Business Hours

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problems? Girls I bet.”

“No, it’s a little more serious than that,” Chris said. The hesitation on his face was something Frank found disconcerting. He and Chris had never been close, and if he was hesitating that meant he had some issue deeper than some girl who was yanking his chain. “My dad is terminally ill.”

Frank’s eyes snapped up to stare into Chris’s, but found them to be as lifeless as fish eyes. “I haven’t told anyone else this, but I found out yesterday that something bad is happening and he has even less time than before. He’s only got a couple of months left.”

The room spun a little bit as Chris went on to talk about how he was trying to spend as much time with his father as possible, but it was hard. Frank looked around trying to get his bearings on the moving room. He didn’t think he was that drunk. The look on Chris’s face kept making Frank want to cry, until tears welled up in his eyes. Frank mumbled some things that he wouldn’t recall later. He was too drunk to really hit any good points in conversation. Words about brotherhood mumbled with enough conviction eventually got Chris to look less miserable, which in turn made Frank feel a little better then.

Frank made a hasty exit from the empty bar; as he walked toward his car he took in the downtown lights as they gave off glowing halos in the fine mist that was coming down. The sun would be up in a few short hours to rescue the efforts of these lonely lights to hold back the dark. The problem for Frank was that his darkness felt like looking down into an endless well. It was night that kept coming back around, and each time snuffed out all light forever.

Frank knew that his greatest battle was with himself, he just wasn’t sure how to get there, or which side he was even on.