

Julie Summers smiles at her brother, Andy, who had just walked in the door. Andy gave a brief smile back. He sat in a chair next to his sister's hospital bed. The all too familiar sight of the heart monitor and the breathing tube in her nose was heart breaking.

Andy ran a hand through his hair and sighed. He looked at his sister. "How are you holding up?" He asked her. Julie pushed a lock of blonde hair behind her ear and smiled. "I've been doing this since birth." She said, "You know I'm fine."

Andy gave his little sister a serious look. "You know that's not what I meant." It was true. Julie did know. But she didn't want to stress her brother even more. But the topic seemed inevitable.

"You're talking about yesterday right?" She asked softly. Her brother gave a small nod. Julie took a sip of the apple juice the nurse had brought her earlier. "Honestly I'm not that worried." She said.

Her brother gave her an odd look. "How are you not?! The doctor said you have 30 days left to live." His little sister nodded, "I know. But we all knew this day was coming." She said softly.

Andy sighed and ran a hand over his face. "Yes but not this soon..." he said quietly. Julie smiled and looked at him, "Andy let's not spend our last days dreading it and enjoy our time." She said. Her brother smiled and nodded.

Andy looked at his watch and sighed, "Well I got to get to work. Take care little sis okay?"

Julie smiled and nodded giving her brother a hug.

"Love you big bro!"

"Love you too

Julie found it hard to sleep that night. She was sitting up in her hospital bed braiding small strands of her hair. She was oddly calm for a girl who had not much time to live.

The only sound was her humming and the heart monitor and the machine that helped her breathe.

Julie then suddenly felt someone in the room with her. She looked up and she was right. There in the corner was a dark hooded figure. She couldn't see his face. Only his mouth showed.

Instead of feeling fear she felt comfort.

"Who is there?" She finally asked. The cloaked figure answered her, "it's just me Julie." It said.

"I'm always here." The blonde girl was intrigued, "who are you?" She asked. "Not who but what." It spoke, "If you must know I am Death."

Suddenly she grew worried. Was he here to take her? "I-I still have time! Please don't take me yet!" She pleaded. Death gave a small chuckle, "don't worry." It said, "I'm not here for you yet. It's not your time."

Julie relaxed but was still confused, "then why are you here?" She asked. "I have always been here." Death replies. "But this is the first I've seen you." Julie responded.

"When one gets closer to their time, then they shall see me." It replies. Julie could hardly believe what was happening yet it seemed logical in her mind. "I have so many questions." She murmured. "And answer them I shall." Death spoke. Julie's mind was swimming with questions. "Death," she spoke, "can you extend my time?" The figure shook its head, "I can not. I don't have the power and it's against the laws of nature." It said. Julie sighed and nodded, "Well okay. What's next? Is there heaven?" She asked.

"That depends." Death replies, "if a person believes in heaven then yes there is." Julie tilted her head in confusion, "I don't understand." Death gave what seemed like a chuckle. "Let me explain" It said. "The human mind is creative. That's why there are many religions. Whatever one believes in, that's what awaits them beyond." Julie thought about it, "I guess that makes sense."

It continued to explain, "yes it exists in the mind. And once someone passes, their life creates another soul." Julie thought that was a comforting thought. "A life for a life." She murmured. "Precisely " Death replies.

"Does that mean it affects the way people see you?" She asked. Death nodded, "Yes. Some see me as god or an angel. Some may see me as a light at the end of a tunnel. And some, like you, see me as the Grim Reaper." It said.

Julie was silent for a moment. She then spoke, "Death, what if I want to be reborn?" She asked. Julie could sense a smile from Death. "Then you shall be." It said, "Your soul will go into a new body."

"Does this mean religion is fake?" She asked. "Not necessarily. Since it lives in the mind." Death replies. "I still have so many questions." Julie informed. "Like I said I will answer all. But for now you should sleep." It responded.

Julie nodded and got comfortable in her bed. She yawned and gave one last look at Death before closing her eyes.

"Goodnight Julie"

"Goodnight Death"