

A Mothers Diary

July 8, 2006: (4:30 am) The Sheriff's officer just left my home. It took him almost five hours to get to the house to tell me you were killed in an accident. They gave me pamphlets on how to retrieve your body and a few items that belonged to you. They told me how terribly sorry they were for my loss and then went on their way. They told me you were driving the truck that killed you and one of your best friends, and put another in the hospital in severe critical condition. I feel numb! I don't know what to do with myself! Do I start making phone calls or wait? It's still early, but family members would probably want to know. This can't be real! I must be dreaming! I wonder what his father is feeling right now. What do I have to do first? Who do I call? Oh my God! My son is dead! I dial the phone to try to get a hold of your sister and all I get is her voice mail. I leave a frantic message and hang up. I call your grandfather and he can't even talk on the other line, he say's nothing but he'll call other family members out where he lives for me. I try your sister again! Oh my God it's her voice mail again. Please pick your phone up! I can't stand it! I leave another voice mail. I call your cell phone message to see if you answer. Maybe this is all a big mistake! Please answer your cell phone; maybe they had the wrong kid! Darn! It's your voice mail too! I listen carefully to your voice as you talk. Oh my God! My son is dead!

(5:30 am) I dial your sisters' phone again and still no answer. I think, maybe she's with her friend. I dial her number and she picks up. I say, "Is my daughter there?" she says, "Yeah, she's right here!" I hesitate for a minute and hear her answer the phone with "why are you up so early?" I reply, "I have some really bad news" She replies "what now?" I said, "Your brother was killed last night in a car accident" She sobs uncontrollably. I tell her to collect herself and call me in a few minutes and I'll let her know the details.

(10:00 am) We all gather at your aunt's house. No one can believe that our number seventy-one from the football team that just graduated a month later, is gone. The disbelief on all their faces is indescribable! Your football coach shows up. Yeah that guy that was also your teacher who helped you receive that diploma one month earlier! He hugs me! Says he's here as he always was when it came to you. I asked him to get your football jersey so you could wear it. I turned around to see your little brother sitting on the couch with elephant tears running down his face as he looked at your senior picture on the wall. The one with the sideways smug little smile we loved so much.

(11:30 am) There you are lying on the table. They cleaned you up and gave you a little shave. Thank God your face wasn't damaged! We were surely blessed by that. I needed to see your face to make this real. You really do look like you're asleep. I keep expecting you to jump up any minute and say "jokes on you mom! Got you good!" but your face is so cold; your chest is so bruised! They say you didn't suffer at all. But how do they really know for sure. I sure hope you didn't. I wouldn't want that for you. Your dad is so sad! He wants to see you alone because he doesn't want anyone to see him say good-bye.

He doesn't want anyone to see him so vulnerable. He was always so tough! But not now, his son is dead! Your step-dad has been very supportive. He's trying everything in the world to help me cope but I see how much this is tearing him apart. He loved you so much! He misses you terribly! Your whole family is here for you. I wonder if you know you are dead. I wonder if you know we are here. I wonder where you are right this very moment.

(12:30 pm) We're all sitting down and planning your funeral. Oh my God my son is dead! We have to do this now? Yes I guess so. Do we bury you? No! I couldn't bear putting you in the ground like that! I want you with me always. We decide to cremate you and share you in death just like we shared you in life. We will have a viewing with your friend for a day so everyone can see you both and say goodbye! I think people will need that! Oh my God! I can't believe this is happening! I so numb! There are so many things to pick. Flowers, pictures, announcements, too many things to think about. What about the other family? Are they taken care of? So many people want to help but I don't know what to tell them. I don't want to deal with this anymore. I want to wake up now. This can all go away! I want you to wake me up and tell me this was all a bad dream! No, not a dream this is as real as it gets. Oh my God, my son is dead!

(2:30 pm) I'm driving home so numb to reality I can't even think straight. There is really nothing else to do but sit and wait for people to come. We get home and there are many messages on the machine of people who don't know what to say. I keep staring at the door waiting for you to walk through it, telling myself that wasn't really you I just saw on that table at the mortuary. I walk into your bedroom and sit on your bed. I take in the aroma of the room. Gosh! It still smells like you were just here! Are you here? Can you see me? I listen to see if I can hear you. Nothing but silence. Oh my God! My son is Dead! I start to weep, afraid I won't stop, but the phone rings. It's another concerned friend or family member wanting to do something. What would I do without them!

July 13, 2006: We are driving up to the mortuary. I'm feeling anxious. How will you look? How will your friend look? What will people do? As I enter the room where you lay in your casket, I can see your face. You look so handsome in your football jersey! Number seventy-one. We saw it so many times just a few months earlier on the field as you tackled those guys. You did such a good job. You still look like you're sleeping. Again I picture you jumping up saying "Ha! Mom!" "Danny and I got you good this time!" Oh how I wish you would do that! But no, you just lay there. I place a kiss on your forehead. It's so cold! I turn around and there are so many people waiting to see you! I move aside as if no one even knows who I am. Four hours later and hundreds of people later we say goodbye to you for one more day.

July 14, 2006: Well this is the day we all gather to say goodbye to you for the last time in our lives! We put on our Sunday best and drive to the church. They predict a huge crowd today! Who knew? George will say a beautiful service for you! Coach will speak about

you. Music will be played in your honor and people will speak many great things as they say goodbye to you one last time. Many, many tears fall. Not a dry eye in the place! Standing room only! They said there was nearly nine hundred people there. You were so loved! I am so proud! I look around and so many young faces with blank look on their faces! I want to scoop them up and hug them all. Then we have your buddy's funeral right after yours. It's just as sad! We put you in a room up the hill in a little chapel off to the side so people can spend some time with you. Then I watch the Hearst's drive off with you guys in them and my heart sank! Goodbye Jason. Rest in Peace! See you on Sunday one last time my son!

July 16, 2006: It's your eighteenth birthday today son! We came to the mortuary one last time to see you before they take you to be cremated. You look different today! I don't know what it is, but you look different. I kiss you one last time and say goodbye, looking back at you as I leave the room! Goodbye my only son! There will never be a day I won't miss you or forget you! We drive to the football field and leave your casket flowers on your rock that bears your name and number. We then drive to the accident site and leave the tons of wreaths and flowers that people sent as a shrine in your honor for all to see! You were truly loved and you are truly missed. I love you my only son and you will live forever in my heart.