

THE DIRARY OF M

By Wayne D Heavey.

Inspired by a study and the author experience of the Mental Helath system. This story looks at why the mental health system needs to be revamped and the harsh realities of those who suffer the loss of one due to suicide and those going through the pain.

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"ON AVERAGE, EVERY 18 DAYS A CHILD UNDER 18 IN IRELAND DIES BY SUICIDE"

DARKNESS

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE ROOM

A typical intensive care room, a young man MARK FORREST, lays in the bed hooked up to a life support machine.

An upset woman SHONA FORREST in her early 40s, sits on a chair by the bed. Her head is placed on her hands staring at her son fight for his life.

A young nurse enters the room, she glances at SHONA and back at the monitor. Picking up MARK'S chart she dots down some notes.

INT. HOSPITAL - RECEPTION AREA - TWO NIGHTS BEFORE

MARK FORREST, an athletic looking young man, dark blue eyes and black shaggy hair that looks like it has not been cut in months, slowly walks into the reception area of the hospital.

He stops glancing around, he glances over at chairs, two patients, one elderly man asleep in a wheelchair and another man laying down across his girlfriend's lap.

MARK takes down his hood, walks up to the reception desk. The receptionist a woman in her 30s, with way too much make pulls the glass window open. MARK glances back at the entrance, he is clearly nervous. Standing up the receptionist greets MARK with a smile.

RECEPTIONIST

How can I help you?

MARK

(SOFTLY)

I-I-... Would like to talk to a doctor please.

RECEPTIONIST

Fill this out.

MARK

No... I have nothing physically wrong with me.

(CONTINUED)

RECEPTIONIST

Okay... Well can you explain to me why you want to see a doctor than?

MARK

(BREATHING HEAVY)

Please just get me a doctor.

RECEPTIONIST

You have to fill out these forms.

MARK

I told you i just need a doctor... to talk. I-I I WANT TO KILL MYSELF.

MARK swiftly looks around at the girlfriend of the man sleeping on her lap. She glances at MARK with a sympathy smile.

RECEPTIONIST

Okay. Have you cut yourself or tried anything to harm yourself physically?

MARK

(SOFTLY)

No.

RECEPTIONIST

Name?

MARK

I will write it down for you.

RECEPTIONIST stares at him for a moment confused, she slides him a pad. MARK glances down at his hands as he writes, his hands shake excessively. MARK slides her back the pad.

RECEPTIONIST

Okay... Take a seat and i will have someone with you shortly.

MARK looks like a lost figure as he walks over to chairs, he sits down and glances around. An old man, semi naked sits in a wheelchair with a blanket over his legs. His belongings, a pair of jeans and shoes are placed on the ground beside him. The man resting his head on his girlfriend lap has a gash to his head, dry blood is on his top. His girlfriend runs her fingers through his hair.

MARK glances down at his hands, they are still shaking uncontrollably. The girlfriend of the man stares over at him. He quickly slips his hands inside his pockets.

(CONTINUED)

Hours pass, MARK is still sitting in chairs, a man with an eye problem comes in screaming with his wife leading him to the window of reception. The concerned looking receptionist paces out from behind her desk pressing the button to open the double doors. Double doors swing open, the receptionist along with a nurse leads the man and wife through the doors. The doors close swiftly behind them. Soon after the man with the gash to his head is called, with the help of a doctor and his girlfriend he is helped through.

More hours pass, more patients come and go. MARK lays down across the chairs. The old semi naked guy gets up off the wheelchair, strolling to the bathroom in his boxers. Mark glances at him. A moment later the sound of a toilet flushing and the old man walks back out. He starts to grunt and make weird snorting sounds. Sitting back down in the wheelchair he pulls the blanket back over himself.

The double doors open swiftly, a doctor glances towards MARK, he strolls over to him holding an envelope in his hand. MARK gets up swiftly and meets the doctor half way.

MARK

Am i going to be seen now?

DOCTOR

No. I have arranged for you to go to another hospital.

The doctor hands him the envelope. MARK glances down at it.

DOCTOR

In the envelope is information for the hospital. We have phoned a taxi for you.

INT. HOSPITAL NO. 2 - RECEPTION AREA

MARK strolls in to the reception area. He glances over at chairs. Chairs is crowded with patients waiting to be seen, MARK strolls up to reception he is breathing heavy. He slides the envelope across to the receptionist who is much more attractive and softly spoken than the previous receptionist in the previous hospital.

The receptionist takes out the note which is handwritten. It reads "Sorry not our area". The receptionist shakes her head in disgust. She glances at MARK.

RECEPTIONIST 2

How are you feeling now Mark?

