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Walk the Steps

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And with that, her grip on my wrist slackened and she fell back into her pillow. The drugs must have kicked in.

That night, while she slept soundly in her hospital room, I was kept awake by what she said to me.

Living, but better...How could she know how it feels to “live, but more” if she was dying?

I didn’t understand her.

She’s dead now.

(But of course you knew that, the media covered it for days. ‘END OF AN ERA’, they said. ‘END OF AN ERA’, they exclaimed. ‘END OF AN ERA’, they plastered all over the hologram newspapers and building-wide televisions. End of an Era, indeed...We should have been mourning her death, the death of another human being...But instead we celebrated it. It was the End of an Era and the Ushering in of the Age of Glorious Immortality, they said. The Last Mortal Human was gone...And they didn’t even care to know her name...No one cared. No one except me.)

I understand her now. I’ve understood her for a long time now. It wasn’t until I discontinued my stem cell regeneration, until I decided to not live forever, did I get her. They can say what they like about me, about my decision and how stupid and crazy it was...I don’t regret it. I...loved every moment I lived from that point on. I ceased to merely exist. I loved every sunset, every person who came my way (as best I could, I mean) because I didn’t know if that sunset was my last or if that person was the last person I would ever speak to again. Things mean more when they have the possibility of being your last.

...So, is that it?

Do you have all you want for your interview? I have an appointment to keep, you know.

I must tell Thecla that I know why she felt sorry for me. She’ll be thrilled.





WALK THE STEPS Andrew Barba

YOU WILL NOT DEFINE ME

Crystal Lee

If you only knew the pain you've caused,
If you only knew the loneliness you've brought,
If you only knew the many lives you've ruined,
If you only knew that you've tried to break me,
But you didn't.

I will no longer let you cause pain.
I will no longer feel lonely.
I will no longer let you ruin my life.
I will no longer let you define me until my last day.
Cancer, you will not define me.