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### **That Sickly Feeling**

I hear a robin outside my window and I wake up. My face still feels stretched. I lick the roof of my mouth. It's dry. For the past four days, my mouth and throat has been dry and my face has been feeling stretched. I try to get up but my head starts to pound. I fall over onto the bed breathing heavier. I wait a minute and go to the bathroom. *Why am I so thirsty?* I slowly walk towards the old bathroom. I bend over and drink straight from the tap. Nothing changes. "Geeze. Why am I so dry?" I whisper. I drink some more but still nothing. I go downstairs to the kitchen towards the fridge to get something cooler to drink. *Grapefruit juice.* I take the large bottle and drink it down. "Hey do you want to come with me to look for stuff? It looks like it will be a great day today." Dad walks in wearing a peculiar combination of green shorts and a yellow T-shirt. He is in his early fifties with white hair and is balding. He is the kind of person who shows no ill will towards people. Always wanting to help you out. No matter who you are. "Sure!" I smile. My dad and I always go out to the forest within the city to look for mammals, insects, birds and other interesting things. It's kind of like our pastime during the summer. Mom walks up carrying her course load from her online class. "You're going out? Don't forget your sunscreen then. Take plenty of water as well." we nod at her, take our things and head out. *My head still hurts.* We traveled through the forest and end up at the beaver's pond. I begin to swerve and my vision starts to go. I stop and look up at the semi cloudy sky. *I know I drank a lot of liquids before heading out to this place, but why do I feel so sick and thirsty?* Dad is ahead of me sifting through the long grasses looking for things like frogs and abandoned red-winged blackbird nests. I take a drink from the water bottle and I ask him if he found anything. He looks up. "Nothing much apart from the usual." I smile and join him. A few minutes pass and my head starts to

pound and my vision becomes worse. I start to worry and heave a sigh. *I think I have been exposed to the sun for too long.* I walk to the shaded rocks to sit down but I stumble and fall a little ahead of it. “Ouch.” Dad hears me and runs up. “Are you alright?” He looks at my hands as I get up letting him know that I’m fine. “Oh geeze your hand is cut.” I look at my hand. Sure enough there is a long but thankfully small cut on the thumb to my palm. I look on the ground and I see something clear and shiny. Glass. Dad cleans my hand with some water. “Well this sucks.” I laugh. Dad looks up at the sky “I think it’s time to go home now. It’s going to rain soon.” I look up as well. The clouds are beginning to form together. “Thunder storm?” I ask. “Yeah I think it’s going to be just that.” Dad replies. We hurry the best we can to the burgundy van and began our drive home.

I look out the side and all I see is a blur. My head is starting to pulsate again. *My head is still pounding and I still cannot see a thing! What the heck is happening to me?* I begin to feel nauseous and I drink the last of the water. “Dad I’m not feeling very well today. I think it might be through the exposure to the Sun.” he looks at me. “Hmm yeah and the water is out too. Let’s stop somewhere so you can get something to drink.” We stop at a nearby Wendy’s and ordered some food with the drink and head home. *I feel a little better now but what just happened?* I take a bite from my sandwich and tried to swallow. Nothing. I tried again and still nothing. *Why can’t I take solid foods? I never had this much of a problem!* I swig it down with my 7up and look outside. The rain begins pouring heavily. It’s going to storm. We get home and rush inside.

The rain continues throughout the afternoon and it has now begun to hail. I look away from the window stood up to go to the bathroom. *Hmm I think this is my sixth time today.* As I wash my hands I start to think of how strange it is that I am continuously urinating within a small time frame. Looking at the cupboard, I swap the thought with another. *I wonder how much I weigh now...* All throughout my life, I have been considered an overweight child. Now I am fifteen years old standing at about six feet tall. When I checked my weight a month ago I was two hundred and sixty-five pounds. I take the scale from the bathroom’s bottom cupboard and weigh myself. “Not bad.” I whisper, smiling to myself. *This is awesome! I’m losing weight by doing absolutely nothing! It’s like a dream come true!* The reading was two hundred pounds. Although this seems like a lot of weight; to me this is something really good. I head downstairs

to watch a movie with the family.

During the movie I develop the urge to go to the washroom again. “Hey can you stop the movie for me please? I have to go to the washroom.” Mom looks up at me a little concerned. “Are you alright? You seem to be going to the washroom quite frequently, you always seem to be tired and it looks like that you have difficulty swallowing your food.” I sigh and smile at my mom. “It’s nothing serious mom. Don’t worry.” I stand up. The head throbbing starts in full force and I fall down as I take my second step from the couch. I try to stand up again but I can’t. “Ouch.” *God. Mom is right. There is something serious happening to me... but I do not want her and the rest of the family to worry-* I start vomiting. The room becomes a blur. Mom rushes over and asks if I’m okay. For some reason, I became irritated at those words. I tell her to go away. She looks at me. “I think you may have diabetes. Let’s go to the emergency room.” the words hit me. I look at her and whisper. “Yeah.” We head out to the hospital.

