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Letter to My Friend

By L.I.S.T.E.N.

Trigger Warning: This story makes brief mention of sexual assault.

Death is something that we're all mindful of, and we all know it will happen to us at some point. To many of us, death sends shivers down our spines, accompanied by despair, but to others, it is accompanied later by power and a sense of hope to do more. Whether we like it or not, we are all doomed to die. However, no one can predict when the inevitable will arrive, but we all know it will. Five years ago, I met my best friend, My Right hand, The person who knew me better than myself. Three years ago, my life was changed forever.

Growing up until I never really cared too much about school. I was okay if my grades were getting me honor roll. Around November 15th, 2018, I met my Best Friend. She was 16, getting ready to go to college. She was accepted to the University of North Carolina. She skipped three years of school which allowed her to be able to go to college early. She believed I could be a straight A student, the girl who was top of their class so, for years she used to tell me “Chanelle you are so much better than what you are doing” reminding me that getting regular honor roll was not enough. But she believed in me more than anyone I knew. Then we began studying together all the time. Laughing about the craziness things in the world from astrology to human connections to soul ties, there was nothing I and she couldn't talk about. We were the best of best of friends. She was the person it didn't matter if I hadn't seen her in a year when we talked on the phone it was like we never were far apart.

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The day that changed my life, I remember getting up around 7 am getting ready to take my PSAT; I was so tired, drained physically and mentally due to everything going on around me. But I still decided to get up and take this exam because I knew it was preparing me for the following chapters of my life. I remember promising my friend a year ago that I would always answer when she called due to things that had tragically approached her life. She was raped by over 18 men in the back of her house. When her dad found out, he didn't believe her. Then, later, she developed sickle cell, which was taken away from her body. She said that she didn't pick up when she called her mom during this tragic situation. So, we used to write poetry a lot to ease the pain in our lives. We were miles apart, but it felt like we were the only person we had in tragic times when we spoke. So, during the PSATs, around 7 am, My teacher, said, "Chanelle passed the phone; we are About to begin the exam" I gave my phone up, and I began to proceed on my exam. Four hours passed, and I turned my phone on to over 100 missed calls and 33 missed texts saying, "You promised me." I began to start calling her phone. No answer. I started texting. No explanation, my heart began to break into millions of pieces, saying it was my fault. About two hours later, she called and said, you lied to me, and you were the only person I had left, and about 5 min later, she was gone, she took her life, and every day I say my listening could have saved her life. The phone hung up, the lights were dark, and I had been trying to wake up from this nightmare for the last three years.

Listening has the power to change the people around you, and it can move you. The people in your life can allow you to be the next version of yourself. Without her, I don't know where I would be, but I hope she is looking down on me. She will be proud, and I hope she forgives me. Tragedies happen, but hopefully, it moves you into the next part.