

May 15, 2007

My dearest brother,

I can only hope that one day during your lifetime you are able to feel as enlightened by this situation and experience we have just had as I have been blessed to feel. Seeing the anger and vile hatred in your heart toward me has allowed me to love you even more as my brother. I am able to do that because as I understand it, and as Jesus showed us, we are meant to love our “enemies,” because in truth, there is no enemy outside of ourselves.

Whatever malcontent you may feel for me has nothing to do with who I am or who you may believe me to be. The man you may have “written off a long time ago” and is “worthless” to you is as much a part of you as you are me, and a part that neither of us can write off nor forget. It is the part of us that transcends these earthly bounds and will keep us connected long after we leave this world. You may not see that connection yet and you certainly don’t feel it like I do, but it is there.

I have never asked anything of you but to love me. That was all I ever wanted or ever needed from my big brother in my life, but instead you have felt ashamed of me: not wanting me to play with you and your friends when we were small children; then later siding with your friends in school when they would attack me with bigoted, malicious remarks. Although it always hurt me then, it never stopped me from seeing you as anything other than my big brother, Marty, who was capable of doing anything he wanted and becoming anyone he wanted to be; nor did it stop me from wanting to be your friend.

It is not by chance that one year ago this very week when our Granny died, and I felt called to speak at her funeral, you pulled me aside the night of her wake, and in the hallway next to where her body lay, you warned me with a virulent tone “not to say anything stupid” and that I “better not make a fool of myself.” You didn’t believe in me then, and you clearly don’t believe in me now. That’s ok. I accept that you may never believe in me, even after I’m gone. But because my Granny *always* believed in me, and as I said in her Eulogy that May 22nd, I was confident in my faith that God would give me the strength, courage, and ability to make it through that day, and now this one, too.

You may choose to stop loving me with whatever love you once had for me. You may choose to continue feeling shame, disgust, and hostility for the man you see me as; but I will never go away nor stop believing in *my* big brother, who has always been my hero, capable of doing anything he wants and being anyone he wants to be. The choice is yours and always has been yours. I have made mine: I will always love you.

Your baby brother,

Terry