

“Broken”

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[30 Days of Writing](#) – One Word Prompts
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Day 25: “Broken”

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2005

Jamie stood back, hovering in the door frame. He couldn't bring himself to cross the threshold into the kitchen. Kay stood at the microwave, leaning forward against the counter. The machine whirred, spinning the bowl of soup around and around.

She looked... bad. Broken. Her hair, which she'd cut short earlier that year, hung limp against her forehead and the back of her neck. She'd lost so much weight in such a short amount of time that she looked almost like a living skeleton. Her t-shirt and jean shorts were baggie and hung off her thin frame. The dark circles around her dispirited eyes only made her look even more gaunt and hollow.

The woman before him didn't seem like his sister any more and that terrified him. His breath caught. His vision went hazy.

The cancer was taking her much faster than he could stand.

Never mind that he was here to help her. Never mind that her daughter, his niece was just in the other room waiting for him. Never mind that they were counting on him.

He couldn't do this.

Weight crushed his chest, making his heart hurt. It pumped harder and faster, kicking violently against his ribs. He was sure Kay could hear it, could hear him breathing heavily, frozen in the middle of the doorway, but she hadn't noticed him yet.

He couldn't do this.

It was all happening so fast. Everything was falling apart and it hit him all at once. He didn't remember leaving the apartment, or how he got downstairs, not until the cool autumn air hit him in the face.

Fuck, he couldn't do this.