It Isn't Fair

by xcourtney_chaoticx

Summary

Accidents happen. Bob knows this. He is a fireman, a paramedic. If not for accidents, he'd be well out of a job after too long. He just never expected for an accident to affect him so deeply.

Notes

Inspired by a tumblr prompt. Link below.

7) A repeated sentence, a hospital in the middle of the night, a green apple

It isn’t fair.

Bob thinks the words savagely, hates their truth almost as much as he hates the truth in front of him, wants to force them out of his head as if doing so would make everything better. It was an accident, a stupid accident. Their shift was almost done. All that was left was to handle a rescue at a rush hour car accident. All that was left was for them to pull a woman from her car where she’d been rear-ended into the barricade, setting the car on its side. She had no major injuries, which was very lucky for her.

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Things were going so well. They got the woman out. They were loading her into the ambulance when she asked for her purse. Craig went back to get it, clambering in through the broken
windshield and Bob can just imagine him seeing the purse in the back seat, arm stretched as far as possible, straining, his fingers brushing the leather bag-

It was enough weight to shift the car. Bob still doesn’t really know what happened. He just remembers someone screaming and metal groaning as the car suddenly flips with Craig inside. They told Bob Craig hit his head somehow, but no one really knew how. It just happened. A freak accident. A stupid accident. It wouldn’t have happened had Craig only put his helmet back on or if someone else went for her purse or if someone had braced the car or if-

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It’s late. Bob checks his watch. It’s well after midnight. He’s been in the hospital all day and all night, just waiting for Craig to wake up. Craig hasn’t woken up, hasn’t moved since the morning. They were on a rescue, and then they were in the hospital. Someone should have chased Bob out hours ago, informed him visiting hours are over, told him to come back in the morning. He couldn’t leave. He can’t leave. Craig is his partner and he should have looked out for him and should have been there for him but dammit, he wasn’t and he feels like shit.

He scrubs at his face and watches Craig, even if he’s not interesting to watch at the moment. Interesting would be if he woke up suddenly and chided Bob for not behaving logically and for breaking hospital rules. That would be interesting only because it would be so normal. What’s happening now is not normal.

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Bob should not be sitting here watching Craig in his unconscious state. They should be having fun. They were going to go see a movie tonight because Craig secretly loves movies. They were going to have dinner. They were going to talk about moving in together because it would save them both money. It was going to be a great day. Instead there was a stupid accident, and it’s been an awful day. Bob scrubs at his face again.

Craig has a lump on his head and a bruise on part of his face. He hasn’t moved save to breathe and Bob is thankful that he is at least breathing on his own because he wouldn’t be able to bear seeing Craig with a tube down his throat. It’s bad enough to see him like this, with tubes in his arm and the papery hospital gown covering his body and his glasses folded carefully on the small side table.

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Not leaving the uncomfortable chair, Bob simply leans forward and folds his arms on the hospital bed near Craig’s flank and rests his head on his folded arms. He isn’t going to work tomorrow. The aching back and neck will be worth it if only Craig would wake up. The fingers of his left hand fan out, brushing at Craig’s, which lay dormant on the bed. He wants Craig to know he’s not alone, that Bob- his partner, his friend- is here and will not leave him and would never leave him because that’s his partner and he loves him more than anything, more than anyone, more than himself. He would give anything to be in Craig’s place, but he doesn’t want Craig to feel that pain, either, of sitting helpless at his partner’s bedside.

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He doesn’t know exactly when he falls asleep, but it’s not quite daybreak when he wakes, pale dawn light peeking through the window. For a long moment, Bob refuses to move, closing his eyes again. It’s better to imagine that Craig is awake rather than still being unconscious, so he pretends. He pretends he feels the bed shift with his movement and pretends he feels the thin and calloused
fingers wrapped around his own and pretends he hears a soft voice telling him he’s alright and not to worry any longer and-

Bob’s eyes open slowly. Craig smiles at him, a smile reserved just for him, one that reaches his eyes and almost puts dimples in his cheeks.

“You shouldn’t be here,” he smirks, “Visiting hours haven’t started yet.”

“Well, I got here when they started yesterday, so technically-“

“You should have left when they were over.”

“Yeah… Yeah, I guess I shoulda… but I couldn’t. I didn’t want ya to be alone.”

“I cannot be alone in a hospital full of people.”

“Aw, Craig, you know what I mean. Just- I didn’t want ya to be alone. Scary to wake up in a hospital room all alone.”

“I know. I’ve done it.”

“But ya don’t hafta do it ever again, kid. I’m gonna make sure of that.”

His smile grows, teeth almost showing, and Bob feels himself smile in response. Craig’s fingers are still wrapped around his.

“Here… Dixie stopped in and asked if we needed anything,” Craig says, “so I got you this- well, I asked Dixie to get you this, I mean. I know you like them.”

Craig hands him a green apple, continues, “I know how you feel about breakfast, also. You should eat. I doubt you did so yesterday.”

“I didn’t. I was worried.”

Craig says nothing, simply tightens his fingers around Bob’s, still smiling, and Bob wonders if he’s the first one who ever cared for Craig this much, to sit at his bedside and worry over him to the point of not eating.

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Making sure to keep his hand in Craig’s, Bob starts in on his apple. Both of them still smile.

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