

Narrative Example

Giving Life

It was a hot summer day. My dad and I were getting ready to go out for a ride on the boat with my friend Katie and the dog. That's when the phone call came, the call that made that bright, beautiful day a cold, dark, gloomy one.

I had just put on my suit, shorts, and tank top, and packed my bag with sunscreen and everything else I would need for the day. I ran into my parents' room to find Dad. When I saw him on the phone, he was crying. I'd never seen my dad cry before. My heart sank. What possibly could have happened?

"Max, I'm so sorry," I heard him say. That's when it hit me. I knew that Suzie had died.

Max has been my dad's best friend for years. Suzie, his daughter, had a rare disease that mainly affected her body. Her brain was OK. She knew what was going on; she knew that she had problems and was different than other kids. Once she told her dad that she wished she could die and be born in a different body. Yet although she couldn't live a normal life, she was still happy.

When Suzie and I were little, we spent quite a bit of time together. As we grew up, we grew apart. She lived in New York, and I lived in the Midwest. When Suzie was ten she had to live in a hospital in Virginia. About eight months before she died, Max gave us her number at the hospital and we talked at least twice a week until the end. Suzie was always so excited to talk to us and wanted to know every detail about my life. She wanted to know everything I did and everything I ate. In a way, she lived through me.

After we found out about her death, we made our plans to go to New York for the funeral. When she was alive, I sent her a Beanie Baby and she sent one back to me. I had bought her another one but never had the chance to send it to her, so I took it to put in her casket.

Her funeral was very different than any funeral I'd ever been to. After they lowered her casket, each one of us put a shovelful of dirt over her. I remember crying so hard, I felt weak. My cheeks burned from the tears. My whole body was shaking as I picked up the shovel, but I'm glad I did it.

When Suzie and I first started calling one another, I thought it would be more of a burden on me, but I was completely wrong. I learned so much from her. She gave me more than I could ever give to her. I will never forget her or the talks we had. I now know that I must never take anything for granted, especially my health and the gift of life.