

Drama

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**No Release**

By Tara Meddaugh

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*MELINDA, a woman in her 20s-40s, speaks to her friend, Lauren. Melinda's mother is suffering from a debilitating and fatal disease and she has given up her job and apartment to move back at home and care for her. Her mother has stopped eating and Melinda knows that she is dying.*

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MELINDA

Everyone keeps telling me to cry like it's some kind of, some kind of miracle cure or something. I'll feel better, I'll feel this, I don't know, this release, and—I don't even know what a release feels like. What—suddenly I'll have no tightness in my chest? Cause you know, I'm wearing this tightness inside of me like some kind of old fashioned girdle, you know? And, it's like, if crying really did cure all of that—if it took away this—this monster that's squeezing the breath out of me—if it took away that feeling in my throat like I'm being choked all the time, or like my throat is tired from whispering all night? I mean, if it took that away, if that's what a release is...then, yeah. I'd cry until my eyes dried out.

(pause)

But...Lauren, it doesn't work that way. I wish it did. God, I wish it did. Because I do cry. I cry and sometimes I sob like those little kids in the grocery store who want, whatever, candy or, I don't know what they want. But I'm sobbing in the shower or in front of the refrigerator and that tightness in my chest is making me heave and those hands around my neck are still choking me, and, when I'm done crying—I'm hoping, I'm waiting...for me to feel that release...that everyone keeps talking about.

(pause)

But the tightness is still there. And...now I have this weaknesses too, like, my legs don't want to hold me up anymore. Like, I'm some sort of—you know those puppets? Marionettes? That have to have strings to hold them up or they'll collapse?

(pause)

I'm one of those.

(pause)

I'm gonna collapse in the shower.

(pause)

I'm shaking and I'm shivering and I'm cold.

(pause)

And it hurts just as much.

(pause)

It doesn't take any of the pain away.

(pause)

No release.

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