

Three Lifetimes

Age 14

Language Arts Short Story

Also used as a Drama Monologue

Last I remembered I had been suffering from cancer.

What happened?

Last I remembered I had been in a terrible accident.

What happened?

Last I remembered I had been in the shower.

What happened?

First Visit

It was my first visit; right after my heart had stopped. I was in my hospital bed, left to myself, and that's when I had let go. I saw nothing. I noticed nothing, but the voices whispering ahead of me. I felt myself glide, slowly, toward them.

'Ahh,' I heard one say. 'Mary, we have another.' I began to see a dark silhouette of what seemed to be a big golden gate.

'Hello?' I called. *Last I remembered I had been suffering from Cancer. What happened?*

'Cancer,' a woman replied. She seemed to ignore me. 'Cancer to the heart is what caused his death.' She was obviously talking to someone else. 'What do you think, Paul?'

'A sign of anger,' Paul replied. 'He hasn't fulfilled his purpose.'

'Hello?' I called again, hoping for a reply.

'What do *you* think, Peter?' Paul asked.

‘We should send him back,’ Peter responded. And so they did. The golden gates disappeared and the sight I saw next was unbelievable. The noise I heard was unbearable. The cries of babies and the yells of young women rang in my ears. My soul fell. It fell below the skies down toward the noises which rapidly grew louder and I was reborn.

Second Life

With a blank memory and as a woman, this time, I lived my second life back on earth in anger; incapable of love, and always full of hatred. My mother died a few months after I was born. She had obviously found her purpose and was off to a *much* better place. I was left to live with my father, George Hanson. We didn't get along well. He seemed to believe my birth had been the reason for my mother's death. I grew up to inherit a lot of his personality traits: anger, greed, and envy. Living a life like that was definitely not decent. And that's what I was born to learn. My purpose was to overcome anger. Something I just couldn't see back then.

Dad died when I was twenty. My characteristics seemed to be the only thing left in his memory. I lived with my roommate, Stan. A man I couldn't *stand*. He was always so happy, and full of energy. *Nobody's* that happy. He moved on to get married and then had three kids. He was still alive

at the time of my second death, the accident. It was the day he had professed his love for me.

I was driving to the Petrol Station, me behind the wheel, after having attended a glamorous Christmas Party at Stan's work office. He graciously invited me to attend it with him, seeing as his family was out of town for the weekend.

I don't know what it was that made him decide to profess his love to me that day, but I didn't like it. I was so infuriated; I remember kicking him out on the side of the road, right before filling up for gas. He was married! How he could even *think* telling me this would be okay, I never knew. That's when I died for the second time.

I started my car just after filling it up with premium oil when the motor exploded, sending different parts of my body everywhere. *Last I remembered I was in a terrible accident. What happened?*

Second Visit

The voices sounded again. Peter, Paul, and Mary's, the three gatekeepers who would make the decision of whether I'd finally enter heaven, take a chance at a new life, or remain in purgatory forever.

'A car crash, it seems, was the cause of it this time,' Mary whispered to Paul.

'An accident?' Paul asked. A person dying as a result of coincidence was usually a sign of acceptance into heaven. 'Could it be time to open the gates?'

'No,' whispered Peter. 'The accident involved an explosion of fire. The body burned to death sending its soul up to us.'

'Ahh, yes,' Mary replied. 'Burns; one of the many signs of anger.'

'Hello?' I called. Neither of them acknowledges me, and once again, I was reborn.

Final Life

A man, I was, with a beautiful face, and an honest smile. My memories, once again, erased from my mind as I entered the world one last time. My father, Sean, was a well-known man with a rich and complicated history. He had a great friend, Arthur, who I was later given custody to when my father disappeared at the age of forty. Arthur never showed me much respect, although I had to him. I grew to love him, no matter how much he had despised me. He raised me as a child until I was a young man of eighteen years. I got married at twenty, and had three children by twenty-two; also the age of my death.

It was Arthur who had killed me, God bless his soul. It was a very long night of explanation. My father, it seemed, had accidentally taken Arthur's son's life with him when they died in a car crash, and in revenge, he wanted mine. He tortured me severely that night, but I managed to escape with only a few scars and blood spread all over my body,

assuring that the last words I had said to him were, 'I love you.' *Forgive him*, I thought, *for he does not understand*. And as I stood in the shower, washing the blood off my arms and legs, I noticed myself falling gently to sleep, a sleep that I realized I wouldn't come out of.

Final Visit

‘Hello?’ I called, for the last time in their company.

‘Welcome,’ Mary whispered as the golden gates opened.

‘Last I remembered I had been in the shower,’ I told her.

‘What happened?’

‘You found your purpose,’ Mary explained. ‘You learned to love in the fellowship of anger.’ I nodded gently and took the steps forward, necessary to enter the new world awaiting me. And in a second, all memories from the three lifetimes flew back into my mind. I understood.

Without anger, the world could be a better place. Without anger, I could reach out to people like I never had before. It’s unfortunate how long it takes for someone to learn from their mistakes. But in reality, all we really need...is time.