest route with the fewest number of crossings. I then began to trudge my way to what I knew would be a very emotional destination.

The heat which was being contained within the blanket could not compare to the heat which had been trapped within my chest during that stroll. Each passing step which brought me closer to the hospital and the event contained within brought with it a small increase in temperature, until my heart felt as though it were beating in an ocean of magma. I was unsure if the heat was due to the frustration over the car situation which found me walking to what I knew would be one of my worst moments; or the fact that my coworkers had seemed inconvenienced that I had to leave due to the circumstances; or maybe the fact that I was walking through a monsoon and every driver seemed to find it entertaining to douse me with water from the gutters.

The tears rolling freely down my cheeks had long since soaked my shirt and the blanket, but I hadn't moved in hours and the moisture would continue to soak in for hours to come. Finally, making it to the large building I stood for a moment unsure of whether to continue on knowing what lay waiting within. The rotating door before me moved mercilessly as though to remind me that the world would continue moving regardless of my actions, not caring if I went in or continued to stand frozen on the lawn, in the rain.

I could hear people talking somewhere nearby, but in my haze, I could not determine gender of the speakers, the words they were murmuring, or even the tone in which they were speaking. Nothing mattered anymore. Nothing would ever matter again. Gathering my courage and reinforcing it with anger I lunged forward and leapt through the revolving door.

Emerging into the foyer I looked around dazed at the sheer number of people who were milling about, but my mind could connect no names or familial ties to any of the faces. I was blindly searching for the information desk, and nothing else mattered to me at the moment. Seeing the lady watching through her little window I stumbled almost drunkenly to her and asked to be let back into the room.

How could anyone continue on alone? How does one forge a future when everything they had planned to use as a foundation had been torn from beneath them? I had been given the approval to head back and still dazed I stared blankly at the woman as she attempted to give directions. Abruptly there were loud voices blaring overhead but I could not discern the words. A flashing began in the distance and a horde of people in flowing white coats surged down the hall behind the woman.

The darkness of the room, and the dampness of my blanket were the only future I knew. Even if the sun returned and made the entire world glow, my eyes would still only see darkness. As the last of the white coats vanished from sight, I saw her mother stumble out of the room they had all surged into. She collapsed on the floor and began shaking with tears. Above her head a blue light snapped into being above the doorway not long after, and the lights were doused in the room as all the coats vacated quietly. One man slowly knelt beside her and refused to meet her gaze.

There is no way this is real!

You were my future ...

You were my everything ...

How could you leave me here?

Why couldn't I come with you?