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forgotten

As the doctor entered the room, the tension was palpable. With bated breath, Whitney and Tim awaited the news that would either shatter their world or grant them a newfound hope. With a gentle smile, the doctor delivered the words they had been desperately praying for, “You've beaten it. You're cancer-free.”

Tears of relief streamed down Whitney‘s face as she embraced, thanking God and knowing that the cancer had been conquered by the Lord in the darkest of times. In the wake of the doctor's words, a wave of gratitude and joy filled them, infusing the room with a sense of renewed hope and purpose. Tim started praying, thanking God for healing his wife. With trembling hands, they clung to each other, feeling the weight of uncertainty lift from their shoulders. As they left the office, Tim professed that the Lord had healed his wife to everyone! Hand in hand, they knew that their journey was far from over, but they also knew that together, they could face whatever challenges lay ahead. With a newfound appreciation for each other and for life itself, they vowed to cherish every moment and never take a single day for granted.

As Tim and Whitney's old Ford F100 rattled down the dirt road, anticipation gnawed at their children, John and Sammi, waiting on the porch of their northern Michigan farm. Dust billowed behind the truck as it turned into the driveway, announcing their arrival. When Tim and Whitney burst from the truck, tears mingling with smiles, their children's hearts pounded with a mixture of fear and hope.

"It's gone, it's all gone," Tim exclaimed, his voice trembling with emotion. "All of the cancer is completely out of her!"

John and Sammie were speechless, their eyes wide with disbelief and relief. In a blur of tears and laughter, they enveloped their mother in tight embraces, the weight of impending loss lifted from their shoulders. At that moment, as the sun was starting to set into the horizon they knew that their family had been granted a second chance at happiness.

As Sunday approached, the anticipation in the small town grew palpable. Tim's sermon had become the talk of the community, with whispers of God's miraculous intervention spreading like wildfire. The church pews were filled to the brim with eager congregants, their hearts heavy with the weight of Tim's words. As Tim stepped up to the pulpit, a hush fell over the crowd. With conviction in his voice and tears glistening in his eyes, he spoke of grace, mercy, and the boundless compassion of God. He shared the story of his wife's battle with cancer, highlighting the miraculous healing they had witnessed firsthand. His words were a beacon of hope, a testament to the power of faith in the face of adversity.

Throughout the sermon, tears flowed freely, hearts swelled with gratitude, and a sense of awe washed over the congregation. In that sacred space, surrounded by love and faith, they were reminded of the limitless possibilities that lay within the realm of divine intervention. And as they left the church that day, their spirits uplifted and their faith renewed, they carried with them the profound belief that indeed, nothing is impossible with God. Whitney drove herself and the kids to be there on time for the service.

After saying their goodbyes to friends and family, Whitney kissed John and said, “I love you and I will see you at home.” and

John replied, “I love you, too.” He kissed her and addd, “I’m right behind you. I just need to run inside and grab my Bible and keys. So I’ll see you at the house.”

So Whitney left with John. Sammie stayed with Tim because he let her drive his pickup down the dirt road to their house every Sunday after church. So Tim and Sammie left but pulled up to stalled traffic on their road, which usually wasn’t busy.So Tim exited his pick up and started walking to the front of the cars in the traffic.

He was stopped by a police officer, who said, “Tim, there’s been a bad accident, and you can’t go up there. I need you to go back to your truck and wait for me to come get you.”

Tim's heart sank as the police officer delivered the devastating news. His mind raced with worry for his family, fear gripping him tightly. Nodding silently, he turned back to his pickup, his hands trembling as he gripped the steering wheel. Sammie's concerned gaze met him as he climbed back into the truck, and he offered her a tight-lipped smile, trying to convey reassurance despite the turmoil raging within him.

As they waited in tense silence, Tim's thoughts were consumed by the well-being of his loved ones. Every passing second stretched out into an agonizing eternity of uncertainty.

Finally, the police officer returned, his expression grim as he asked for Tim to follow him. With a heavy heart and a silent prayer on his lips, Tim followed the officer, his mind filled with dread at what awaited him at the scene of the accident. Tim knew something was wrong as he walked the line of cars to the accident.

Halfway there and outside of the view of the truck and Sammie’s view, the officer turned around and said, “Tim, I need you to take a deep breath and listen to me.” At that moment, Tim knew it was his wife and son. The officer continued, “We don’t understand what happened. From what we can tell, it looks like the driver of the other vehicle intentionally drove into her, but there is nobody in the other car.”

in a panic. Tim asked, “Are my wife and son okay!?”

