

No One Will Be With You Shortly

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A short play

By Jarred Corona

AT RISE: A hospital bed. On it lies DEIRDRE, a middle-aged woman. She is alone. We hear sounds of a busy hospital. People walk by. But no one ever enters.

DEIRDRE

I swallowed half a bottle of pain killers this morning. I've thought about killing myself ever since I was six years old and learned how men are. I never did anything about it. The doctors who saw me when I was 18 said I probably wouldn't last long. I've passed the midway point. I never did anything about it.

My son drove me here. I walked down the stairs and there he was, eating breakfast, and I told him what I just had to eat. We got in his car. He didn't speed. The traffic was the same as ever. I thought the streets would be empty or more crowded than ever, some sort of sign from the universe, a judgement. It was the same as ever.

It doesn't matter how old children get. Even the adult ones ask so many questions. They're never ending. He kept asking. Stubbornness runs in our blood. One time we argued, and he wouldn't stop pressing until I grabbed him by the face and told him to stop or get the fuck out of my house. He was angry. He was angry when he was young. Anger is a dangerous trait in men. He favors the left side of his jaw when he's clenching it. When he drove me here, it was the right side. I'd have preferred the left.

When are they coming back? They keep taking my blood. They don't come back until it's time for more. I keep forgetting to ask them questions. They don't answer.

Pills start to lose their flavor after the twelfth one you've shot back. They said my liver could fail. They said that when I told them what I did. "Your liver could fail, so we're running tests." My stomach keeps flipping. Is that organ failure? The internet says overdosing on pain pills can eat a hole in your stomach. Maybe I'm melting. If I lift this paper gown, I'll see an acid-burned cavern where my belly button used to be.

I miss my grandmother. She was such a horrid little bitch. I miss her.

Motherhood is strange. You start off fearing that your baby will die before you. That's the worst possibility. But then you see how his eyes change when you're dying, and suddenly you think maybe it wouldn't be so bad if he left first.

I say I'm still Catholic. I don't remember the last time I took Communion.