

0124123

## To MAX

788 Days Down

A piece for my Creative Writing class about losing the relationship of my cousin, one of the most important people in my life, because of what brought me to jail.

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Of every loss I've experienced, yours has been the hardest. It's a heavy numbness that gnaws at my stomach with teeth as blunt as bricks when any memory of you decides to claw its way back up from the grey depths I've pushed it down to. The problem is that so many of my best memories were made with you. How do I let go of my brother, my counterpart from a childhood spent so distanced that we forged a bond strong enough to make up for the miles of endless road that separated us? Do you feel betrayal? Anger? Depression? Have you moved on, casting me to the back of your mind in desperation of separation? Or are you stuck, still trying to figure out if you ever truly knew me, still vacillating between falling forward or staying back? I break each time I think of the pain you feel, the loss that must hurt you more than it hurts me, and to think that I created that pain... How we talked about the future, our hopeful relationships turned to weddings, our kids who'd grow up connected by the bond we'd bestow from our own, while we sat back to back, looking up at the stars, lost, splitting a stolen six pack on a boat gently rocked by murmuring waves. The pacts we made at ten upheld into our twenties, the songs we learned together because sometimes words simply spoken can't convey the right emotion. I learned that love can be expressed without a sound; that sometimes it just is. How can I grieve when you're always just one impossible call away? Our cord's been severed, we continue to exist, but from now on we are separate. Don't fade away from me - let me hold on. Or maybe, maybe it'd be better if I...