“Tim, I need you to listen to me!” (I’d use the officer’s name if Tim knows him.) said in a calm but sad and passionate voice. “They were both killed instantly, and they felt no pain”

Tim's world shattered in an instant as the officer's words pierced through him like a dagger to the heart. The ground beneath him seemed to give way as he struggled to comprehend the devastating news.

His breath caught in his throat and his chest constricted with grief as he fought to hold back the flood of emotions threatening to engulf him. With tears streaming down his face, Tim choked back a sob as he pleaded with the officer for confirmation of his worst fears.

The words hung heavy in the air as (officer’s first or last name) confirmed the unthinkable truth; his beloved wife and son were gone, taken from him in a senseless act of violence. Numb with shock and disbelief, Tim felt as if the world had stopped turning. It felt like time itself had ceased to exist. Every fiber of his being screamed in anguish, every thought consumed by the unbearable weight of his loss.

In the days that followed, grief hung heavy in the air, casting a shadow over Tim and Sammie's shattered world. Each passing moment seemed to only deepen the empty chasm left in the wake of Whitney and John's untimely deaths. Tim struggled to reconcile the cruel twist of fate that had robbed him of his wife and son, his faith shaken to its core by the profound injustice of their loss.

Sammi, too, grappled with overwhelming emotions, her heart weighed down by the enormity of their absence. The once vibrant energy of their home now echoed with the haunting silence of their absence, leaving her adrift.

Together, Tim and Sammi found themselves navigating the uncharted waters of grief, their words failing to capture the magnitude of their pain. Each day felt like an eternity, a relentless cycle of anguish and despair that threatened to consume them whole.

People continued to bring their comfort and remorse to Tim in his time of loss, but Tim was struggling with the fact that God took his wife and son, so Tim told his congregation that he is going to leave the church and the religion completely and is moving somewhere far away because the grief is too much.

As word spread of Tim's decision to leave the church and the community, an outpouring of shock and sorrow rippled through the congregation. Friends and neighbors, once filled with hope and faith, now grappled with their own sense of loss and confusion. They reached out to Tim with heartfelt expressions of comfort and support, urging him to reconsider his decision and offering their prayers in his time of need.

But for Tim, the pain of his loss was too overwhelming, the questions too profound to ignore. As he stood before his congregation, his voice heavy with sorrow, he spoke of his struggle to reconcile the tragedy that had befallen his family with the teachings of his faith. The words fell from his lips like a lament, a desperate plea for understanding in the face of unfathomable loss.

With a heavy heart and tear-filled eyes, Tim announced his intention to leave the church and the religion altogether, seeking solace in a place far removed from the memories that haunted him. His decision sent shockwaves through the community, leaving them stunned and bereft. But for Tim, it was a necessary step in his journey toward healing, a quest for peace in a world torn apart by grief and doubt.

So Tim sold his farm and everything else and decided to move to the most rural part of the United States, Willow, Alaska, and bought a nice cabin outside of town for him and Sammie where nobody was close. The closest person was 10 miles down the road.

Tim wrote in his journal, “I’m still hurting beyond belief. My beautiful wife, Whitney, and son were taken from me in an instant. It’s like a twister that comes in fast and is devastating and then is gone with the wind, leaving behind a sunny day like nothing had happened at all. I am truly hurting, but I can only imagine what my Sammie is going through. She not only lost her mother but her brother, too. I would pray to God for peace, but I don’t believe there is a God, because God wouldn’t heal my wife, just to take her from me in an instant. I feel as if my heart has been ripped out of my chest, and the air pierced from my lungs. This is a very different life for me, I used to devote my days to praising the Lord for everything that he has given me. Now I question the very existence of God. I just don’t understand how he would do this to me when I have praised him and served him. The accident is haunting my dreams. Every single time I wake up, I can’t help but think to lean over and kiss her and tell her good morning and thank God for giving me such a good life.”

“Sammi tells me that she feels like she’s being watched, but I tell her it’s nothing because there’s nothing out here. We live alone, and there is no one for miles. But I, too, feel like I am being watched when I wake in the morning, as I make coffee, and as I get ready to go to sleep at night. It feels as if something is lurking in the shadows, but that just can’t be.

