

# Medical School

Category: Hope

written by Rebecca MacDonnell-Yilmaz | January 19, 2017

We came to the one place I knew you dreaded.

As joyful as you sounded when you called me at work after you plucked the envelope – a big envelope this time – from our mailbox, I knew our happiness lay in the expectation that other oversized bundles would follow. For it to truly be our happiness, our dream, we would need to rejoice at this triumph, then file it away and ultimately go elsewhere.

But we didn't. The zip code on that first big envelope became our zip code. Two years of apologies for not getting in anywhere else, for dragging you back here, have ebbed but not run dry. You bat them gently away–sometimes too gently–but the stoop of your shoulders tells me they are not unwarranted.

We thought the first job was a fluke, the one freakishly awful office that actually warranted your resignation on the second day. We thought the next one–so close to home, such an esteemed name–would be better, or at least take longer to sour. Each day I thought I might return home and not find you in bed, hood of your sweatshirt pulled up to hug your face, even as I left the library earlier and earlier. Even as I left in daylight.

I never thought that it would turn out to be not the demeaning job or the rude coworkers, the tough economy or the smelly Long Island highway lined with oversized strip malls where our little apartment–the apartment that we took at your insistence, to make my commute as short as possible–sat, but the place, the very pocket of the universe into which we had shifted our lives, all for me, that would be so toxic to you.

I never anticipated that on the last day of the school year, I would swipe some make-up over my tired eyes, slip into flip-flops, and grab my keys to head off to the end-of-the-year party, then turn to where you lay crumpled in the bed we shared, and ask you if you had ever thought about hurting yourself.

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