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English 100

Narrative Project: Draft #1

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Losing the Battle

The struggle began. My mother was diagnosed with stage IV ovarian cancer and living in and out of the hospital receiving treatment. For at least a month my mom and aunt were seeing doctors and talking to surgeons to see what the treatment options were before they told me about the cancer. They finally sat me down in the living room, and told me, they shared the doctor’s opinions, and the course of treatment they decided on. I felt left in the dark. My mom was the most important person in my life and they waited a whole month to tell me. I showed my support during treatments, but there is no way to describe how horrible it is to see a loved one sick, and losing hair after treatments, and not being able to work or do the things they love. I was only 14 years old, so I began staying with my aunt, so I could still go to school and sports. About a year into treatments and surgery everything was going well the cancer was gone. In early February my mom went to get a checkup after the surgery to make sure it was all gone. It wasn’t! The doctor came in and talked to us all and said “You’re going to have to be admitted for further treatment. The cancer spread during the surgery and you’re going to have to continue with chemo, however the cancer is progressing and were not sure what more we can do”.

It was all so much to process. I stared at the plain white hospital walls, and just began to cry. My mom was upset, but despite how she felt she wanted to comfort me, so she said, “Come lay up here with me, regardless of what the doctor says I’m going to fight, fight for you. I can do this as long as you’re by my side.”

But into a few more sessions of chemotherapy, we saw no changes the cancer was spreading everywhere, and there really wasn’t much more anyone could’ve done. We all sat down getting her affairs in order and getting her set up in hospice. I was in disbelief that this was really happening. But I put a smile on my face every day and woke up and did my daily routine of going to school and visiting her after practice. That was the hardest part. Seeing my mom, a 42-year-old dying from cancer. Until one night my whole world turned upside down.

We all knew it was going to happen and one night we got the call in the middle of the night. I was asleep upstairs and heard people crying and talking to each other then heard my aunt knock on the door and calling my name to wake me up. I vividly remember one of the worst conversations of my life.

“Gabriella, we have to go, to the hospital the doctor called this is it we have to hurry!”

I was still half asleep and in confusion and replied saying “Ok I’m coming!”

My heart felt like it was sinking in my chest, and I couldn’t breathe. But I ran down the steps, passing by the family pictures on the wall, and bolted to the car. We all seat belted ourselves in the car and sat silent. As we scurried to the hospital I just felt more nervous the closer we got. Thinking to myself, “Was I ready for this?” “What am I supposed to say, or do?” As we pulled up to the hospital, we saw my grand mom pull up behind us. I remember saying to myself, “Oh, thank god grams here she makes everything feel better”. So, we all rushed into the University of Pennsylvania hospital knowing there was not much else we could do.

I knew this was going to be one of the hardest days of my life. The doctors can always tell you there is nothing left that they can do, but it never truly prepares you for losing a parent. When we arrived at the hospital it was too late. She was gone there was never a chance to say goodbye. As I sat there crying for hours I heard my aunt talking to my other family members in the hallway about how we had to go and that it wasn’t good for me to sit there just crying.

My grand mom came into the room took the rings off my mom’s fingers and said

“She would want you to have these, don’t ever lose them”

As we left the hospital that next morning, I was silent. There were no words or emotions to describe what I was feeling. No one in the world could comfort me but I knew that I had to keep moving on that’s one thing my mom always taught me to do.

We all sat down for breakfast in the morning and no one really could say anything about what just happened. So, we shared memories and the good times, and began laughing together. This tragedy brought my family together even in the darkest of times we were together and could bring light to a horrible situation. My friends began calling me and sending their condolences, and comforting me, which really helped me get through the situation life threw at me.

To this day I never took the rings off. I wear them every day and think of the good times. The times before cancer treatments, surgeries, and hospitals. It became my everyday reminder that life is short, and what really matters are the memories, and being surrounded my family. Looking back I feel sad that my mom isn’t here with me but joy that I was able to be by her side during the worst moments of her life. But you know what they say the good always die young.