

Thank You, Dylan

"Jenny, why don't you just ask him out?" "Steph, girls don't ask guys out. If I asked him out, it would just be weird."

"Aw, come on. That just happens in a Disney movie, or something." "Well, he's on his way to New York for the Macy's Day Parade. So that ship has sailed."

"So, do it next week. I don't think he's going to find a girlfriend in New York, and have relationship that'll last. I mean, how many people do you know that have a long distance relationship from Michigan to New York?" "As we reached her house she asked me, 'Do you want to come over?'" "I can't, my mom has been baking pies for tomorrow and she probably wants help." "Okay, happy Thanksgiving." I continued walking home.

"Mom, I'm home. Hey, when is dad coming home?" "Oh sweetie I thought I told you, he won't be back until Friday morning." "Oh, um, okay. Hey do you mind if I just go upstairs?" "Is everything ok?" "Yeah I'm just tired."

The next morning I woke up to the sound of marching music. A band was playing on the TV. My mother was watching the Macy's Day Parade. I had no interest but she made me watch it anyway. "Jenny, could you get me one of those muffins in the pantry, the blueberry ones?" "Yup." About thirty seconds after I walked into the kitchen my mom called me. "Jenny!" "I know, one second!" My mother walked into the kitchen with a terrifying look on her face. "There was a terrorist attack at the parade." After she said that, I too had the same look on my face. "Oh my god, Dylan!" I picked up my phone and started texting him. I asked him if he was ok, but I got no answer. I sent him another text, but no answer. My mom was calling my dad because at about 9:30 he got on his train back to Madison Heights, Michigan, and Penn Station was fairly close to where the parade was happening. We didn't get an answer from my dad until 12:53 because the cell service was down.

The next day my dad got home. "Oh my god, thank god you're ok, Leo!" My mother and I gave him a giant hug followed with tears of happiness. At 7:00 I got a text from Dylan. I suddenly felt like a giant weight was lifted off my shoulders. I opened my phone and read the text. "Hello, Jenny. This is Dylan's mother. Dylan died yesterday morning in New York when the bomb exploded. He's gone, my little boy is gone." I burst out in tears. My parents heard me and came in the room. "Jenny what's wrong!" "He, he, he's dead!" "Who's dead?" I struggled to get the words out "Dylan is dead!" My parents looked at each other. They then swarmed me in hugs. The rest of the weekend was kind of a blur because I was thinking of Dylan. I re-read our texts to each other and re-read the text his mother had sent me. The day followed with lots of tears and lots of hugs.

On monday morning I was talking to Stephanie at our lockers when I saw Dylan's parents talking to the principal. "Jenny, we're going to be late for science." "I'll catch up with you."

I stared at Dylan's parents for fifteen seconds before we made eye contact. I quickly looked away and pretended to get something in my locker. His mom came out and said to me "Dylan spoke of you a lot, he loved you, you know." I nodded my head and said "I'm so sorry for your loss, Mrs. Sandoval." She said "Thank you." and walked away.

On Tuesday night I received an email from the Sandovals. The email asked if I would say one of Dylan's eulogies at his funeral.

I loved Dylan so I said yes, and on Saturday December 1st I spoke about Dylan:

"The first time I met Dylan was the third week of high school. We were science lab partners for a project on marine biology. He told me that his father was a marine biologist. "Really?" I said. "Nah, I'm messing with you." That was the moment I realized that we were going to be friends, really good friends. His death was a disgusting waste of human life."

I then said my final goodbye. Thank you, Dylan, for being my friend.