

Lies

By: D.L.T Robles

I was waiting in a snow-white room with beaming yellow lights at the Hyacinth Advocate. I was waiting for the doctor to tell me how my parents were since they've been staying there for a couple of months now due to an illness. Unfortunately, because of the town rules we can't leave town and get medicine or equipment from other towns. Lately, they haven't been doing well, and I was actually called there because they are in a critical condition. When I see Dr. Ryan walking down the hall with a gloomy look on his face, my heart sinks for a moment. I get up and rush toward him with a hundred thoughts running through my head, hoping for the best

"So how are they, Dr. Ryan? Please tell me they're ok," I say.

"I'm sorry to tell you this, but your parents have sadly passed away," he says.

I stood there and cried, tears rushing down my face and a sharp pain going through my chest, feeling as if I've been stabbed.

After taking some time to calm down, I headed back home, taking a walk through the town. I see the white street lights through the smog as if it was the moonlight through the smog. After about a minute of walking, I see my Dark oak house with walls weathered down by the seasons. I stood in front of my house door looking at my keys, thinking about all the memories I made in the house with my parents. All the birthdays, all the Christmases, that time I broke my leg falling out of the tree in the backyard and my dad carried me to the hospital. I'm all alone now.

I turn the doorknob and slowly open the door. It's dark and quiet inside. I don't know how I'm going to continue without them. But I have to carry on, live my best life in Hyacinth Valley. That's what they would want me to do, and I knew them better than anyone.

A month has passed since my parents' death and I've been able to manage my emotions enough to be able to continue my life. My parents owned a bookstore with a small coffee shop inside, so it's only natural that I would end up having to take over the business after their death. It's a medium-sized one-story brick building that is located on the far right side of the town. The inside has warm lights with aisles of towering bookshelves, an oak floor, and the scent of caramel floods the air as you shop in the store.

One Wednesday, just a regular day at the bookstore, I was pushing around an old rusty cart full of books. I was putting away the mysteries when I heard the chime of the door opening. I lean back to glance around the shelves and see it's my old friend. He's wearing his usual white lab coat.

"How's it going, Dr. Wayne?" I asked with a smile on my face.

"I'm doing fine, but I actually came here to talk to you. Would you mind if we had a chat after you close down the shop?" he asked, looking around the store.

"Sure, no problem," I replied while putting the last of the books on the shelf. Dr. Wayne walks away and sits at one of the cafe tables.

I wonder what he wants to talk about.

After some time, nightfall hit, and I closed up the shop. I headed over to Dr. Wayne, who was sitting down, reading a book while drinking a large caramel coffee.

"So what did you want to talk about?" I asked when I sat down next to him.

"It's about this place. More specifically, what's under this shop," he says while taking a sip of his coffee.

I frowned. "What do you mean?"

"Well you see, when your parents were still alive I asked them to do me a favor. This favor was to build a tunnel under this bookstore that leads outside of the town walls". He says while giving me a serious look.

"You mean to tell me that there is a tunnel under this shop that my parents supposedly helped you build. You really expect me to believe that, and this better not be some kind of Joke." I say while getting up from the chair.

"If you don't believe me then I'll just have to show it to you. Now come, follow me." He says getting up from the chair while gesturing for me to follow him.

He leads me through the isles of tall bookshelves until we reach the far right corner of the store. This part of the store was usually never used and it always had an empty bookshelf worn down throughout the years just sitting there collecting dust and spider webs. He grabs the left side of the bookshelf and pushes it in towards the wall and when he does a slot in the bookshelf opens revealing a keyhole. He grabs a gold colored key from his back pocket and puts it into the keyhole. After he turns the key, the bookshelf swings back towards us revealing a staircase that leads down. "How is this possible? There really is a tunnel and I never knew about it. But why, why here and why did my parents never tell me?" I think to myself while following Dr. Wayne down the stairs.

The walls of the staircase aren't old and it looks well taken care of. Dr.Wayne flips a switch on the wall that lights up a string of lights that lead all the way down. When we get to the bottom, he flips another switch that lights up even more lights but this time when the lights turn on, a tunnel that I can't see the end of is revealed. The walls are all dirt and stone with support beams running all the way down the tunnel.

"Now do you believe me"? Dr.Wayne says.

“Why was this built? Why did you ask my parents to build this tunnel? I have so many questions”. I say.

“I will answer all your questions, but first I have to explain why the smog exists. Before the smog most of the people that lived in the town were violent people. So we decided to make a plan to try and make it so people would calm down and wouldn't be so violent. While I was doing some research I discovered that the Hyacinth flower Had a calming effect and would make people less violent and would make them calm.” He says before I interrupt him.

“So what does this have to do with the smog?” I say with a confused look on my face.

“ I'm getting there. So after some more testing me and the counselors decided to make a giant machine that would make a smog that would cover this town and the liquid creating the smog would contain the Hyacinth flower. So in theory everyone would become less violent and it worked. For the past few years we haven't had any major crime issues.”he says.

