

It's Never Too Late

By Lyna Pravy

It was your typical Wednesday morning. The city was alive and bustling with folks walking, bicycling, or driving to work. Some people, however, were headed to the hottest coffee shop to indulge in caffeine and gossip addictions. Speaking of which, on the sidewalk three scantily clad women were marching in line plastered to their phones. I, being a handsome enough man with a taste in only the finest of women, glazed over them like the latest celebrity column. Who has time for such rubbish?

I casually entered the building across from the coffee shop with a sign that read "Bob McArther's Frame Emporium" in peeling white letters. Good ol' Bob passed away generations ago and his decedents still owned the store. I muttered a good morning to the head cashier like always and stood at my usual spot right next to the golden frames on display. The game of waiting for a customer was not entertaining. In fact, it was more fun to count the number of frames on the shelves.

I was up to twenty-two frames when suddenly, like a girl descending upon a herd of gaming geeks, a customer walked into the store and immediately captured the interest of the employees, myself included. Unfortunately it was my job to pester customers with questions, such as: "Would you like to see that frame up close?" or "How about this one?" but never "Could you *please* hurry up so I can get back to being paid to do nothing?" Oh how I wish I could ask that last one.

The customer looked to be about 80 years old and still nimble enough to walk on her own. She had a large picture cradled in her arms like a baby. I walked up to her, not quite sure if I was happy or upset with the fact that I would have to do something.

"Would you like any help finding a frame?" I asked her most sincerely.

Glancing up at me and, with a voice as sweet as maple syrup, she whispered, "Oh yes. I would like a nice frame for this picture". She slowly lowered her arms revealing the entirety of the picture. It was of a blue-eyed man appearing to be in his late 30's. I was about to offer an exquisite silver frame when her voice pierced the quiet air, "May I ask you something?"

"Sure go ahead."

"What would you do if you only had six months to live?"

I couldn't help but stare at her. It took me a few moments to register the question. She must have sensed my hesitation, because she followed with: "I ask because my grandson in this picture passed away two years ago from cancer. He was told he had three months to live but he thankfully made it to six."

The only thing I could muster was that no one had ever asked me that question and I hadn't thought about it.

On the walk home under the intense street lights I continued to ponder the question. Six months doesn't sound like a lot of time if it's a countdown to your doom. Six months. Six...months...

It's Never Too Late

By Lyna Pravy

I couldn't fall asleep. My arm draped off of the bed as the alarm clock glared the neon red time into my face. It was only 9:32 pm. I decided that the only way I was going to fall asleep was if I did something constructive. I flicked the lamp resting atop the nightstand on, slumped out of bed, and sat at my desk. With pen and paper ready, I made a list of what I had always wanted to do, such as travel the world, make new friends, and get a better job. How typical of most of the population.

After some time passed I had about ten items on my list. Feeling satisfied, I underlined "write a story" because that was a recurring item on my yearly New Year's resolutions, sadly never pursued. I blankly stared out of the tiny window in my apartment. The stars were probably there but I couldn't see them thanks to all of the light pollution. My eyes dragged back to the list. I studied it for a little while.

Suddenly, something inside me triggered. It was as if a big bolt of lightning came down from the sky and zapped my soul, awakening me to the core of my very being. I was determined to achieve my greatest goal right then and there: to be an author.

Time seemed to stop as I hastily opened the right-hand drawer of my desk, pulled out more loose-leaf paper, and got to work. I feverishly wrote until my hand grew sore.

I looked at the clock and sighed. It was now four in the morning and I was nowhere near finished. I decided to call out of work feigning being ill and continued writing. I wrote and wrote, only stopping for bathroom breaks and the occasional bite to eat. The novel was getting done and I didn't care how long it took.

Finally, after another two days of calling out and racing to put thoughts to paper, I was done with my rough draft. Tears welled up in my eyes because I had finally accomplished something, something that I wanted to do for the longest time. Sure, I still had a lot to do, such as finding an editor and getting the novel published, yet nothing mattered as much as actually having it in my hands. Somewhere deep inside of me I knew this was my calling; I just had to have the courage to start.

I happily glanced down at the list and the novel I made a few days ago. My eyes widened as I realized, if I only had six months to live, I would definitely be able to accomplish what was on my list and more. It also dawned on me to start writing down the steps I could take to turn my passion into a source of income and finally be able to quit the unfulfilling job I had.

Another thought resonated within me; it is amazing that so many people live out their lives not wanting to pursue greater goals. They are merely content in their comfort zones while not daring to venture out doing noble things.

*Determination and persistence go a very long way* was the last thing I wrote before I got up and put step one into motion.