

Saying Goodbye

"It's not for sure yet." I blinked back tears. Because the thing was, if they told us they were thinking about it, it was pretty much guaranteed. We most likely would be moving the following summer. "Where?" I asked. "Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. It's where Nan grew up. I visited there a lot when I was little." I shrugged. "What's so important about that place?" I asked. "Well, we would have a lot of family living nearby. Won't that be fun?" "I guess." I muttered. But it wasn't enough fun that I would move halfway across the country for it. It was decided a couple of weeks later. We were officially moving. I cried a lot. It was tough. I didn't want to leave my best friend Emily. It was too hard. "I don't want you to leave." Emily said one day. "I don't want to go either."

We were in 3rd grade. We had been best friends since Emily had moved to Boston in 2nd grade. Now, it sounds like we hadn't been friends for very long, but that didn't matter. We were best friends, no matter what. We did everything together. The beach, school, sleepovers. Wherever we went, we went together. No exceptions.

Leading up to the move, we hung out together 24/7. I didn't leave her side. But no matter how hard I tried to forget, I knew every moment I spent with her was one of my last. We tried to make the days drag on, but we just couldn't. It felt like any good moment we spent together was just another reminder that there wouldn't be many more. OR that's what we thought at the time. The move was all I ever thought of. Our parents did a million fun things with us. They didn't separate us all summer long. But no matter how great things were, eventually, the dreaded day arrived.

The movers walked through the house, grabbing boxes and carrying them to the van. I walked inside my room one last time. It looked so weird without my bed and my desk and all my things. I blinked back tears. This was it. My mom came in beside me. "I'm sorry" she said. "You know I'm sad too." I nodded. This was the hardest thing I would ever have to experience, and I knew it. I walked into my closet and placed my hand on the wall, sobbing. It amazed me that something so unimportant like a closet could make me feel this way.

I walked downstairs and met Emily in the kitchen. We didn't say anything, we just hugged. Just then, there was a BOOM! We looked outside and saw a storm raging. Raindrops blew across the sidewalks and a frigid wind rattled the trees. I thought back to about a year ago. It was me and Emily at a beach about an hour from our house. Giant waves crashed down on the sandy shore. "Whoa, those waves are huge!" I cried. We ran out onto the sand, screaming in delight. "This is so fun!" Emily yelled, as we jumped through the waves. "Oh, be careful!" My mom said, clutching her hand to her heart. I remembered our expressions, the way we screamed in delight. I felt like I would never feel that again. I shook my head and embraced Emily one more time. "I'm going to miss you so much." She whispered. I couldn't control myself. I nodded and rested my head on her shoulder, tears dripping down my face.

I climbed into the back of the car, shaking. I turned, looking out the window splattered with rain drops. I could see Emily standing in the freezing rain, hair stuck to her shoulders, glasses covered in fat raindrops. She walked up to the window of the car, wiping tears and raindrops off her glasses. "We'll FaceTime each other. This is not the end of our friendship." She held up the matching necklaces we had. Mine said best, and hers said friends. I held mine up to hers. The sound of the metal clinking started something in me. A surge of hope ran through my body. "You're right." I said. "This is not the end." It was in that moment that I realized a true friend will always be there for you. Through the bumps in the road, through the rough and the tough, she'd be there. "You are the best friend anyone could ask for." I said. She looked at me. "Same here." As our car rumbled down the road, I watched a soaking wet Emily wave goodbye, her eyes teary. I fiddled with my necklace, hand clamped on the chain. I whispered to myself, ever so softly, "Forever."

Two days later, our car rumbled into the driveway of our new house. It wasn't the first time we had been there, but I knew it was for real this time. I sat on the front steps while the movers unloaded our stuff. I looked over the quiet neighborhood. "It isn't that much different." I thought to myself. Just then a group of kids came speeding down the block. They were wearing swimsuits and holding giant squirt guns.

The tallest one stepped forward. "Hey, I'm Ethan." He said. I introduced myself and stood there awkwardly. "Do you want to play?" He offered. I smiled. "Yeah let me get my swimsuit." I managed to dig it out of one of the boxes. I ran to my mom, who was standing in the kitchen. "Can I go and play?" I asked her. She nodded and smiled. "Have fun." I ran outside. "I will!" I yelled. Yeah, I was going to be just fine here.