

The pouring rain floods the sidewalk, road and my mood since the very early morning. I'm angry with the pedestrians, the depressing weather, the lack of warmth and my inability to find parking. I drive down one street and another and another. I circle around in the hope of finding a long awaited spot for my car. I finally squeeze in between two trucks and freeze for a moment, realizing how long I will have to walk in my flimsy open-toes shoes during this downpour. After turning the first corner, I give up on finding a dry spot on the sidewalk. The stream carries me away, as I push my way through the flooded streets.

"Good morning, Mrs. Smith", I managed to blurt out through my jittering teeth. "Good morning, dear. I am so happy to see you". A petite hunchbacked elderly woman with snow-white hair quickly closes the door behind me. "Hurry and come right in. I am so stressed out. I don't know what to do. Help me. I'm not sleeping or eating". Mrs. Smith has never looked so fragile nor so worried. Her frail legs paced nervously around the room. "What happened"? I asked with genuine worry for Mrs. Smith. "My husband was taken to the hospital three days ago. His sugar went up and the doctor said he must go to the hospital."

It is only now that I had noticed the man of the house was nowhere to be found. Usually they would greet me together. She, wearing a warm sweater draped around her shoulders and him in a wheelchair beside her. "Mrs. Smith, please don't worry. Sometimes people need to spend some time in the hospital. I am sure that he is being well taken care of by professionals. They will treat him well and return him to you in better condition". She replied, "I know he is being well taken care of and our doctor visits him every day". "You see, everything will be all right".

I take her bony, nearly translucent hand in mine. I am aware how cold and almost lifeless her skin appears in my warm palm.

"You don't understand" she states as she raised her tear-filled eyes that look inside my soul. "We have never been apart for more than three days...never...not in our life together. We promised each other from the start to never part. And now it has been three days since I have heard his voice. He doesn't have a phone in his room. I can't sleep without hearing his voice. I can't eat without hearing his voice. I can't live without him."

Tears flowed from her transparent eyes, as though her soul was weeping along with the tears. I sat in a near trance, at a loss for words. The thoughts inside my head began to tangle, turning into rain. The rain turned into tears. And the tears turned up my emotions. Mrs. Smith has been living on this earth for 98 years. More precisely she states she feels as if she has lived with her husband for 98 years. Although they spent their childhoods in different places, they are sure they have been together forever. They have kept their promise to one another for almost a century. And like always, they must hold each other at night before they fall asleep. I look at her and don't see age. An eternally faithful, loving woman sits before me.

“Mrs. Smith please don’t cry. I will call the hospital today. I promise you will talk to him by this evening”. I do what I do best. Despite the constant waiting on the phone, being placed on hold, arguing, demanding, convincing. I am happy with the result. Mr. Smith has received authorization to use the doctor’s phone line whenever he wants. Mrs. Smith’s shaky hands grasp the phone. On the other end of the line is her love, her heart, her soul, her life.

The room is filled with her shining eyes, her radiant smile, and the light from within heart. She silently takes my hand, kisses it and happily looks inside my thoughts. I leave and walk back into the rain.

Wet streets, water in my shoes, drops from the sky envelop my face. No I won’t open my umbrella. I’ll let the rain, along with my tears, washout my soul...