

ONE PERSON TOO MANY™

Because being truthful comes at a cost

She Said She Was Dying Dirty

*"I feel like I'm
dying dirty."*

Tammy was living with advanced cancer. Her wound was not just painful—it was leaking, odorous, and humiliating. She wouldn't let her husband near her. She wouldn't let her family see her. She was dying in isolation, not because she wanted to be alone, but because she felt too ashamed for anyone to come close.

She sat in front of me, desperate for dignity. Not more appointments. Not more referrals. Not polite nods and paperwork. She needed relief—and she needed someone to actually see her.

When I called the palliative care director who had sent her to me, the response was dismissive. "You're just a nurse. I'll take it from here." But "taking it from here" never brought her back to my clinic. I never saw her again.

Before she left that day, I gave her what I could—dressings to absorb the drainage, supplies to neutralize the smell, medication to ease her discomfort. But I knew in my core that it was too late to change her story.

Tammy is the reason I continued my education. She is the reason I now ask the hardest questions, the reason I push for autonomy, the reason the Purity Model exists.

Because dying in pain is wrong. Dying in shame is worse. And dying unseen is unacceptable.

Her story can't be told by her anymore. But it can still be heard.

Because one person dying dirty is **one person too many**.

If care had centered around her from the start—if someone had asked, listened, and acted sooner—Tammy's last months could have been different. She didn't need a miracle. She needed humanity.

If you have a story like Tammy's, your voice matters.

Share it, so it is not forgotten. So no one else becomes **one person too many**.