At about seven p.m. a man walks into the pancake house. Without asking to be seated, he heads to a booth with a window that overlooks the wooded lot next door that has a trailer placed on it. He seats himself and just looks out the window as he has done for the past twelve years.

The waitress, whose name is Michelle, notices him and comes over with a *Dr. Pepper* with little ice, which is his usual drink that he has ordered the entire time that he has been cominng there even though he has never spoken a word. As the waitress starts to leave, he touches her arm and asks if she has a moment to spare for an old man. Shocked, the waitress says sure but she needs a second to check on her other customers.

After checking on her other customers, Michelle heads to where the other waiters and waitresses are standing. She asks Michael if he could keep an eye on her other tables because the old man had asked to talk to her.

"He actually spoke?" Michael asked.

"Yeah. He asked me if I could spare a moment to talk to him." Michelle replied.

Michael assured her that he would keep an eye on her tables while she talked to the old man. Michelle finished giving her other customers refills and then went to sit with the old man.

"Okay, I am finally caught up with my tables. What can I do for you?"

"I know that it might have came as a shock that I asked to talk to you but I have had a few things on my mind lately"

"Well to be honest, we never even knew that you could talk. I mean, you have been coming in here all of these years and never said a word."

"I understand. I apologize for the shock that I gave you while ago. Could you please forgive me?"

"Sure."

"Let me first introduce myself. My name is Tracy Hand.," the old man said.

"My name is Michelle Rose. It is a pleasure to finally know you."

"Have you ever wonder what might have been?"

"I don't quite know if I follow you."

"Well, have you ever wondered what might have been if you were just a little bit braver?"

"I guess so. I just never really gave it much thought."

"Have you ever lost someone that you love all because you were not braver?"

"No, not that I remember. Have you?" Michelle asked while already knowing the answer.

At the thought of his past, Tracy Hands eyes started to well up with tears. Michelle reaches over while looking at the longing in his eyes. She just sat there for what seemed like thirty minutes watching Tracy's past play in his eyes. After a while, she barely heard him whisper; and that whisper was just one word.

"Janice!"

"What? I couldn't hear what you said."

"Her name is Janice. She is the one that I truly loved but was too scared to do anything about it. Fear will cause a person to do things that they normally would not do. For me, it caused me not to speak up about my love for her. This has weighed on me all my life."

"How long has it really been?" Michelle asked with true curiosity.

"It has been sixty years. I met her in the third grade and thought that she was an angel. I have always loved her but was just too scared to say anything to her."

They just sat there for a few more minutes in complete silence. Tracy eventually stirred first. Michelle looked into his eyes and saw true sincerity in them.

"Thank you for taking the time to listen to an old man. I am only asking that you do not let opportunities pass you by; Grab hold of the ones that you love and tell them that you love them. Don't waste time being scared."

As he finished speaking, he got up and left the restaurant. Michelle and the others watched as he walked over to the trailer on the wooded lot next door because that is where he lived. A few days later, Michelle was reading the newspaper and happened to turn to the obituary section. Right away, she noticed a familiar name. It was Tracy Hand.

The old man had passed away right after talking to her. She read the obituary and decided to go to his funeral a couple of days later.

As she was sitting in the funeral homes room with his body, a woman walked in and went straight to the coffin. While the woman looked at Tracy’s body, she broke out into racking sobs. Michelle went up to her so that she may comfort her. After a while, the woman calmed down enough to be guided toward a chair. Michelle noticed that they were the only two people there.

"Thank you,” the woman said after calming down enough to talk.

"You're welcome." Michelle said.

"My name is Janice."

As the woman said her name, Michelle remembered the conversation that she had with Tracy. This is the woman that he loved his entire life. Did she know?

"You know he loved you his entire life?" Michelle said.

"I did not know. Why didn't he say anything to me?"

"He was scared."

"He should have told me. I loved him my entire life also. Now it's too late to do anything."

Michelle learned a valuable lesson just then. She realized that a person should not let fear rule over their lives. Love can conquer anything that comes your way. Never wait until it is too late to do something.