

IMPACT STORY

I was laying on the bed, a routine checkup they said. The monitors were beeping around me, it felt frantic as if my heart was trying to leap out of me and tell me something was wrong.

Dr. Stephen walked into the room, sporting his lab clothes and white scrubs underneath. He looked grim, he knew a secret.

"Sorry." He whispered. His cadence dropped but I would think he had done this a hundred times before. "The brain cancer has progressed. It is in stage 4."

I was calm, I was expecting the other shoe to drop someday. For the last week, I was always laughing manically. Everyone called it a "personality change" but it felt like my heart was beating different.

"How much time do I have?" I asked, flinching almost immediately.

"6 months." He replied, he cared but not enough. I laughed just a little, a tiny crack bubbling inside my throat.

"Why?" I asked. The answer was staring back at him, something I called 'double minutes'.

"Your cancer is not just rejecting the treatment, it is feeding on it." The doctor explained, his eyes empty.

"What can we do then? There must be something I could do." My voice cracked, "Right?..." I knew there was no cure but miracled do occur.

Something was eating me up alive and he knew. But why was he so quiet? Was there nothing I could do? Is it hopeless? I wanted to scream but just a broken laugh echoed through the room, proof that my brain deteriorating bit by bit. I could feel it, running through my fingers.

I was doomed from the start. No medicine would have helped me.

He prompted, "If you want, we can get a DO NOT RESSUSCITATE form. It will give you sign of hope." I nodded, I did not know why I did. I was just a scientist working in a lab, when did that lab become me? I understood what he said to the nurses, each piece of medical terminology that he thought hid the truth that I was dying. I studied ecDNA, I saw the downward curve and I knew that was my life playing a rollercoaster on me.

He brought the form, I just signed it nto even bothering to read it. Usually I would have gulped the form down like a snack, btu I was tired. Just end this. He clicked the pen, a tiny gesture he made when he finished something. What did he finish now? Signing my death certificate?

It's a lonely kind of horror to be knowing exactly what is killing you, but to see the person who is supposed to save you looking right past it. I should have worked harder, maybe done a breakthrough. But who cares? In the end, it takes decades to finalize medicine.

I don't want to die, I still have things I want to do. Tears brimmed my eyes, pooling down like a rainy day puddle.

Someone, some day will find a cure, but that cure won't save my life.