

## I Blink

People say your memories flash in front of your eyes just before you die and I can say that this is true. I lay on an uncomfortable hospital bed, an IV stabbing into my vein, and a harsh bright white light shining down onto my pale white face. I blink. I hear sounds around me, some sound like words, others sobs, all sad. Yet, I don't feel sad, in fact, I don't really feel anything. I blink. If I don't feel sad then why do my eyes and my cheek feel wet? Am I crying or is it something else? I blink.

I am now standing on the shore of a beach and the ground seems very close to me; am I shorter? I hear a call and to my right stands my mother, her dirty blond curls fall over her shoulders as she beckons me towards her. As I take a step, I blink. I now seem to be taller, and no longer on the beach. I am now standing next to a bed, and in the bed lies my mother. Her curls now gone, in its place is a wool cap that keeps her now bald head warm. She looks up at me and smiles as her grip on my hand lessens. I blink.

I am now holding my wife's hand as I stare into her beautiful green eyes, as to my right a wedding officiant reads out of the bible. I smile and glance to my left and see my father with a toothy smile on his face twirling a wool cap in his hand. I turn back to face my wife finding myself saying, "I do," and moments later lean in for a kiss. As I do, I blink.

As I pull back from the kiss, I find myself holding an hour old baby in my arms. I look down at its calm face as it softly sleeps. My gaze moves from young Gwen to her mother as she weakly gestures for the young child. I comply, handing her the baby and smile as I watch the two of them rest. I blink. I watch as Gwen moves her quick little legs as she scampers across the field chasing a ball I just kicked. Even though her body is so small, it contains so much energy, much

more than I have. I try to start to run after her but the sharp inhale causes me a shock of pain and I start to cough. I glance down and see Gwen hugging my leg with a concerned look as I blink.

I now sit in a dim room as spotlights flash on. Standing tall beneath the pool of light is Gwen in her favorite dress holding a microphone to her mouth. I smile as she starts to sing, feeling the cheery melodic tune and its shifting harmonies as she beautifully flows through the song. I feel a sense of pride in my heart; she has worked so hard and it is all now paying off. As she finishes the song, I stand up quickly ready to give her the loudest applause she has ever heard, but as the blood rushes through my body, I feel faint and blink.

I open my eyes and look up to see that same harsh light but slowly, they dim as I focus on Gwen looking down at her sick and fragile father. Tears fall from her eyes landing on my cheek as she sobs saying something I just can't make out. I smile looking deep into her light green eyes, full of so much youth and energy. I tighten my grip on her hand and use the rest of my energy to say, "Use that youthful energy to experience all the world has to offer. Enough for the both of us."

I smile, a single tear forming in my eye, saying a prayer in my heart that her life will be a long and fulfilling one. As I close my eyes for the last time, I find myself ready for whatever is to come next. With a smile on my face, I blink.