

Softball and My Sister

I was twenty years old. Not old enough to drink, halfway through college, and as I saw it, halfway between the life I grew up in and one I didn't yet know.

This summer I was in a softball league with old friends. Two of them played baseball in high school and were our team's strongest players. Their dad was our coach.

He was like an oak tree: sturdy, dependable, and not liable to move anywhere fast. He was deliberate with his actions, spoke confidently and humbly with a rough voice, and looked at you directly.

We were sharing the bench early one evening, the rest of the team on the field. I had my face in the sun and cleats scraping the dugout sand when he asked me a question. "Joe, you have a sister, don't you?"

Suddenly, I did. Brought forth by the certainty in his voice came my sister, fully known in just a moment. She was young, beautiful, and fully a woman, with a radiant, open face and bright eyes, whose long blonde hair was like that of my mother in her graduation photos.

Here was blood of my blood, incarnate in the female form, reflective of the same goodness inside of me. She gave shape to our inner light in ways I could not, our differences illuminating a greater whole. I was affirmed by her, as she was by me. We were within each other, honored by each other, and a great love lay between us. I was proud to stand beside her at family gatherings and amongst friends.

In another moment this vision was gone.

I must live in the truth, and in truth, I have no sister.