Sammie wrote in her journal, “I’m trying so hard to be brave for my dad; however, I am hurt because my mother and brother were taken, and there’s nothing I can do about it. There is nothing I can say to bring them back. My father has denounced his faith and has completely abandoned God because he thinks God has abandoned him. But I still pray to give my dad peace because I don’t know what else to do. My dad does not pray anymore. He doesn’t even own a Bible. I still pray every day, wishing for peace for myself, and him hoping God will answer. I also feel as if something is watching me. But my dad says it’s a figment of my imagination because we live in the middle of nowhere, and there is no one near. I still feel as if I am being creeped upon in the morning when I am getting out of bed and having eyes look at me when I go to sleep. Maybe I’m just paranoid.”

Tim wrote in his Sept. 10, 1997, journal entry, “Sammie isn’t sleeping anymore so I have decided to get a German shepherd as a guard dog to make her feel safe because I have no other way of doing it. His name is Sampson. I bought him from a man in town named Dylan Taylor. He is a very good dog. I have never seen one like him. He is by Sammi's side all the time. As if he is her guardian angel. I feel as if the dog can tell there is something out there, because he growls at the door in the morning and at night before we go to bed.”

“There was a knock at the door last night. I thought it was a figment of imagination, but Sampson stood up and started barking with the force of a foghorn on a ship. I have never heard a dog do that before let alone have something hit my door in the middle of the night. I don’t let Sammie go anywhere without him because it makes me feel better that he is with her. I truly believe there is something out there. It might be a bear or a wolf. But whatever it is, I don’t want my daughter going face-to-face with it.”

Samantha wrote, “Dad got me a dog because he is worried about me. I appreciate it though because he makes me feel safe and protected. His name is Samson. He is a large German shepherd, like I have never seen before. He has beautiful, blue eyes and smooth, but bristly hair and weighs about 120 pounds. He is the best behaved dog I have ever seen. Dad told him to stay by my side, and he has every second of every day since he said it to him like he can understand English. He is with me when I go to sleep, is there all night, and is there to comfort me when I get scared, and have no one else to hold onto.”

“There was a knock at the door the other night, and it scared me because Samson started barking like I had never heard before, but whatever was, it was scared away because of him. Whatever is lurking around, our house is truly haunting. However, I believe by the power of God that He will protect me and my dad, even if dad doesn’t believe in Him.”

Tim-

Today Sammi and I went into town to grab a few things from the hardware store, and while we were there, the clerk was talking about the Yankees clinching a postseason spot for the 37th time in franchise history and third consecutively while on the phone. While in town we stopped to grab some dinner before we headed home for the night, but while we were there, I felt as if something, or someone was out of place. However, I couldn’t figure out which it was.

After dinner, we decided to head home and that’s when I had this awful feeling in my gut like the day I had when I lost everything. It felt like whatever was watching us was breathing down our necks as we drove down the dirt road to our cabin. All the hair on Samson‘s back bristled up as he growled and barked into the darkness. The hair on my neck stood up as well as he barked like he was barking to scare away a grizzly bear as if he were bigger than it. When we finally reached the house, the front door was wide open.

That’s when he jumped out of the bed of the truck and ran inside at full speed like there was something in there. And then just like that, he came right back out, wagging his tail like nothing had ever happened, and that feeling of being watched was completely gone. I don’t think I have ever been more frightened than that drive the other night.

Tim - I went into town with Sammie to go to the church because she wanted to talk to the pastor. The church is a place where I feel I can get true peace and quiet even though I don’t believe in this stuff anymore. The pastor there told me to forgive God and to not hold a grudge because the Lord has a purpose and plan for my life. I disregarded what he was saying because I didn’t care. However, Sammi’s drawing inspiration from God was confusing to me because he took away the people that we loved.

A loud trumpet sounded from the sky and shook the church. Suddenly Sammi was gone, and the priest's and Sammi’s clothes were on the floor. I knew at that moment what had happened. The Lord Almighty had come back and taken the church and Sammi and I was left to be *forgotten*.

I then heard a voice that said, “God didn’t take them. I did, to ruin you!”

A man appeared out of nowhere. He continued, saying, ” I was the other driver that day. I am the one lurking in the shadows watching. I am the one who has taken them from you! You turned your back on God after he healed your wife. Your daughter was a strong one that I could not break like you. And that putrid dog that you had was an angel sent by God to keep her safe from me!”