

Booklet Code: SM-1104 Step 1 View all

STEP 1. 1000 words or less

Enter your Scenario responding the the IC Scenario Writing Future Scene.

Title: Hyphaebatin: Friend or Foe

"When antibiotics became industrially produced following WW2, our quality of life and our longevity improved enormously. No one thought bacteria were going to become resistant."

-Bonnie Bassler

"Benjamin! Think of Janice! Without this, who knows what will happen!"

As I hide behind the stairs just outside of my bedroom, I hear all of their fights. Being sick in 2041 is a nightmare. I've had Tuberculosis for roughly two years, but after the first round of normal antibiotics didn't work, we learned that I had an antibiotic resistant form of the disease. My parents went through five counties trying to find one with Hyphaebactin available, since supply is always low according to dad.

"The mortality rate has skyrocketed, Benjamin! Can you really not think about someone else in your life? Not even your own daughter?"

I remember when I first started showing symptoms, everyone thought it was some type of viral infection, like the flu. When it started getting worse and I developed new symptoms, I was rushed to the hospital, where after they assessed my signs and ran a few tests, they diagnosed me with TB. I still remember the hologram that came to my parents, I don't think I'll ever be able to forget it. "Your daughter has been infected with Tuberculosis, I'm sorry." Their reactions were chilling, as they began to understand the toll that the treatment would take on our lives.

"I'm trying to save us, Julia! Hyphaebactin is impossible to get nowadays! Do you want the whole lot of us to suffer?"

When we began the old antibiotic treatment, a holographic doctor would appear every day at 5:30pm and would make sure I took the right set of pills each day, as Rifampin and Isoniazid were meant to be taken at first, and once I was mostly cured they would slowly ease me onto different medications. After the symptoms kept getting worse, we decided to do an antibiogram test. The results showed that I had a type of infection that was resistant to nearly every broad-spectrum, derivative, and narrow-spectrum antibiotic besides Hyphaebactin. The AI doctor told my parents that it was some sort of multi-drug-resistant infection. I remember the room went quiet for a moment, and all I heard was the slight whirr of the AI as it projected the doctor. The only thing my father said to the AI was a soft "Thank you."

"Julia, you know rent keeps going up! Since she got sick, it's nearly doubled! Do you even want a roof over our heads?"

My mom is a part of the Antibiotics Compliance Board and doubles as an AAO. She is one of the good ones who only approved the ones who really needed it, though some thought she was being biased by approving me. Ever since the rent has gone up, my dad's started working too; he is a lobbyist for the Global Antibiotic Protection Committee. He tries to get them more authority so they can regulate the security on vessels, making it less likely they will lose any in transport. They used to both share the same viewpoints, until the prices started skyrocketing. My dad immediately was against this, thinking that it would help way less people this way, while my mom thought it was justified and people should just pay for it. From the sounds of tonight's argument, it looks like we might be choosing between Hyphaebactin and this month's rent.

"Well Julia? What's your choice?"

Rent isn't the only expensive thing. I go to several different doctors every two weeks, and even with my family's good jobs, it's a struggle to pay every time. Since so few people are able to get approved, they can charge whatever they want. Mom keeps talking about the ACB trying to use the antibiotic sparingly. See, so many want it that they're afraid of making the bacteria resistant to this too. The threats that mom gets when she doesn't approve someone for it are terrible, though they have added more security to combat that. Dad was also trying to get more regulations on farmers who are using it as a prophylactic dose, because that sort of behavior in a CAFO caused the resistant bacteria in the first place. It seems like everyone is in a sheer state of panic over getting their hands on this antibiotic.

"...You're right Ben. Rent is more important."

I wish I could say that my family's situation is rare, but with poverty levels climbing exponentially, it's far from unordinary. I watch as my parents hug, my mom softly crying into his shoulder. They begin to make their ways to the stairs, which is my queue to return to my room.

"Honey, your mother and I have something we need to tell you..."

-3 years later

"Breaking News: GAPC Gains Authority to regulate security on transportation vessels"

Sitting in my hovering hospital bed, I can't help but smile. Dad finally did it. Last year, mom managed to pass better acts that would better control the spread of Hyphaebactin antibiotics, nearly eliminating the thought of resistant bacteria. Together, they managed to contribute to the lowering of the cost to the miracle medicine and were able to stop the use of it as a prophylactic. The amount of people who are struggling to pay has dropped exponentially, as even doctors have been ordered to lower their prices. Unfortunately, by this time I was too sick to be effectively treated. I wish I could see more, but I fear my time has come to move on. However, I can go now with a peace of mind that the world will be better off with the changes my parents made.