

My patient Mr. Nick

Tereasa worked with many patients at the hospital but, her favorite was Mr. Nick. Mr. Nick was so easy going and would tell Tereasa stories of how he used to dance on the streets with his friends.

"Tereasa let's dance," said Mr. Nick.

"Mr. Nick you know you can't walk anymore" said Tereasa wistfully as she got ready to go home.

"Tereasa, won't you dance with me one last time?" added the old man with a wide tooth smile.

"Maybe next time, okay?" said Tereasa before she left the room and went downstairs to the lobby.

"Hey Lisa, how is Mr. Nicks physical therapy?" asked Tereasa as she signed her name on the clipboard ending her shift.

"What do you mean Tereasa?" asked Lisa with a puzzled look.

"Mr. Nick, how are his legs?"

There was a long pause from both women who stared at each other confused before Lisa spoke starring at Tereasa like she had mentioned an alien.

"Tereasa Mr. Nick is no longer a patient here"

"What?"

"Mr. Nick died last night...he climbed out his window" said Lisa with a concerned look.

Tereasa starred at her in disbelief before gathering her thoughts.

"Lisa I just talked to hi- him, right now he-"

Lisa reached over and grabbed her hand tightly shaking her head dejectedly. Tereasa nodded before saying her goodbyes to walk to the bus that would drop her off at her street near her house. She boarded her bus starring out the window feeling sad yet unsettled. Mr. Nick was gone, and she felt maybe it was the because her 10hr shift that confused her into thinking she talked to him today. Tereasa yawned tiredly, when she noticed a man was sitting two seats in front of her. She hadn't noticed him when she got on the bus but, more importantly she wondered why this old man had on a brown suit and hat to match. What would an old man dressed in a suit be doing on a bus this late at night?

She soon reached her stop and got off in the empty quiet street only illuminated by the old lampposts every couple yards. Tereasa walked the lonely sidewalk with her work shoes making a clack each step. *Clack, clack, clack, Tap, clack.*

Taken aback she noticed a second pair of steps coming from the asphalt street ahead. Glancing up at the street she squinted to see who was making the noise when she finally saw them. There was someone dancing in the middle of the street. They were rhythmically making circles before they leaped forward closer and closer like a cartoon character would down the middle of the street. Tereasa was baffled at the sight and looked around the empty street... she as alone. As she kept walking in their

direction, she couldn't make out their face in the shadows until they stepped under a lamppost and she saw it. It was the same man from the bus she was on. He wore the hat down shrouding his face in darkness with that brown suit and shiny ballroom shoes that clacked on the pitch-black asphalt each stride. She could not make out his face or where he was looking as he twirled effortlessly around before he leaped with a limp. He continued to sway and twirl as if he was in a ballroom down the street getting closer and closer when he suddenly turned in her direction. His body facing her he then slowly bowed at her with his pale hand slowly lifting to point at her. Getting uncomfortable Tereasa ignored him and walked forward quickly. She walked right past him before feeling comfortable enough to glance over her shoulder only to see he was gone. With a sigh of relief, she turned forward only to jump back in horror to see he was in front of her with his head bowing and hand up to her. Tereasa shakily stood there wondering what this man was doing.

"What- what do you want sir?" she said in a voice she didn't recognize as her own.

The street was silent with an eerie atmosphere as no one said anything until the man in the suit began to wave his hand at her. Gesturing for her to come closer with his head down still bowing. Tereasa's heart began to thump loud and fast enough she could hear it.

"Lea- leave me alone" she said as sternly as she could, trying to sound mad but her voice betrayed her. It was full of fear and that scared her even more.

Not waiting for his answer, she crossed the street to walk on the other side. She was walking with fast strides trying to get home in a hurry now when the familiar sound of fast footsteps were approaching her from behind. She spun around with wide eyes to see the unnerving image of the man crouched down only a few steps away from her with his head down and hands up in air moving like flags. Trembling she began to walk backwards not taking her eyes off him, fear caught in her throat when he stood up and slowly twirled before leaping towards her in pursuit. She began to cry to herself not wanting this anymore as she walked backwards with the dancing man following a few steps behind. She saw the familiar red payphone box across the street and desperately sprinted to the payphone. She reached the phone chaotically slipping coins into phone before looking around to see the dancing man was gone. Trembling she dialed the police number.

*Ring...Ring...Ring* the phone echoed in the silent street.

"Hello?" Said a man on the other line.

"Yes hel- hello!" said Tereasa terror stricken looking behind herself before turning to the phone.

"Yes?" said the man on the other side of the phone.

"Umm I'm being followed by a man" She whispered.

"A man?" asked the voice.

"Yes, he followed me from my bus an- and he- he was dance- "

"...Tereasa"

There was a long silence on that dark street but, there was horror loudly written all over Tereasa's face as her hands trembled and the hair on her body rose.

Nora Reyes, Age 18

“How do you- how do you know my name?” She said feeling dread sink into her.

There was a pause before the voice spoke with a alarming familiarity.

“Tereasa, let’s dance” said the man on the other line.

Before she could speak, Tereasa was petrified upon seeing a pale boney hand creep from behind her come up and push the phone into its place sinisterly. The hand then opened palm up to her as a gesture to take it with her own hand.

“Tereasa wont you dance one last time?”