

A Memoir
By: Megan Rakoczy

For the last 13 years I've dreaded these words.

"It's time" my mom muttered out as I was sitting in our living room Monday morning. Teary-eyed we sat in silence, unable to speak.

"Wednesday at noon." Was the start of the next conversation, and the end.

Here we are Wednesday, the morning spent pacing around the house. Kissing your head, holding your paws, petting your ears. Waiting, just waiting for 12:00. What a concept, to have death scheduled. Every minute of the last few days eating me alive, wanting it to just be over with but also never wanting the moment to actually come.

A car pulls up into the driveway. My gradual tears turn into full water works. The presence of death is near. I have avoided him for all my 23 years. But he has found us, and this next moment of life is about to get a little more real, a little more dark, and a lot more sad.

We are all sitting in our back room. Surrounded by you. Or is it us surrounding you. No I think I had it right the first time. The vet is explaining what's going to happen. As the first part of the process begins, Nichole and I sit holding your hand. You slowly drift into a peaceful sleep. I look up and for the first time in my life I see my dad cry. I lose it all over again. My face nuzzled into yours I whisper to you. "You are beautiful. You are the best boy. You are doing so good. So handsome." My face now against your nose I feel your breath brush my face. It is cold. In and out. In and out. Then it stops. I grab your face and kiss your head, hold your soft ears one last time.

The vet tells us we should leave the room when they take you. I go wash my hands and wipe my face. As I walk to the living room I catch a glimpse of a black bag. I make it to the couch before the waterfall begins again. I listen to the crinkling of the bag; waiting for the vets' voice to say we will see you later. The door clicks shut behind her...

It's done.

Suddenly I go numb. I feel frozen, unable to move. Tears still dripping down my face. My heart starts to hurt, a pain that I have never known washes over me, but I can't feel anything. Scotty McCreery's song, five more minutes comes on Sirius XM radio that's playing on the TV...Great, like the moment needed that.

I sit here and the house feels empty. My mind flooding with all of life's questions, overflowing with memories of moments, images of everyone I've ever known, everyone you have ever known. Is this real? How can something you love and see everyday be here one second and gone the next? Where do we go from here?

You will never be just a dog to me. You were my best friend. My strength when I felt anxious, my calm when I felt angry, my protector when I felt scared, my everyday joy. You held my heart, and now a piece of my heart lies with you.

Bear Rakoczy 2004-2018 you are so loved.