

# THE VISITOR



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Darkness greeted my tired eyes as I opened the door to my son's room. I squinted hard to make out the basic outline of the room. My eyes were bloodshot; my face filled with misery. There were bags under my eyes and they were made from crying for many long hours in conjunction with the row of sleepless nights that plagued my life.

Each second seemed to me like a painful reminder of how pathetic I was, how utterly powerless in front of God's wrath. My son was the only thing anchoring me to reality, until the moment he had passed away, while I sat unable to do anything. An accident, a small car crash, had snatched away from me the only thing I had truly valued.

I was nothing but a jest to God, as He took away everything I had; leaving me empty. Grief painted my life with hues of excruciating agony. And now, all the cherished memories of my son show no mercy as they engulf my soul.

The small white cloud eclipsing the moon moved away, and moonlight flooded into the room, onto the blue walls trapping me. My eyes darted back and forth, yet failing miserably to feel once again the presence of my son.

At a snail's pace I approached the large window and stuck my head out. The tangerine glow of the nearby lamp-post fell on my wrinkled and tired face. The smoke from the cigarette in my hand drifted towards the obsidian sky, and the ash and amber from its tip fell limply to the ground below.

On my son's table I noticed his books, the countless books he'd borrowed from the library, staying awake many nights to finish them, and not sleeping till he finished the last page of the book. Now he was asleep... for eternity.

Thoughts were blurring in my head, appearing and dissolving with each breath. Deep in the void of my mind, frustration and depression erupted like a furious volcano. My eyes moved from one corner to another as the half-crescent moonshine was reflected on the numerous framed photographs of my son that were hanging on the walls, perpetually reminding me of my loss. The piercing numbness that I was very familiar with was this time accompanied by a torturous headache; it was intolerable.

I could once again feel the tears welling in my eyes, as I sat down on my son's bed, my right hand gripping a bottle tightly. I could not bear it any longer and I was about to start drinking when I suddenly felt a cold touch on my hand. Flabbergasted, I turned to look and saw sitting beside me was my fifteen year-old boy.

My feelings couldn't be described in words, not by anyone. A thousand emotions in less than a second, and suddenly I was hugging him, weeping freely, not daring to blink, lest he vanished from my sight.

"Dad?" -- he whispered, his voice providing vitality to my dying soul.

"Is it you, my son?" -- I whispered, my voice so low that it was barely audible even in the stillness of the night. He smiled his angelic smile and was about to answer, when I heard the loud rumble of thunder and saw white everywhere.

I woke up in my bed, with the sun shining brightly on my face, the smell of fresh rain heavy in the air and beside my bed on a table I saw two lines scrawled on a piece of paper -- "Don't give up, Dad. Live on." -- written beautifully in my son's handwriting.

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