

# An Accident

by

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Characters.

Libby.

Anton.

Setting.

Yes, a hospital room. And a bench outside.

Author's Note.

Well over a million people die in accidents every year around the world, but many more survive with various injuries of body, mind and spirit. Seven years ago, I was hit and run over in a traffic accident on my bike, joining others on the far side of one of life's great divides. I discovered that accident survivors live in the world in a different way. The life and death scenario of the accident, itself, is of course dramatic in ways the process of recovery is not. But there is something in the latter that is compelling on its own terms—and never-ending. And yet it was not until recently that I was able to imagine writing this play. For it was then that the idea of a relationship evolved to tell the story.

**SAMPLE SCENE**

Scene

Anton sits by Libby's bedside. They sit wordless for some time.

LIBBY

Are you married, Anton? Gay?

ANTON

Divorced.

LIBBY

Oh. I see.

I don't know what I am.

ANTON

(affirming, awkward) No.

LIBBY

You see, my memory's a little shaky.

(Anton nods.)

I seem to forget.

ANTON

(trying, helpless) You're not alone in that.

LIBBY

I'm not?

ANTON

(getting himself in deeper) But I have no excuse. For my forgetfulness.

LIBBY

Forget to watch the road sometimes?

(He bows his head.)

So what do you do?

ANTON

I teach history.

LIBBY

I see.

ANTON

The civil war is my, uh, main field of study.

LIBBY

Oh, yeah?

(looking him over)

Any children?

ANTON

One daughter. She's in med school now.

LIBBY

You must be very proud of her.

(pause)

Did you tell her about me?

ANTON

She knows about you.

LIBBY

What did you tell her about the accident?

ANTON

I told her—

LIBBY

What happened.

ANTON

Right.

LIBBY

What happened, Anton?

ANTON

You really?

LIBBY

Tell me. I want to hear it in your words.

(a pause)

ANTON

I bought a few groceries.

LIBBY

What kind?

ANTON

Oh, nothing much. The whole thing. It wasn't necessary.

LIBBY

You don't remember what you bought?

ANTON

Yes, I do. As a matter of fact. I bought cherries.

LIBBY

Cherries. Were they good? Were they sweet?

ANTON

They were sweet and good.

LIBBY

A good cherry is hard to find these days.

And then?

ANTON

I pulled out of the lot.

(a pause)

LIBBY

You had to have those cherries, didn't you, Anton?

ANTON

No.

LIBBY

Thank you. Now I know.

(She nods.)

Now I know what happened.

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