

Continuing the Journey

By : Anno9

I am new to short story writing...actually, to story writing of any sort. This is my first. Will you please leave any relevant comments for me, please? I'd truly appreciate, and will do the same for you! This is Noah's story. He died at age 9 from Neuroblastoma.

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THIS IS UNFINISHED - I WOULD DEEPLY APPRECIATE ANY FEEDBACK TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT I SHOULD CONTINUE WRITING THIS. IS IT TOO LONG? IS IT BORING? IS IT RELATABLE? IS IT RELEVANT?

My name is Noah. I was nine years old when I died last Friday. I have been sick for six years, so I have no real memory of what it feels like to be healthy. I am all too familiar with being sick. Just three months after my third birthday, I was diagnosed with neuroblastoma, an aggressive pediatric cancer. The statistics are scary. I know this because my mom did fundraisers for neuroblastoma research and that is what she would always say. The statistics are scary. I think it means that most kids die when they have cancer.

I also know that neuroblastoma is not in the spell check dictionary. That would make my mom angry, too. She would say, "You don't have a voice. You need a voice!" Huh? I do have a voice. I used my voice to sass you! You got mad at me when I used my voice in that tone. At least, that is what you said.

So, anyway, now I'm dead. Dead is weird. No one knows what dead is like. You won't know what it's like until you're dead. Then you can't tell anyone because no one can hear you when you're dead. Not even the people who say they can hear dead. Believe me, they can't. I tried to talk to one of those people. They didn't hear me. I saw another dead do the same. They couldn't hear her either. I don't know who they are hearing. It isn't dead. Maybe they are hearing aliens and just think it is dead.

Being dead is pretty cool, though. I can see everything I want to. Sometimes I see things I don't want to see, but I remember that happening when I was alive, too, so I think it is better to be dead. I don't like to see my parents cry. They talk with my sister about how much they miss me. I miss them, too. ..in the alive sort of way. I miss hugging my mom. I miss driving the go cart with my dad. I miss swimming in our pool with my sister. I miss holding my dog.

The cool thing is that I can fly now. I can fly so high up in the sky and see the stars up close. I can also see all the neuroblastoma friends I made before we all died. I see Chloe and Joey and Nick and Tyler. There are more kids dead that I never met before, too.

We play dead soccer. It is so fun! Many of us were not healthy enough to play soccer when we were alive, so we don't really know what we're doing. My sister played soccer, though, so I went to a lot of games. I learned all about soccer from watching her, so I am the coach of our team, and the star player. I make all the goals!

We make the ball float in the air, so we get to fly when we play soccer. We soar all over the place. Really, really fast! My mom would warn me to be careful if she were here. I think it would scare her because she would worry that we will crash into each other. Don't worry, Mom. That won't happen. We're dead.

We just float through each other when we play together. We can kick a ball, though. We can make contact with things when we want to. We have to really want to. We all really want to kick a ball, so it is easy to do. It doesn't work with people, though. There are times when I really want to hug my mom, but I can't. Instead, I sit next to her on her bed and whisper in her ear. I love you, mom! You are the best mom ever. You took such good care of me and I was really happy even though I was sick. That's how good you are at being a mom!

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My sister is pretty awesome. She was really good to me. She would play with me all the time. She would bring her friends home from school and they would all want to hang out with me. I think they thought it was special to know a kid with cancer. To be touched by something like that. That's okay. I didn't care. They were nice to me and would often bring me cool gifts.

Anyway, I like to mess with my sister. It is funny. She is smart and she knows it is me. She tells me that at night when she is trying to go to sleep. That is mostly when she talks to me, even though she can't hear me. I move things around in her room. I like to hide her shoes. She says Mom will get mad at me if I make her late for school again, but it is so funny because her room is so messy I really just have to toss some of the crap on her floor over her shoes and they are buried.

One time, though, just for fun, I took one of her shoes and put it in the tree just outside her bedroom window. She couldn't get to it because the tree is too far for her to reach. I could get there because I can fly now. Mom and Dad said Hannah threw her shoe in the tree. They think she did it because she is upset that I died. She is upset that I died. She cries herself to sleep sometimes, but that is usually after she gets done laughing at the latest trick I have pulled on her. She knows it was me who put her shoe in the tree. She told me so.

I know people are sad that I died. They are also sad that I was sick in the first place. I can read the cards they have sent to my family. I was never healthy enough to go to school, so I was homeschooled. I can read, though. I had a lot of time to practice reading. It was a good way to pass all the time I spent in hospitals. I'm happy I learned to read before I died. Some of the friends I have now did not learn to read when they were alive. It is different to learn new things when you are dead. It is really hard.

You are sort of stuck where you are when you died. I'm not going to grow up now that I am dead. My brain will be stuck at nine forever. That's okay. Being nine seems a lot better than being an adult. The dead adults seem sad a lot more than us kids. They even cry sometimes. I think they have a harder time getting used to being dead because they were alive for so long. I wasn't so used to being alive, especially because I was sick for so long. It is easy to get used to being dead for me. Even though I miss hugging my mom, and even though I feel bad when she cries because she misses me.

The thing is, there is a sort of life after death. I wasn't reborn. I didn't come back to earth as a dog, or something funny like that. I heard some of my sister's friends wonder if I would return as a dog once I died. That would be pretty hilarious! I don't know if that has happened to other deads, but I wonder if it does happen, if they know they used to be a person and they are now a dog. Or are they just a regular dog who doesn't know anything? I'm curious about that.

Anyway, but where I am now, I don't have to eat or sleep. I don't have to be careful even. That's really cool! I can fly all over the place, I can see things on earth if I want to, or I can stay up here with my friends and other deads. It is all just open space. It is always comfortable. Warm, but not hot; cool, but not cold. I like it here. I am not sick here. I can see who is still on earth and who loves me from there, and I can find my dead family, who also love me. My great grandpa is here, and he tells me funny stories about my grandma and my mom. He tells me stories about my great aunts and uncles, too. I tell him stories about things that happened after he died.

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