

I watch closely as the application pile rises higher and higher, yet my application is missing. I look down in my lap and as my long brown hair falls over my face I push enough behind my ear just so I can stare down at the files neatly enclosed in a yellow sealed envelope. My mother's soft and frail voice comes to mind as I contemplate whether I should walk up to that table or not. "Do something for yourself baby! Start living your life."

Beautiful girls in their beautiful dresses wearing beautiful heels float across the green oval, applications in hand ready to conquer the world. They have just jumped off the 10 o'clock train from Geelong, yet it seems as though they have been here for years. My ragged jeans and sloppy hoodie are nothing compared to the latest from Chanel, yet I feel something in this outfit none of those perfect girls would, warmth and security. This jumper was my father's, the only thing I have left.

I remember the day my name was called across the loudspeaker. Lucy had brought Oreos to school and promised me one at lunch. Walking across the basketball courts, I could already taste the chocolate biscuit crumbling in my mouth. I was just seconds away from grasping one in my hand when suddenly my name was called. That was the day my life changed forever.

The words rang in my head, "I am sorry sweetie, there was nothing more we could do." Nothing more they could possibly do to save my father from a freak car accident. How do you tell a nine year old there was nothing more you could do. When your favourite barbie loses her arm, your parents say she is special. When that last piece of chocolate is taken from the party, your parents tell you it was rotten. A little child's mind is full of wonder and imagination, something so horrifying as losing a loved one isn't something they can even begin to comprehend and in a split second my innocence was ripped away.

For a few years after the passing of my father, life was hard. Yet nothing could prepare me for what happened after my 15th birthday. My life really hit rock bottom when I came home to find mum crying in her bedroom. It nearly broke my heart to see the tears streaming down her cheek yet what really broke me was the reality I was soon to face. Since then, acting like a child was something of the past. Sleepovers with friends and going to parties didn't exist for me, because in between cleaning the house, working and homework I barely had enough time to sleep. Breast Cancer the results had said, yet looking back now it might as well have been a death sentence.

My phone suddenly vibrates underneath me and as I slowly pull it out from my back jean pocket I see the caller ID, it's Tim. My one friend who I hate a lot of the time but would die for in an instant, my best friend.

Hey Lil,

Good luck today! - I know you can do it.

Tim x

Tim and I have been friends for as long as I can remember and although it seems cliché it's true, he is my better half. When one of many troubles with my mum surfaced, Tim's shoulder would comfort me and through the muffled sobs I could hear, "So do you wanna grab a pizza or something?"

Tim always had something to say, and I mean to everything. Whether it was a simply goodbye or a ridiculous question, that boy could no doubt turn a rotten day into something worth living for. That boy is the reason I survived high school and the entire reason I am sitting on this park bench today. A little smile crept across my face as I re-read the text message, Tim believe's I can do this, so why can't I??

So as the sun sets I find the courage I have always been searching for, to finally achieve something for myself. As I approach the desk, a small elderly woman speaks to me.

"Welcome to Monash University, how many I help you?"

"Hi my name is Lily James, I just wanted to hand in this application."

meg Blood