(CONTINUED)

MARK

Nervous.

RECEPTIONIST 2

I am going to get you seen to straight away. See that wheelchair over there?

MARK

Yes

RECEPTIONIST 2

Get in it. Because if they other patients waiting to be seen see you walking in with me they will go crazy and i have already been yelled at enough tonight.

MARK strolls over to the wheelchair and sits down in it. The receptionist is dressed in a black blouse, shes slim and looks very fit. She pushes MARK through the double doors and into a hallway that is filled with patients on trolleys.

INT. HOSPITAL NO.2 - CURTAIN AREA

The receptionist places the wheelchair right in front of the nurses station. She walks around, speaks to a doctor for a minute about MARK. She comes back to MARK.

RECEPTIONIST 2

Mark, i just spoke with Doctor Malone and he will see you soon. I hope you get sorted.

MARK

Thank you so much.

Doctor Malone comes behind MARK and pushes the wheelchair along the hallway, MALONE is tall, black spiked hair. He pushes MARK in to a curtain area of the ANE.

DOCTOR MALONE

My name is Malone. Tell me how long have you been feeling low?

MARK

Couple of days.

DOCTOR MALONE

Anything in particular happen?

(CONTINUED)

MARK  
Nothing really.

DOCTOR MALONE  
Have you tried to kill yourself  
before?

MARK  
No.

DOCTOR MALONE  
Really? Never cut yourself or hold  
your breath?

MARK  
Hold my breath?

Doctor Malone takes MARK blood pressure, he dots down the  
results in his pad.

DOCTOR MALONE  
Bit high. Are you feeling anxious?

MARK  
Yes.

DOCTOR MALONE  
I will give you some exfexor to  
help you relax. While your waiting  
try get some rest. Do you want me  
to ring your parents?

MARK  
No.

Doctor Malone nods his head and pulls back the curtain, he  
walks out and pulls the curtain closed. A nurse walks  
towards him.

DOCTOR MALONE  
Get security to guard this kid. I  
don't want him to start kicking  
off.

NURSE  
Okay. And you are going to?

DOCTOR MALONE  
Get some exfexor for him and ring  
upstairs to get a psych counsel.

A tall security guard well built stands in front of MARK  
curtain area guarding. Inside the curtain MARK lays down on  
the bed staring at the ceiling.

A short while goes by, MARK is fast asleep on the bed. The curtain pulls back MALONE walks in, nudges MARK awake.

DOCTOR MALONE

Mark, I am afraid there is no psych upstairs so. I am going to give you some anti depressants and send you home. I will get your GP to follow up with you, see how you are doing in the next couple of days.

EXT. BENCH - MORNING

The hospital is in the background as MARK sits on a bench overlooking a lake. The sun is coming up. He glances around taking in the morning air.

MARK gets up and walks around the other side of the lake, finding a shallow area, he kneels down and splashes water over his face. His reflection shows a tired looking MARK.

INT. MCDONALDS RESTAURANT

MARK, reaching into his pocket pulls out coins. He counts them and glances at the menu. Examines it carefully before ordering.

He takes a seat in a booth, opens his double sausage and egg mcmuffin. He takes a big bite out of it before glancing around at the empty restaurant. SKY NEWS is on a screen in the corner of the restaurant. Two guys middle aged, hungover looking enter his line of vision, they stroll by his table and up to the counter to order.

MARK VO

Suffering from a mental illness in this country means you are screwed big time. I lied back at the hospital i did try kill myself before, but did not have the balls to go through with it.

Cut to MARK standing on the edge of a platform, a garda talks him away from the edge and puts the cuffs on him.

MARK VO

They Gardai arrested me that day for been suicidal as crazy that sounds. I am waiting a year and half to see a psychiatrist for a mental health assessment. The

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARK VO (cont'd)

system is a joke really. I suppose if i had the money i would go private. My mum thinks it is the waiting that gets me down. Hell the waiting, never ever crosses your mind how can it. This disease takes over your brain and you need your brain to survive. Accident and Emergency needs a psych nurse in my opinion. The ANE doctors don't really care, they don't have the time for us. Once we don't have a wound they don't care. I know of people who have actually self harmed to make sure they are seen.

MARK places all of his rubbish on the tray, stands and strolls over to a bin sliding the contents off the tray in to it. He places the tray with the rest of them on top of the bin.

INT. BEDROOM

The bedroom is dark, curtains pulled keeping the light out. MARK is sitting at his desk, writing in his diary. Clicking his desk light, it lights up the room. The room is crystal clean, a single bed with Manchester United bed covers is placed against the wall. Pictures of MARK holding trophies decorate the wall. His medals are hung on a medal rack that is screwed also to his wall.