We arrive at the hospital and walk up to the front desk. Mom tells receptionist nurse what happened and what she thinks the problem may be. The nurse takes my hand and pricks it with a needle. She takes the blood sample. Her face look serious and she immediately takes us to a hospital room and politely orders me to put on the hospital gown and to lie down. She later tells us my blood sugar levels are critically high and that I am going to be transferred to the main hospital. I ask her what that meant and she tells me “your blood sugar reading was over one hundred. The average reading you’re supposed to have is between four and eight.” *Oh great. I thought. This is going to be interesting.* She hooks me up to an intravenous and I lick the roof of my mouth. The tongue begins to stick a little bit. *Oh Geeze I really need something to drink.* I call upon the nurse that walks in. “uh excuse me? May I have something to drink?” the nurse doesn’t look at me. “I’m sorry sir but I cannot give you anything to drink. Doctor’s orders.” I become irritated by those words. “why not? I am so dry; my tongue is sticking to the roof of my mouth. I need something to drink!” She looks at me then motions for another nurse to come in. She walks in with a serious face and asks me loudly where I am, when I was born and what day it is. I become increasingly frustrated but answer them anyway then asked for something to drink. She says she cannot give me anything because I may mess up a reading or some sorts. *Forget it.* I snort and slowly turn around to avoid complications with the intravenous. *Huh what*

*Is this? I feel really tired all of a sudden...* My face feels seemingly stretched like sleeping in the sun and I fall asleep within minutes.

“Sir. Wake up. Hi we’re the ambulance crew and we’re going to transfer you to the main hospital. Okay?” I open my eyes and I see a woman and a man dressed in a dark uniform. I look around. *What time is it?* “Alright sir you’re going to have to get off and switch with one of our beds.” I sluggishly get off of the bed and slither towards the other with minimal difficulty. “That’s good sir.” She looks at her partner “let’s go.” we travel to the other hospital with no trouble. Mom and Dad arrive at the hospital as well and we wait for further instruction. “Mom what is going to happen to me?” I ask; a little nervous “we’ve been waiting a long time.” Mom smiles and tells me not to worry. The look on her face is telling me otherwise. A young doctor arrives and talks with my parents first. He then walks up to me and introduces himself. “Hello Alistair.” He smiles. “We received some alarming news about you and we’re going to have to give you a CAT scan to see if you have not suffered from a stroke or to see if anything was damaged.” I stare at him. I do not know what to say or think. All I could muster was “hmm.” The doctor left and my head begins to pulsate again and I roll over onto my side to fall asleep but I didn’t get the chance as the doctor arrived with some transporters to take me to the scanning area. After the scan I was put back to the same place where I arrived. *What is up with this place?* I turn over slowly and fall into a light sleep.

I was transferred from the emergency room into the NICU where I spent my remaining four days. After the four days in the NICU, we spent our time at the diabetic clinic for support and vital information about the new disease I am to be living with. The nurses and doctors told us about the things we needed to watch out for when it comes to food, reading labels, how to use the lovingly dubbed ‘Insulin Pen’, how to know when you’re suffering from low and high blood sugar and whispered to me how I was able to get off of insulin and instead take a pill called metformin. After the four days in the hospital, I was free. I was finally able to go home. They told me it would take about twelve months to switch from insulin injections to the pill. In two months I was able to take the metformin. I now look at the importance of how I control my diabetes when it comes to diet, and exercise. I do not want to experience the same thing again.

### *Author's Statement*

People do not really know just how dangerous diabetes really is. Whenever I chat with people about it, they would answer by asking if it is the disease that you need insulin. Diabetes is a serious disease that can cause you many problems if left untreated. It can leave you blind, become numb, receive an amputation of the limbs and ultimately death. It's sad how people do not truly understand the devastating effects of the disease. They tend to make errors about the symptoms thinking the people with them are either drunk or high. Although this may not be considered a historical event, the problems with diabetes are still at a critical high where many people are diagnosed every year. The disease used to activate when you are at an older age but now children as young as nine to twelve are becoming diagnosed. This tends to affect the aboriginal populations who in the past would usually never be diagnosed with the disease. Now, with the introduction of the television, vehicles and a new change in the diet like replacing traditional foods with fatty and sugary material like candy, processed foods, chips and white grains, the aboriginal populations are being diagnosed with the disease at an alarming rate. In some areas in Canada, some aboriginal populations even have the highest percentage of diabetes within the world.