Welcome to Spotlight. I’m Liz Waid. And I’m Bruce Gulland. Spotlight uses a special English method of broadcasting. It is easier for people to understand, no matter where in the world they live. A man is in the hospital with his son. The boy is very young, not even two years old. But he is very sick. He has brain cancer. His doctors say that he will soon die. It is very late at night. The man and boy have been in the hospital for many days. But tonight the boy cannot sleep. He cries and cries. The man wants his son to be happy. He needs him to sleep so that his body can be stronger. But nothing will calm the boy. So the man rocks him. He gives him milk to drink. But this makes the boy cry more. The man feels like he has no power to help his son. Finally, the man does the only thing he can think of. He closes his eyes and prays to God. Suddenly, the boy stops crying. Soon, they are both able to sleep. It feels like God has worked a small miracle. This painful event led the man to make a video game about his experience. Today’s Spotlight is on that video game, called ‘That Dragon, Cancer.’ The game, ‘That Dragon, Cancer’ tells the story of a family struggling with their young son’s cancer. The player of the game sees many different sides of the treatment process. But the game is not trying to teach technical facts about cancer. Instead, the player learns what watching another person struggling with cancer feels like. Many video games are for entertainment. But ‘That Dragon, Cancer’ asks the player very basic questions about life. ‘That Dragon, Cancer’ is not just a game. It is also a record of events that really happened. Ryan Green is a video game designer from the United States of America. He created ‘That Dragon, Cancer’ to tell his experience with his son, Joel. Joel was very young when doctors discovered he had a rare form of cancer. The doctors told Ryan and his wife Amy that Joel would not live. The family decided to fight the cancer through medical treatments. Joel was in the hospital a lot. Some of the treatments affected his development. Chemotherapy is an extreme form of cancer treatment. It delayed Joel’s ability to speak. But he continued to grow. And his family had hope. At first, Ryan Green made the video game about only one night. It was the night that Joel could not sleep at the hospital. But as time passed, the game grew larger. More and more people became involved. Another game designer, Josh Larson, began to work with Ryan. Amy also helped write the game. She and Ryan recorded their own voices for the game. They also included the voices of their other children. And they even recorded Joel’s laughter. It would be a way to remember him. In 2015 Ryan spoke to the New Yorker Magazine. He said: “I want the game to show the way Joel danced. The way he laughed. The way his brothers treated one another. The love they have. I want to put those things in the game. He was the sweetest boy. I cannot explain... I hope to show some of that. I want to show something of who he was and is. In the end, I think my greatest hope is simple: that people who play this game will care about my son the way that I do.” Because of this, playing through ‘That Dragon, Cancer’ is like experiencing different parts of the Greens’ experience. Ryan created the game in scenes - like in a film. And each scene shows a different part of their lives. In some scenes, the player takes care of Joel. In others, the player experiences the world AS Joel. In still other scenes, the player does not act at all. Instead, he or she gathers information, watching the family from far away. Many of these scenes are very sad. But Ryan wanted the game to be hopeful. Doctors found Joel’s cancer when he was one year old. They told the Greens he would die when he was two. But Joel did not die at two years old! For three years after that, he lived with the cancer. It seemed like he would survive. Ryan and Amy Green are also Christians. Many Christians believe in a God that can do miracles. And the Greens believed that if they asked, God could heal their son. But, in 2014 Joel became more seriously ill. His treatment stopped working. The Green family tried everything they could for their son. They even organized a meeting in their home with friends and people from their church. Everyone came together and prayed over their boy. They asked God to save Joel. But on March 13, at around two in the morning, Joel died. Two days later, Ryan began working on the game again. Now ‘That Dragon, Cancer’ would be a memorial for Joel, a way to remember him. Ryan and Amy also used the game as a way to deal with their sadness. Making it helped them remember what they loved about their son. And it helped them understand why the God they believed in let him die. The last scene of the game shows Joel in heaven, surrounded by things he loves. He has a small dog. He has hundreds of pancakes, his favourite food. Even though Joel could not speak well, he talks to the player. He says how happy he is. And the player can make him laugh by blowing bubbles through the air. The scene shows how much the Greens loved their son. It also shows their pain, and their hope. It is a hope for a better life for him in heaven. But it is also a hope that they will always remember him as happy, even though he was sick. Amy Green told Wired magazine: “Ryan worked the last year of Joel’s life, and all the time since he died, on this game. We would love for it to change people. For it to be very successful. But there is a part of me that says maybe it is just for us.” That Dragon, Cancer was released on January 12th, 2016. Would you play this game? How do you deal with difficult experiences in your own life? Tell us what you think on our website. Or email us at radio@radioenglish.net. And find us on Facebook - just search for spotlightradio. The writer of this program was Dan Christmann. The producer was Bruce Gulland. The voices you heard were from the United States and the United Kingdom. All quotes were adapted for this program and voiced by Spotlight. You can listen to this program again, and read it, on the internet at www.radioenglish.net. This program is called, “A Video Game About Cancer”. You can also get our programs delivered directly to your Android or Apple device through our free official Spotlight English app. The music in this program has come from the video game, That Dragon, Cancer, by Numinous Games. We hope you can join us again for the next Spotlight program. Goodbye.