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A Blink of an Eye

My arm hairs stood up as the syringe was being unwrapped by the bright blue gloves the nurse wore. The smell of rubbing alcohol filled the room and my lungs sucked it all in. I looked to my right, the door was still open. My 5 year old self would have run out the door by now. My mom is in the bathroom so the escape would be easy. I began the pattern of numbers in my head, “1,2,3” I was told by my parents that it would calm me down, “4,5,6.” God out of all the moments in the Hospital, needle preparation seems to take the longest out of everything. Eternal life has always been a topic that surrounded me, how temporary life can be. I did not grow up in church but on those rare moments when I got to sit on church cotton chairs I would always hear about the “eternal God” about an existing and out of time God. I never thought fainting would amplify my view of how fragile human life is, at the very end of human life it is truly only us and God, and we have to inevitably face death someday. After I had awakened from fainting I realized how death is not planned and how we may never grasp time.

Pressing upon all my veins, she wrapped a tight ridged band around my arm. I thought this was going to be a normal doctor’s appointment, but as soon as she inserted the needle, the expression on her face gave it all away. The nurse was not able to find my bloodstream to fill the blood tests with. The blood test containers remained empty, and the needle continued to be

impaled into different directions in search of blood. “Go easy on it” “have you found it yet?” I kept repeating phrases like these to the nurse, but soon a sensation of confusion and unbalance stirred my body. “I feel dizzy,” I told her. Trying to get a hold of my consciousness I blink and grab onto my seat. The nurse proceeds to call her coworkers, and soon I am surrounded by multiple women. They hand me a drink of water but nothing seems to wear this feeling away. It’s just me and this feeling, “they can’t help” I say to myself.

That is the truth they cannot help. It was just me and my body at that moment fighting to stay awake. I have always heard the phrase “life flashes before your eyes” . I was not prepared to live it. I heard my mom’s voice in the distance, “Que esta pasando aqui?”, “Ernest, estas bien?” but I had no strength to make fun of her dumb question. All I knew was I did not want to be there. After a minute of trying to avoid fainting, one of the nurses directs me to get up and move to the room next door. When I stood up and proceeded to walk towards the room, the phrase “life flashes before your eyes.” suddenly held value. I was transported to a yellow like film shot of my morning. Yellow and bright, like light reflecting off sunflower petals. I fixed my gaze on the squared yellow film of myself and my mom in third person. Before my hospital appointment my mom and I had gone to her favorite salon, we had both got haircuts that morning. I saw my mom and I walk out of the salon with our brand new haircuts, both of us beaming with delight as we laughed together at a joke. It was exactly what had happened when we left the salon that morning, only in slow motion. I saw how I flipped my hair back and how my mother's eyes sparkled as we went. The video seemed serene and almost too natural, like if I were floating amid lovely clouds. I wished to linger just a second longer.

"Ernest!" I started hearing echoes. "Ernest!" Is that my mother? Finally, I recall being in the hospital. I strain my eyes to focus, and the yellow film vanishes from view. All I can see now is my mother's mournful face glaring at me and yelling, "Ernest!" I entered reality. I hurried to comfort my mom. "Hay Ernest, you've got to eat," she said in response to "Mamy don't worry, I'm alright, Mamy im okay." My mother was not having it when the nurses who were still on duty tried to reassure her that "this is normal" and "it occurs." At the end of the day, we discovered that the cause of my fainting incident was something as simple as low blood pressure. I had not consumed anything when I got up. The nurses explained to my mother and me that this is very typical and that since my heart rate is normally low, it was inevitable. It's crazy that we humans rely on food and other things to maintain our health on a daily basis. This realization made me realize how fleeting life is and how unpromised a day is. It also made me understand how crucial it is to make the most of this impermanent existence by taking care of your health and valuing other lives. Even though life on earth is temporary, lives are still affected, which makes life all the more significant.