

## Heartbeat

“You’re going to be okay.” my mother said softly clenching my hand tighter. She didn’t act the slightest bit concerned, but you can see the doubt in her eyes. I glanced at the end of my hospital bed, eyeing the scratchy white blanket they had given me earlier. The beige walls surrounded me, sucking me into a draining hole. Questions kept flowing through my brain, what would the doctors say? Was I ever going to see my friends again? I was trying to think of the good, but the bad thoughts kept coming. I was drowning in my sorrow.

The next day. Still no one. I was all alone. Yes, there was my mom, but when she talked it was like her words meant nothing. She would repeat these phrases again and again. They no longer had meaning. I knew she wanted me to be okay but, did she?

Doctors, after doctors, have tried to tell me what’s wrong with me, like I didn’t already know. My heart wasn’t working as well as it should be. The doctors didn’t know if I was old enough to be able to survive a surgery that would give me a new heart. That’s how I ended up here. My frail thirteen-year-old body laying in a small twin bed in a room with no color.

When people think of me they don’t think of the word “pretty” or “beautiful”. I have long, frizzy hair as red as an apple. My freckles take up most of my face and not even my muddy brown eyes scare them away. Some people tell me I am somehow different than they are because of my appearance. Since I don’t have blonde or brunette hair people think that makes me less knowledgeable than them. People tell me I’m different and that’s not a good thing. The sad thing is, the people that say these things, I consider my friends.

I knew I might not live; I might not survive this surgery. So did everyone else. I know we shouldn’t think about the worst-case scenario, but we should at least consider it. My mom acts as if me dying isn’t even a possibility. Every day I wake up she is so happy; her positivity radiates off of her. How could she be so upbeat after knowing her only child might not live? The child she has raised by herself after her husband decided he wasn’t ready to. The child that was there for her when no one else wanted to be. The child that cries when she cries. The child that would do anything for her. Was she happy because she wanted me to be? If this is the case, it isn’t working.

I have depression. When I think, it’s like a dark rain cloud is taking over my brain. My thoughts are so bitter. I feel like no one loves me. I feel like I’m all alone. I know I’m not, but something in my brain is telling me I am. It is like I’m in ice-cold water, drowning. Everyone I love is on the shore. I try and try again to save myself but I don’t know if I ever will.

Tomorrow is the day of my surgery. The rest of my life depends on this day. Tomorrow, one false move could end it, could end me. Today I talked to my mom. This was a rare occurrence. We acknowledge each other but never really talk unless my mom’s asking me what I want from the hospital cafeteria. Us talking felt good. I got to express my nervousness with her, and all the feelings I wouldn’t openly share. I finally feel like a weight is lifted off my shoulders. She assured me she loved me. She told me that I’m not alone and now for once I sort of believed her.

Today is the day. I woke up at 6 am. I couldn’t eat anything because of the surgery, but what I ate last night could have been my last meal ever. If you looked at me

from many feet away you could tell how uneasy I was. My pale skinny legs couldn't stop twitching from my anxiousness. My mom wasn't any better though. It felt like every 30 seconds she would ask me if I was ok. It started to get annoying but it still showed that she cared about me.

As the doctors walked in, my mom grabbed my hand like she did the first time we arrived at this hospital. After a couple minutes of small talk, the doctors announced it was time for my surgery. My arms started shaking. My teeth jittered. I felt like I was afraid of heights and about to go on the tallest building in the world. I answered the doctor with a soft "ok".

I rolled through the halls. The beeping from every room made me tremble. The thought of me being asleep and maybe dying was the scariest feeling I could ever go through. As I entered the drab room, my mother followed me. I leaned over and gave her the biggest hug of my life. I couldn't let her go. I wouldn't let her go. I smelled her soft aroma of sweet perfume along with the smell of a hospital bed. A tear dripped down my cheek.

I laid down. I held my mom's hand for dear life. The doctors put something in my IV that made me drowsy, and soon my body drifted to sleep. I could remember seeing a vision of my mom leaving the room. In my mind, I couldn't stop yelling at her to not leave. I suddenly felt my body floating through the clouds. My body drifted weightlessly. This is death. It has happened. I saw my lifeless body laying as if I were a spectator watching. My soul somehow left my body and the doctors walked away in slow motion.

This could be how my story ended, but thankfully it's not. The surgery was successful and I now have a new heart. I lived. If this was the way I died I would never forgive myself. I never told my mom I loved her. I never appreciated her as much as I should have. Love the ones one close to you because soon they may be gone.