MARK VO

I am exhausted physically and mentally. My body aches, the one thing i have learned from suffering with a psychological problem is, it's a lonely battle. You try to get people to understand how you feel, but they just don't get it. I don't have many friends, hell i only have one my dog Lucky. I believe he knows what i am going through but they others such as my mum and sister. They can never get it because they have never went through this, so the connection is not there, the understanding between one is non existent.

Later that night.

(CONTINUED)

FORREST jumps off his bed and pukes excessively on the floor. He weeps pulling his hair aggressively. FORREST stands in the middle of the floor. He slides down his bottom and weeps more.

MARK

Please make this stop. Please.

FORREST begins to punch the floor hard with his fist. The room starts to spin, he looks exhausted. Tears begin to fall from his eyes.

Short time passes, FORREST lays on his back in the middle of the floor staring up at the roof. He looks agitated, slashing the air with his fists and kicking out with his legs. He is breathing heavy, an anxiety attack starts. FORREST tries to scream but can't instead he can only cough, its an exaggerated cough, more sick falls from his mouth.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE ROOM - PRESENT

SHONA lays asleep on her hands, her daughter EMILY ROSE, a young girl no more than 20, slim brown hair taps SHONA on the shoulder. EMILY ROSE is soft spoken. She has two cups of tea in her hand, she hands one to SHONA who greets her with a smile.

EMILY ROSE

The guards are outside, i can speak to them if you like?

SHONA

No, i will speak to them. You sit down and keep your brother company.

SHONA sips from her tea, EMILY ROSE hands her a tissue, SHONA takes it from her and wipes her eyes and cleans her nose. She puts on a brave face as she walks out the door.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY

Two Gardai, one male and the other female both in their late 30s stand against a wall. SHONA approaches them. The female Garda introduces herself.

GARDA PETERSON

I am Garda Peterson and this is Garda Sheehan. We would like to talk to you about your son and why he tried to take his own life. Is that okay?

(CONTINUED)

SHONA nods "yes".

GARDA Peterson leads SHONA into the family room with GARDA Sheehan taking up the rear.

HOSPITAL - FAMILY ROOM

The family room is decorated with a sofa and two recliners. A small coffee table is placed in the middle with stacks of magazines and newspapers scattered on top. The TV is on in the corner. GARDA Sheehan snatches the remote from the window sill and mutes it. SHONA sits on the sofa her hands clutched together, PETERSON sits down beside her and SHEEHAN stands guard at the door.

GARDA PETERSON

Was your son involved in drugs Mrs. Forrest?

SHONA

No.

GARDA PETERSON

Are you sure?

SHONA

Yes i am sure.

GARDA PETERSON

If he is, and he owes somebody a debt, this would be a good time to tell us.

SHONA

I AM TELLING YOU MY SON IS NOT A DRUG ADDICT

GARDA SHEEHAN

Calm down Mrs. Forrest we are trying to figure out why he tried to do this.

SHONA

He did this because he has problems. Drugs is not one of them. My son is no dealer, he is a talented young man that has psychological problems.

GARDA PETERSON

Lets take it that he does have psychological problems. How long

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GARDA PETERSON (cont'd)  
are you aware of his suicidal  
behavior?

SHONA  
Two years. Its not a theory that he  
does have problems. Its a fact.

GARDA PETERSON  
Why did he not try something like  
this before?

SHONA  
You's arrested him a couple months  
back because he threatened to jump  
off a platform at the local train  
station.

PETERSON glances at SHEEHAN who shrugs his shoulders.

GARDA PETERSON  
We were not aware of this.

SHONA  
WELL YOU SHOULD INVESTIGATE A BIT  
MORE BEFORE COMING IN HERE AND  
ACCUSING HIM OF BEEN A DRUG ADDICT.  
Not every young man or woman has a  
drug problem.

SHONA swiftly stands up and paces for the door.

SHONA  
If you don't mind i am going back  
to my sons bedside.

GARDA PETERSON  
Okay. We will be in touch.

SHONA  
Don't bother.

GARDA PETERSON  
Well its part of our investigation.

SHONA ignores her and walks out heading across the hall and  
into the room her son is in.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE ROOM

SHONA breaks down crying, she sobs heavily as her daughter EMILY ROSE consoles her.

EMILY ROSE

Shh Shh... Its going be okay.

INT. BEDROOM - PREVIOUS NIGHT

MARK sits at his desk writing in his diary. The curtains remained pulled with his desk light providing the room with light.

