

My High School Prom

On May 17th 2008, I awoke, my first thought being ‘thank God it’s Saturday’. My second; ‘I can’t believe Prom day’s here’.

The beautiful floor length dress with beaded bodice had waited in my closet for months, since being worn to my mom’s wedding in September. I was excited, but also worried about seeing friends from school I had drifted from. Recently I had become closer with people in youth group; especially my best friend and unbelievably my boyfriend of the past 6 months, Eric.

Being a Mary Kay representative and family, my neighbor’s aunt came over that evening with her bag full of makeup samples and set to work on getting me ready. She and my stepmom started with my hair; a simple twist held by a ton of bobby pins. Then simple, light make-up and I was ready. The make-up felt strange to me, being one of the only times that I have worn it. A knock on the door signaled Eric and his dad had arrived.

My stepmom answered the door, and as always, the prospect of seeing Eric made my heart race. As he stepped in the door wearing his black suit, white dress shirt, purple vest and tie; I caught my breath and my heart skipped. It was one of the few times I’d seen him truly dressed up, showing how great he looked. There was love and care in his eyes as he smiled at me, and I felt lucky he was mine. He came over to me with the corsage in hand, smiled and said, “Hey babe. You look amazing.”

I couldn’t help it; blushing and smiling, I looked up at him and said, “Thanks, you do too”. He placed the corsage on me and, after taking a few tries, I successfully pinned the

matching boutonniere on him. I hugged my parents' goodbye, it was time for dinner. We climbed into Eric's Dad's van, and headed to the little Italian restaurant I loved.

Amalfi Ristorante is a small Italian restaurant, with soft lighting for dinnertime, in Rockville, MD, and was perfect for our prom dinner. We got our corner table for two, and it felt like our own private world. We laughed and talked, enjoying the delicious authentic Italian food; ravioli for me and lasagna for him. After splitting dessert and paying our check, we headed outside to meet my dad. He had brought a family friend, Cheree, who was dying to see us. A couple of miles down the road was the hotel, and upon arriving, Cheree insisted on a couple more pictures before leaving.

The hotel although not fancy, was nice. The line of balloons and classmates made it clear where to go. As we stood in line waiting for the photographer and to enter, Eric and I talked about our surroundings. I had noticed the backdrop the photographer had of a fake staircase, set in front of an actual spiral staircase. "Is it just me or does that seem kinda silly? Why wouldn't they use the real staircase instead of a clearly fake one?"

"I don't know," he answered. "Maybe they are afraid someone might fall."

"Hmm. Yeah I guess so. Still a little ridiculous looking from here."

"Agreed,"

Then he leaned down and kissed me. We were called up to have our picture taken, after which we headed to the check-in table and went into the ballroom. Greeted by a large dance floor and beyond that a bunch of tables; the dance floor still fairly empty with only a few couples dancing to an upbeat song. I saw colored lights flashing about, and hundreds of balloons in a net

attached to the ceiling. I turned, smiled up at Eric and asked, “Do you want to find a table to put our stuff down?”

“Sure,” he said, “this is your night, you lead and I’ll come along.”

“Alright,” I said, “Let’s head this way.” Holding his hand, I went towards the tables. I saw one of my friends sitting at a table with a few open chairs. We hadn’t talked much outside of classes that year so I paused, hesitating. As I was about to turn and look for somewhere else to sit, Raquel looked up and caught my eye.

“Ariel, come sit with us! We figured we would save you guys a couple seats.”

“Wow, thanks!” As we took our seats Eric squeezed my hand. He knew how weird it had been for me drifting from Raquel, and how much it meant that she saved us a spot at their table. A huge breath went out of me as I realized my one fear of the night about feeling out of place was unwarranted. The rest of Prom was a blur of dancing, laughing and feeling so completely alive. Afterwards, Eric’s dad took us to the high school for After Prom. My friends and I hung out, laughed, and took pictures to put in the key chains from the school.

As I walked Eric around the school at the end of the night, I couldn’t help but be content. With memories of the ups and downs shared by a few great friends, this had been a great night for us all. Telling him about different memories within the school; and despite all the not so great times, I realized I was really going to miss this place.