

“‘Were you afraid of him dying?’ ‘I was afraid of him living.’ ‘Why?’ He wrote, ‘Life is scarier than death’” (322 Safran Foer).

*Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* touched me in a profound way. “Life is scarier than death” is a concept that I have never really thought about, but it is true. People live their lives afraid of death; they are afraid of what will happen once they cease to exist. Death is a scary thought, but isn’t life scarier? To live is an awfully big adventure. Life brings hard decisions, deep emotions and loss. All of these are inevitable in life.

At some point in a person’s life they are going to love someone deeper than they can ever imagine, but there is a risk that they’ll lose that person, in some way or another. Once the person is lost, the other will feel like the world has disappeared, and there they are, standing alone. To feel like this is a part of life! It is my view that it is better to have loved and lost than to have never loved at all. Oskar’s grandfather never got over losing his first wife. He was still mourning her after thirty years. This is the unhealthy way of dealing with loss of a loved one. Death should not be feared nor regretted; it should be celebrated, for with death there is new life. People have to die in order to make room for all the new life being brought into the world.

Love is not the only emotion people face, they also experience anger and disappointment. Both are significant, and tremendously essential to life. No one desires to be disappointed, but it happens. It is enormously hard to get what you want all the time, it just does not always happen. If we always got what we desired then we wouldn’t know what it was like to earn anything. People have to figure things out for themselves and have to work hard to be happy. People have to make the final decisions in their lives that will determine their fate as a human in this modern world. That thought is intimidating and makes life scary, scarier than death.