MARK VO

Last night i believed was my last resort reaching out to the health system for help. They could not provide me the care i seeked, the pain i feel is still there, the images i see remain. My mind is telling me to quit, my body aching to rest. I now must put an end to the suffering, to the pain i feel. These tablets in my system don't heal me, they just cover the cracks for a short time. Time is not what i have, i am desperate, desperate for relief, relief from the pain, the suffering, the heartache, the sleepless nights. Suicide was never my option, it is not an option in my mind its a resource to stop.

EXT. CANAL - NIGHT

MARK stands on the bank, tears fall from his eyes, he closes his eyes and jumps in to the air, a car coming around the corner catches him in his headlights, a big splash his made. MARK comes up once, goes back down, comes up again, goes back under, comes up for a third time and goes back under. Seconds past MARK is under the water.

MARK VO

When i die... I want my death to be educational. Educational to those that need to be. Accident and Emergency doctors, the ordinary joe soaps that tell you to cop on and get on with it and finally the government who ignore suicide. You

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARK VO (cont'd)

don't have to have a physical injury or illness to have problems. I sometimes wish i had cancer, at least than people could see the effects it has on me, with a mental illness they can't see and they don't want to listen.

The scene cuts back and forward. In the intensive care unit MARK'S ventilator machine beeps, doctors put the paddles on him, shock him once, than twice, than three times, they doctor who sent MARK to a different hospital is the man with the paddles in his hand. MARK is gone, SHONA sobs uncontrollably and for the first time we see EMILY ROSE cry.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - MORNING

MARK is been lowered into the ground, the birds chirp, SHONA sobs, EMILY ROSE holds her.

A coffin sits in the grave, mourners both young and old walk up and throw flowers on top of the coffin. Some touch the hand of the poor duo, others feel too awkward to even glance at them.

SHONA stands alone looking down into the grave. She clutches a picture of MARK close to her chest. She kisses it and throws it carefully on top of the coffin.

INT. BEDROOM - SAME DAY

The door of the bedroom opens. Light shines in, SHONA clutching the diary slowly walks in, switches on the light. SHONA walks to the bed and sits on glances around the room. She looks at pictures of MARK accepting sports awards and trophies.

MARK VO

The last page i dedicate to you. My mother, the person who consistently was there for me. When others did not care, you were there. When i fell apart, you were there to pick me up. Do not be upset, i am fine. I ask just one more thing from you and i know this will make you smile. Please pull back the curtains because i am not in a dark place no more.

(CONTINUED)

SHONA chuckles for a brief moment before a tear falls from eye. She stands up and walks towards the window, she takes a deep breath and slowly pulls the curtains open. A big ray of sunshine beams into the room blinding her.

MARK VO

Today i say goodbye, by the time you read this i will be long gone. I will have accepted defeat and will hand myself over to the demon. I am angry at the hospital, mental health department and government for the treatment or lack of it they have given me and people like me. (PAUSE) I thought doctors did not choose their patients, they had to treat whoever came in the door, how wrong i was. I blame those who turned me away a couple nights ago for me to turn to suicide or self harm. The experience just made me want to give in more, i feel hopeless, i feel i have went too far to be helped. When i am found, i don't want my death to be a sad thing, i want it to be something that people will learn from, mainly the hospital's and their attitudes towards those who suffer from mental disorders. We become anxious about the uncertainty in our lives, we all do. I have wrote guidelines, i feel suffering from my demons makes me qualified to write guidelines for those who will treat me, these guidelines... are not a guide as such, but what all of us who struggle want... To mom and Emily Rose, i love yous so much, i am not gone in spirit, i will sit right beside yous. I will kiss and give dad a hug from yous. To those who suffer everyday, "Don't Hide, Fight It".

INT. THE DAIL - 1 YEAR LATER

A young politician stands and argues why a new Mental Health system should be put in place to tackle the growing suicide problem.

SHONA celebrates hands aloft in the air, smiling and tearful with Emily Rose outside the government building.

(CONTINUED)

FADE TO DARKNESS:

"My son is not a statistic, he was a human being"

"You might ignore it, but Suicide will never go away"

"Don't Hide It, Fight It"

1. Do not judge us, our brain, thoughts, emotions and body have been taken over by something we are fighting.

2. Treat us with respect, would you turn away an angry undiagnosed cancer patient? I don't think so.

3. We need quicker assessments, imagine a cancer patient waiting two years for a biopsy, it is unthinkable.

4. Our assessments is our biopsy.

5. Think if it was a member of your family, and he or she was turned away. How would you feel?

6. We come to you as a last resort, and if you are not willing to help well than it is all over for us.

THE END

Credits.