“Wait you're saying...”I say but then get interrupted.

“Would you just let me finish. There was only one problem, because the smog was always covering the town, we had a lack of sunlight and we couldn't grow the hyacinth flower in bulk anymore. So I needed to find a way to grow the flowers in bulk. That's when I thought of growing them outside of the town, where the smog did not reach and where the sunlight did. Unfortunately the counselors also built a gate around the town so people wouldn't leave the town and notice that when they're out of the smog they're more violent. If they were to notice that they would realise the smog has something to do with it and it would all go down hill. So we had to lie and say that going outside the smog is dangerous. So per their orders no one was allowed to leave the town through those gates. After some time I finally thought of an idea, I would build a tunnel that goes under the gate and onto the other side. So that's when I asked your parents to build the tunnel. After telling them the whole story of the smog and why the tunnel was needed they agreed. Since the shop was already on the edge of town, It wouldn't be long before the tunnel would be complete”. He says.

“ This is just too much. I don't know how to respond to this. So you're telling me that this whole time my parents basically let themselves die even though they could have had you go get the medicine! They died all because they didn't want to tell me about the tunnel! I thought I knew them but apparently I didn't.” I say yelling in a fit of rage. I feel betrayed, lied to by my own parents.

“Your parents believed in my work and the benefits they brought. They sacrificed themselves to keep the experiment going.”

“So why, why would you tell me this.” I say going back up the stairs

“I'm telling you this because I still need to use the tunnel and in order for that to happen you needed to know.” he says closing the bookshelf.

"And you think I would just let you keep using this tunnel after you tell me all this." I said as I walked to the exit.

"You don't have a choice." he says

"And why is that?" I say as I stop in my tracks and turn around to face him.

"If you don't I'll have you thrown in jail on a foney charge. Don't think that I can't." he said. I just stand there silently thinking on what I should do.

"I'll give you one day to think about it. I'll come back and when I do I'll be expecting a response" he says as he walks out the front door. I don't know what to do anymore. When I spend the whole night thinking about it.

All this is happening so fast. My parents lied, the town lied to me. The reason we're stuck in this town is one big lie. That's it! If this town is the problem then I'll just leave.

During the morning of the next day I spent the whole time working on my plan. I went to random buildings all over the town, and when I was done I went to the shop. Before closing time I hear the chime of the door. When I go and check who it is, I see Dr.Wayne. After closing down the stop and making sure it's just me and Dr.Wayne, We sit down and begin our chat.

"So have you decided what you'll do?" He said with his arms crossed as if he was asserting dominance.

"I have. And I have decided that I will let you continue using the tunnel, but..." I say

"But what?"he says confused.

"But only if you allow me to leave."I say smiling.

"You serious? Now what would make you think I'll let you do that." he says laughing.

"Well you see I have written everything you told me the other day. I have it written on many copies of paper hidden throughout the town, and if you don't let me leave I'll give these copies to the people of the town, exposing everything you've worked so hard on." I say smiling. He stops laughing and the smile on his face disappears. I can tell that he's furious but he hasn't spoken a word.

"Just like you said before Dr, I'll give you one day to think about it. I'll meet you here at closing time tomorrow." I say as I begin to head out. I exit through the front door followed by The Dr. I close up Shop and we head our separate ways. The next day I head to the shop just like any other day. I work hard putting away the books and when it's time to close up shop I see none other than Dr.Wayne standing at the front door. I let him in and we sit down at one of the tables.

"So have you decided what you wanted to do?" I ask.

"Yes I have, and after giving it some thought I've decided to let you leave," he says.

"So what made you decide that?" I ask.

"Well it would be a huge problem if the information you've written down where to get out. It'll just be easier if I were to just let you leave and tell the townspeople you died

in an accident. But I'll only let you go if you get rid of the papers with the information on them." he says

"I won't give them to you directly but I'll take them with me and burn them on the other side so you don't just take them and not let me leave." I say.

"That sounds just fine. I'll give you one day to pack your stuff. Sound fine?" he says.

"That sounds just fine. I'll see you here in one day." I say as we get up and leave the store. The rest of my night is spent gathering all my belongings. In the morning I go around town getting all the paper copies and getting a last good look of the town before I leave. When night falls I take all my belongings to the shop and wait for Dr.Wayne. After some time he finally arrives and we head into the shop and down the tunnel.

"So do you have all the copies?" he says as we head down the stairs to the tunnel.

"Yes I do, and don't worry I will destroy them when I'm outside the town since I don't want to deal with this town again." I say as we reach the bottom of the staircase. I flip the switch to turn on the lights, and we walk down the tunnel. Once we reach the end of the tunnel, there is a staircase that leads all the way back up. We look at each other in silence and just nod to one another. He turns around and starts heading back. After standing still for a few seconds I begin my way up the stairs and out of town.