

Block-''Hunger''

I thought that dying would hurt. I suppose that it does for some people. Those who succumb to terminal illness, anyone caught in something terrible like a fire, or anyone who drowned, for example. I wouldn't want to be any of them. I was completely blindsided, literally. T-boned by a jackass in a pickup truck running a red light. I never saw it coming.

The first thing that I felt was shock. The sequence of events as I remember it was: Crash, Darkness, Floating beside my corpse. For a moment, I thought that my brain had just cut out some memories, but once I saw my body in the car, I was more or less forced to accept reality. I never believed in ghosts. I dismissed them as folk lore, stories people tell each other for fun. While the police and paramedics arrived and started to make sense of the scene, I stared off into space, my sense of reality having been thrown into disarray. I was vaguely aware of being declared dead at the scene and hauled off to the morgue.

The first thing that I did as a ghost was also a mistake. I wanted to be with my parents when they got the news. To try and signal to them that I was with them, even in death. I sat with them, in a way, for an hour or so before they got the call. It was as picturesque a day as you could imagine. Dad was sitting on the back patio with a book, mom was baking cookies. I thought that I could handle it.

It was my mom who got the call. She's been my emergency contact for everything for as long as I could remember.

"Hello?" Her voice was cheerful, completely ignorant to what was coming, "This is her."

What followed was a long pause while the person on the other end of the call explained the situation. I couldn't hear that person, but from the look on my mom's face, I knew that this was the call I was waiting for. She didn't react vocally, not at first. Her face distorted in shock

and confusion as she processed the news. Her eyes began to glisten and she fell to her knees, dropping the phone. The two sounds drew my father's attention and he immediately ran inside to check on her. She couldn't speak, the only sounds escaping her mouth were odd choking sounds. But she could point at the phone next to her, the call still connected. Dad put the phone on speaker and demanded to know who was on the line and what they had said to his wife.

Shortly after, he joined her on the floor.

I sat with them for some time, their wails and sobs filling their home for what felt like hours but was really only half an hour or so. I wanted desperately for this to be a vivid nightmare. I told myself I would wake up and call my parents. Have breakfast with them. Go to a baseball game with them. Do all the things that, deep down, I knew I would never do again.