5-1-2009

Clouded Memories

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Recommended Citation
Available at: http://commons.cu-portland.edu/promethean/vol17/iss1/14

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LIES, EYES, GOODBYES

Brittani Brown

Yelling, Nagging, evil words being spoken
Two hearts filled with hatred, but yet we hold on
Lies, cries, promises being broken
A love we shared now completely gone
Forever to the end where did it go wrong?
A friendship we grew, has now faded away
Missing the days when we played our favorite song
And now there's nothing left to say
The keys to our heart has now fallen apart
The love we had will never be the same
Perhaps it is time to let go and restart
I will erase your face and even your name
The soul is revealed in the emptiness of our eyes
A moan of sigh, our final goodbyes, goodbye

CLOUDED MEMORIES

Salena Stopper

She's close, but far away. She's written on my heart, but faded in my mind. I remember some details, but most are dim and forgotten, washed out with the years. Sometimes I think I can hear her voice, but then I realize it's just my imagination tricking me. Other times I think I can feel her holding me in her arms, but again, it's just my imagination. I try to picture her in my mind when my eyes are shut tight, but all I see is a dark shadow. A vague outline of what used to be a bright and vibrant memory. The only way I can see her in my mind is through old photos and other people's memories.

I almost remember her eyes. They were a rich, dark chocolate brown like mine; they sparkled when she laughed, but turned hard when she got upset. She had thick, dark brown hair that she permed because she didn't like her straight hair, which used to be long and beautiful chestnut color. She would put her hair in a pony tail that would partially fall out and frame her face. She had a voice that I remember would soothe me when I was hurting or upset. She was tall for a woman, standing about 5'10".

She was beautiful.

I don't remember a whole bunch about her, but others do. I hear stories all the time on how she would pull pranks on others, or crack a joke that kept people thoroughly entertained. I hear stories of how she would peer her head around a doorframe and pretend someone snuck up behind her, grabbed her by her thin neck and started choking her. My aunts, uncles, and grandparents chuckle just at the thought of it. I wish I could remember that person, but all I see when I think of her is a faded memory.

Faded, but not forgotten.

I remember times that she would comfort and calm us with her soothing voice, making us feel like everything would be alright. There was one time in particular that I remember. I had a horrible ear infection that kept me up and made it hard
for me to sleep. She came into my room and picked me up. My arms grasped her as she carried me to the living room. She held me on the couch as I cried, confused on why my ears hurt so much. She rocked me back and forth, speaking calm, reassuring words over me while my dad went to the doctor to get the medications. Some days she would be sleeping and other days she would be awake and happy. One time she was actually sitting up and brushing her teeth even though the brush probably felt like ten pounds to her.

Her right leg was paralyzed and she had a pouch for her bladder that had been taken out from her previous bout of cancer. Her dark hair was cropped short probably from the nurses cutting it or from her hair growing back from the chemotherapy. Her skin felt hard, dry and limp, like the life was slowly being sucked out of it. Her mouth was open as she struggled to breathe. Pneumonia had started to set in.

While I stood there watching her, my mind traveled back to a time when I was four. She was finally able to leave the hospital because she had successfully beaten her first bout of cancer. The doctors said all the cancer was gone, but little did they know she would be gone in a few years. I remember going with my dad to pick her up. To this day I don’t remember why he took just me, but there must have been a good reason. I hadn’t been around her for a few months, so I was terribly shy at first. I didn’t know how to act around her. I sat between her and my dad in the truck on the way back and I remember peeking at her through the hair hanging around my face. She would smile and start talking to me. After a few minutes, I finally came out of my shell and got over my shyness.

I know that if I could go back to that precious moment in time, I would throw my arms around her scruffy body and hold onto her for dear life. I would never let go. I crave her hugs everyday and without her in my life I don’t feel complete, even after eleven and a half years.

There was another time I remember when I was six. She was in the middle of battling her second bout of cancer. We had come to visit her for a while. It was one of her better days and she had two cookies left over from her lunch. One cookie was chocolate chip, the other peanut butter and she split them in half for us to eat. Since I was allergic to peanut butter at that time, I grabbed the chocolate chip one before she could do anything. She reprimanded me and I felt bad and tried to put it back. She told me that since I touched it, I had to eat it. Sometimes I wish I could go back and do that all over again and wait for my turn, but I treasure that memory, so I wouldn’t have it any other way.

I barely remember that day, the day that ultimately changed my life forever. I woke up to the sound of my dad in the bathroom getting ready. Thinking it was around seven o’clock in the morning, I went back to sleep when in reality it...
was actually around four thirty in the morning. I woke up later to voices drifting down from the living room. Curious, I went out to the living room only to find a couple of our neighbors sitting solemnly on our beaten up couches. They were an older couple that lived across the street from us and loved our family so much. I was confused on why they were at our house so early in the morning.

I asked where my dad was and they hurriedly hushed me so I wouldn’t wake up my siblings. My brother and sisters finally woke up and a lady from our church came to relieve our neighbors so they could go home and get ready for the day. In the middle of the afternoon, my dad finally came home. He dragged his feet to the door with his head held low. He then told us the news that still has yet to really hit me. The woman that was my hero and my comfort was gone—never coming back.

I never got to say goodbye.

It is now April of 2008. The memories are there but faint, distant. I try to see her in my mind, but it’s like looking through a fog. You can see the outline but not the whole picture. As you get closer to the object it gets clearer, but as you walk on past it, the image dissipates. I can’t see the sparkle in her eye, hear the comfort in her voice, or the feel of her arms enveloping me. I can’t remember the sound of her laugh as she made a joke or teased my dad.

I can’t remember the details anymore and it scares me, terrifies me. I took advantage of her when I was young and drove her crazy most days. She loved me though even if I made her want to pull her hair out.

I miss her.

It’s hard watching girls who have an amazing relationship with their caregivers. Since I only knew mine for a few years, I never got to fully experience that special and precious connection. She did so much for us and now she’s no longer here.

I miss the fun times we had with her when we played house and she went camera happy. I also miss the memories we would have together if she were still here. Our first day of school, sports games, and Sleighbells, Our school’s winter formal, are only a few examples. I wonder what my high school years would be like. Would she be the one all my friends went to for advice? Would I have been more popular? What will my college graduation be like, or my wedding? Who will aid my dad in giving me away to my husband? How will I be able to take care of my children correctly? Who will give me advice on marriage and family life?

I need her.

But she’s gone now.

She was my hero, my safety net, and my comfort. She brought sanity to my life. She made my day beautiful and made me feel special. I felt loved, cared for, and blessed when she was still here. She was brave and took cancer head on. She was my example and my role model. She was not afraid to die even though it crushed her to leave us. Some of her last words were, “I praise you God!” and “I thank you God!” She was all of those things and she was my mother.

My birth mom. The one that unknowingly carried my sister Sierra and I in her womb at the same time. The one that had four kids within four years with all of us in diapers for a period of time. She was one that sacrificed for us daily, always putting us first and her last. She’s the woman I long for and crave with every fiber of my being. She’s the one I cherish deep in my heart. She was amazing.

She’s my Momma Sue.