

## When it all changed

By: Madeleine S.

I've always loved my life. Nothing going wrong, although some people were giving me glares at school. My friends always said that my family life was always perfect, and to be honest, it was. My parents and little brother never got mad at each other or me, so there was no reason to fight. Also, all the people at my school absolutely adored me and saw me as an idol.

But one day, all that changed. I remember it like it happened yesterday. I was walking home from school, which seems normal, and I saw my brother, Jacob pass me.

"Hah! You'll never catch up to me Angel!" He screamed. He always called me that. That has been my nickname since I was only one. My real name is Angelica, but since we got nicknames, that's all he'd ever called me.

"Oh, really little monkey?" That was his nickname. I came up with that when he was a baby, since he wouldn't stay in one spot and liked to jump around.

"HEY! I thought we said not to call me that outside near our neighbors!" He said as a pink tint adorned his cheeks. As I caught up to him, I saw that we were tied. He knew I was on the track team, but I guess he thought I had been tired from running after practice.

After I ran to the door first. After he had ran through the door, he stared at me, looking almost as if there were stars forming in his eyes. And of course, like always, he asked 'What we were having for dinner?'

"Homemade sushi" My mother said. Her name was Amy. She is the number one mom, and bestie. I never feel nervous or scared around her. She was always good-natured and cared about her friends, had all her priorities in order, and family was always first. She was calm, collected, and organized. She was the head owner of the electronic company named Pear. And my father; Jerran was a pediatrician. Yes, you can say that we were spoiled, or don't appreciate our lives. But in reality, we really do love everything and don't take anything for granted.

After we had already ate a fourth of the food, my parents stared at each other. I was confused, because then, they looked at me.

"What's wrong? Is it me?" I ask worryingly.

"No sweetie." My mother said.

"Should we tell her?" my father mouthed thinking that I wouldn't notice.

My mother sighed and looked at me with a sad expression. "Angel, we love you very much, and you and Jacob mean the world to us." she paused then trailed off, then she said, "You have.... thyroid cancer."

My jaw dropped. Tears threatened to leave my eyes. I never thought all those checkups and surgeries for my thyroid would lead to this. Mostly the doctors would just say 'Oh the

thyroid looks very healthy' but then we would always need to go back to check again the next month.

But this time was different. 'Mr. And Mrs. Smith, it seems her thyroid isn't healthy. So, we'll need a follow up ultrasound on her neck.' They had said.

I was terrified at this answer and the words that left my mother's mouth. I knew that this was an option, but I never knew it would happen. I assumed the worst and thought that I would die. My mom came towards me and wrapped her arms around me as if no tomorrow, as tears streamed down her face like a waterfall. My father soon joined later along as my brother, as we all cried. We had decided to go to sleep after. My parents tried to tell me stuff like how I wouldn't lose my hair, but it was no help. I just stared blankly at myself in the mirror thinking how I would tell my friends this. How can I just bring that up in a conversation casually? Will they not want to hang out with me or no longer be friends? The possibilities were endless.

I was getting the surgery to get the right half of my thyroid removed in the next 2 weeks. The left half had been removed in past surgeries. I tried to tell myself it will be okay, since I had a surgery before, but to think that I may not live to see the next month, was scary. I trudged through the week. It felt as if it would never end. When the day came, I was shaking so badly that my mother had to help me put on my seatbelt. I fell asleep there, since we left at what felt like the crack of dawn.

When we got there, I wasn't as worried since we were the first people there, but worried, nonetheless. When we made our way to the doctors, they explained to me and my parents how this would go down. I would change into one of the gowns they had, which I found hideous. Then they would give me anesthesia, the smell I wanted, and would need to breathe through my mouth so it would work quicker, and the less time my parents and brother would need to wait.

After all this, I felt much better, as if I could walk without need to worry about it being my last one. In fact, I couldn't even remember walking into the room or the surgery whatsoever. I remember after clearly though. I woke up in a hospital bed, with IV's in my arms, my brother buying candy, my parents glued by my side, along with a nurse near us. She gave me medicine, so that I wouldn't throw up. I still had to stay for the next night though. I realized that I was just worried about myself and not how others around me felt, and those two weeks helped me reflect on my past and how I acted.