

Remembering Maggie

I believe this experience has affected me more than anything else I have experienced in my entire life. If I were to plot out my life in a timeline, emphasizing all the big events- like they do in magazines- it would be "1986-born"—"2004-Smith College"—"May 10, 2006-close friend suffered stroke". This was the first time someone my own age came close to death- it was the first time I really thought about life and death.

I feel like I will spend the rest of my life trying to figure out why it happened. And I know that I will never find my answer. I understand now why people who have experienced the loss of a family member advocate for things, like MADD.

But, what could we advocate for? Make sure you get hundreds of tests to make sure you aren't getting blood clots? Check on other people in your dorm all the time? If you have a sore jaw go to the hospital? But she isn't gone. Maggie didn't die. She is still here with us, in a different way.

There's nothing- there is nothing that anyone did wrong to cause this. Which makes it all the more difficult to deal with. I feel useless, helpless, ineffectual. I want to help Nancy so much, but what can I do? what can anyone do? We are doing all we can and it is still not enough. I want to advocate for living your life the way you want, for always reminding yourself that life is short and

appreciating everything. Life is so fragile.

I remember when I first moved in, and I saw the corkboard on Maggie's door, with all the animals on it. And I wondered who she was.

I remember eating meals with her, chatting with her and getting to know her.

I remember when Josh came for Halloween and I saw them joking around, out of the corner of my eye, and I knew they really were happy.

I remember her winning the doughnut-eating contest at our Halloween party.

I remember how she would sit and wait for me to finish my food at the dining table so I didn't have to walk upstairs alone.

I remember how we were being loud in the hallway once, and she screamed at us to be quiet from her room.

I remember how she talked about how much she liked it when her head was shaved.

I remember when I ran into Nancy in the bathroom late at night, when I was drunk and I was so confused and a bit embarrassed.

I remember how she would talk about working in the veterinary clinic and how she couldn't wait to work there after graduation.

I remember how she was sick of intro to psych and didn't want to write the final paper.

I remember how she felt separated from her best friend because her best friend was married with kids.

I remember when she was upset Josh couldn't come to visit her.

I remember when we could all see her hair coming out from under the door- and we didn't understand.

I remember Alyssa being worried and us telling her to relax.

I remember Malaika and her girlfriend being there and I remember how her girlfriend thought it was human hair.

I remember how I was trying to use the mirror to see under the door, and I just couldn't make anything out.

I remember going on the balcony and looking in the windows.

I remember them calling her room.

I remember the growing sense of unease as Jess seemed disturbed and told us to call public safety.

I remember when Sue, the public safety officer, came and she yelled Maggie's name and I had to run and get the scissors and they cut the window and went in and I heard her calling Maggie's name and I knew it was real.

I remember the sounds she made, oh god, I remember the sounds.

I remember seeing her on the floor when the paramedics came.

I remember how many people there were.

I remember when they hoarded us into Xio's room and we were there for what seemed like forever.

I remember when I called Maggie's best friend Katie and I had to tell her what happened and I was crying and I felt like an awful person for breaking the news to her that way.

I remember touching her skin when we went to see her on Friday.

I think I might remember that most of all, how her hands felt when I was painting her nails and how her face felt when it slipped out of position and I had to put it back.

I love you Maggie.

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Sometimes I think if I say it enough, it will finally be okay.

Maria Sclafani, May 2006