

The Paper Airplane

A paper airplane flies through the window and lands on his bed. He stops and looks at the plane; one hand is filled with pills and the other holds a glass of water.

“Hey, how was your day? Was work busy?” Claire asked as her husband, Damian, trudged through the door. He gave her a tired look and said, “Oh honey, today was a whirlwind. I could barely keep my head on straight.”

“Well, I hope you’re glad that I made some pumpkin pie for you and Corbyn as a little surprise!” Claire said, referring to their son; he should be home any minute now.

“Thank you so much, I needed something to make this day better,” Damian said, kissing her on the forehead. A second later, Corbyn walked through the door.

“Oh hey, honey! How was school today?” Claire asked.

“Fine.”

“Come on, give your poor mother something better than that, Corbyn,” his dad said.

“School was boring.”

“Oh,” Claire looked down and noticed the pie again. She held it up and repeated, “I made some pumpkin pie! I know it’s your favorite!”

“I’m not hungry. Leave me alone.” Corbyn stomped up the stairs to his room.

His parents shared a look. They had been worried about him for a few months now. He had long since lost the glimmer in

when something was funny. He had even stopped his constant snacking. Now he hid away in his room doing who knows what. “Maybe we should go check on him. He doesn’t seem quite right,” Damian said.

“Yeah, recently he’s been acting differently. I’m worried about him. He’s not doing well in school, and he hasn’t made any new friends since we moved here.”

“The move has been rough on all of us. Oh, speaking of which: have you been taking some of my pain meds? I ran out of my prescription early for some reason.”

In the house next door, Jasmine sat at her desk facing the window. There was a new family in town, and she had taken a particular interest in their teenage son, Corbyn. He seemed like the kind of person who had a lot of mystery surrounding him, and that only made her want to know him more. When she sat at her desk, she could see through his window and into his room all the way to the back corner, where he sat with his computer. If she squinted hard enough, she could even see what was on his screen. He never knew she could see him.

After school one day, she sat down at her desk to do homework; however, a loud smash caught her attention. She looked up and saw Corbyn hitting his desk, seemingly out of irritation. Jasmine said, as a little joke, “Whoa there. Control yourself, jeez.” She didn’t know he could hear her.

“Not the greatest at minding your own business, huh?” He made a joke, awkwardly

his eye when he talked and the small lopsided smirk

trying to break the tension. Jasmine could tell that he was embarrassed. She smiled and looked away. She tried her hardest to avoid looking out her window, she couldn't help herself, stealing tiny looks out the window.

Another few weeks went by. Jasmine kept spying on Corbyn; Corbyn sat on his computer in his room. One night, at around 1 AM, as she was finishing up her homework, Jasmine heard the distinct rattle of pills. She looked up to see him line up at least five full drug bottles on the window sill; she started to get suspicious. Jasmine squinted into his dark room to look at the bright monitor in the corner. On the screen, there was a document open, and written on it in all caps was 'IM SORRY MOM BUT THERE'S NO PLACE LEFT FOR ME IN THIS WORLD AND I HAVE TO JOIN THE STARS I LOVE YOU'.

Her eyes widened as her brain pieced the clues together. Jasmine's mouth fell open, and she reached for the first thing she could see. If there was anything, even if it was small, that she could do, she would do it. After looking up the suicide hotline number, she grabbed a pen and quickly wrote a note on a piece of scratch paper and folded it into an airplane. She threw it out the window and prayed that it would work.

He reads the tiny note on the airplane. He sighs and puts the pills away; he draws a smiley face on the paper, and with a small flick of the wrist, the paper airplane went flying back.

