

For Irony

by Ashley Poulter

They all knew he had cancer before the doctors gave the final verdict. His wife wept and his parents held him tightly. It was a dreadful time for all. Out in the hall his children looked on with fearful faces and shook their heads as he begged them inside with a wave of his hands. When the last wail had met its end against the overpowering clicks and beeps of the somewhat melodic machines cluttered by his bedside, they headed home. Leaving the man by his lonesome.

In the cleanliness and relative safety of the hospital he began to reflect on his world at large. A life spent in half joy, half drudgery. Each morning he dressed in a stiff suit and went off to the corporate jungle. He made money by shifting around numbers and balancing funds. The weekends held chores and picking up after messy children. He did adore his family, of course, but they were like the period after a run-on sentence. He didn't care much for this thought. And again the thoughts bubbled to the surface. He was done. No more suits, messy kids, or boring chores. He would lie here for the rest of his short existence in relative comfort. Nurses would tend to his every need and he needn't dress in suits for company. A small, but meaningful life was what he had now. When the nurse came moments later with his dinner...he could only smile. Allowing the cadence of clicking machines to be his simple soundtrack to this new, small life.

