



The Promise

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I came back to my office and sat down.
I couldn't get you off my mind.
It had been a busy day, and
Something just didn't feel right.
It wasn't your fault you were my sixth patient
And this was the sixth time I had said the same thing.
Perhaps I had thrown the "D" word around like it was nothing.
I didn't remember that for you I might as well have been using the "C" word.
You've seen this at its worst.
"My grandmother had it, lost her sight and then her leg."
You could only think of losing your eyes, your feet, or even your life.
You were scared and wanted me to say it would be all right,
And I didn't say it loud enough or strong enough.
You wanted John Wayne and you got Nurse Ratchet.
I've seen hundreds of cases of diabetes.
I forgot that I hadn't seen yours.
I was so busy looking at your numbers and espousing wisdom
That I never heard the quiver and quiet desperation in your voice.
Or saw you wringing your hands.
Not until I was alone at my desk, and I got still.
I made a mistake when we talked.
I was trying to put the pieces together by the numbers
When I should have been listening to you and your story.
And for that I'm sorry.
From now on I'll pay more attention.
I'll be more present.
I'll listen harder.

I promise.

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