The news of Dallas Winston's heroism had spread like wildfire throughout the community, and as a journalist, I was eager to get the full story. I arrived at the hospital where Dallas was being treated and was led to his room.

As I entered the room, I saw Dallas lying in his bed, looking pale and exhausted with his eyes closed. After he heard the knock sound I made on the door, he slowly opened his eyes and looked at me, without any surprise and then closed again. He slowly opened his mouth, licked his dry lips and with a low voice, he asked: “You are a journalist from the town, aren’t you? What do ya wanna know?”

“First of all, thank you for your bravery,” I began. “Can you tell me what happened?”

Dallas shifted in his bed and took a deep breath before speaking. “It was our fault, you know? We live in the church those days and maybe it’s us who throw lighted cigarettes there that caused the fire. I heard those kids screaming, and I knew I had to do something. It is my responsibility.”

His expression turned serious as he continued. “But I gotta tell ya, it was intense. The smoke was so thick, I could barely see. I had to crawl on my hands and knees to get to the kids. And then the roof collapsed.”

He paused for a moment, lost in thought, before continuing. “I thought we were all gonna die. But somehow, we made it out. And those kids, they were so brave. They didn't even cry.”

I asked Dallas how he was feeling now, and he shrugged. “I'll be alright. It's not the first time I've been in the hospital, you know?”

But then his expression turned sad, and his eyes seemed to lose their focus. “It's just...I couldn't save Johnny,” he said quietly. “He was like a little brother to me. I don't think I can handle losing anyone else.”

I could see the pain etched on his face as he spoke, and I realized how deeply Johnny's death had affected him. I asked Dallas if he wanted to talk more about it, and he shook his head.

“It's alright. I'll be okay. I just need to take some time to process everything,” he said.

As I left the hospital room, I couldn't help but feel a sense of empathy for Dallas. His heroic actions had saved lives, but his heart was still heavy with the weight of Johnny's death. It was clear that his feelings for his friend ran deep, and I could only hope that he would find a way to heal and move forward.