



She Brought Me Cocoa

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THERE ARE TIMES IN MY LIFE WHEN I FIND myself just sitting, looking around, and remembering that my sister loved me. She really loved me. I'm sure of it.

When we were fourteen and fifteen, we would watch crime shows together after school. Cuddled up under a dark blue blanket, holding hands when the scenes got too intense. She'd be cracking jokes throughout the whole thing, though. It used to drive me crazy, but I never could keep from laughing. She knew how to bring out the joy in me.

Around fourteen is when I really remember my depression starting to take shape. Before, it had been but a dark sequence of amorphous blobs, coming and going, shifting in and out of my periphery, never sticking around long enough to be recognized as the fully-formed thing it would eventually become.

These days were different from the rest. Instead of throwing my backpack down after school, grabbing a snack, and joining her on the loveseat in the living room, I would practically walk through her, straight into our bedroom and flop down on the bottom bunk, and wait for something to happen to transport me to a better state of mind, where I felt alive again. Sometimes I would cry. Sometimes I would dig up the energy to squeeze my eyes shut as tightly as possible and practice disappearing. As far as I'm aware, it never worked.

I started writing this because I want you all to know that my sister used to bring me cocoa when I was depressed. I want you to know, because I want people to know about her, and I think it's important that someone like her existed, once. She was here before, and she was the kind of person who would bring you cocoa when you were depressed. She would pull you out of bed and make you a sandwich or sometimes just lay with you and cry beside you, telling you not to rush and that you were a bright diamond.

I wanted, before, to tell you all these things, but I realize now that all I wanted to say was that she loved me through it. She taught me, at a very young age, what love looks like. I learned from her about friendship and loyalty and sisterhood. She taught me the value of bringing someone hot cocoa when they're depressed. And that's something I never thanked her for because I never saw it or really considered it when she was alive. To me, at the time, she was just my best friend doing what a best friend does. But I guess that's kind of the point. She showed me what that looks like. And now I know how to recognize it. And now I have the best friends in the world.

I want my friends to know where my love comes from. A lot of it comes from my sister, Lizzy. She was a good friend. The kind that would bring you cocoa. ✨