

I was naive.

Naive in thinking that while living in a world that is currently troubled by hatred and ugliness, that nothing would happen to my family. I was naive in thinking my daughter would always have her daddy right by her side in every milestone of her life. Naive in thinking my son would have his stepdad to help teach him how to play football, drive a car, or be a man. Naive in thinking my soulmate and I had our entire lives ahead of us.

Then one night I received a phone call and heard a phrase that I had previously heard twice before, "Kristy, go to the hospital, Pat's there". Those previous two incidents were minor injuries and were primarily precautionary trips to the hospital; however, this phone call had my stomach in knots. I knew this phone call was serious but I was still naive or hopeful in thinking nothing bad had happened to him.

I never thought I would have to emotionally endure what I have these past few weeks. Patrick ALWAYS made it home! So why should that night be any different? I felt like my heart was ripped out of my chest and as if my soul would forever be half empty. My strength was tested in a way that no one should ever have to endure.

But I'm a strong. I have no other choice but to learn how to manage our loss for the sake of our children. Patrick would sometimes work three extra jobs three days a week. He would work funeral details for fallen soldiers, his regular shift at work, and then work as security at a club or apartment complexes. Not once did he complain, not once. Patrick was strong and would work hard for us. Not only to ensure bills were paid, but to make enough money to take family trips and create everlasting memories.

Patrick is the reason I changed my major to criminal justice. Hearing the enthusiasm and excitement in his voice for his job he so deeply loved is what inspired me to be a police officer. Switching my major meant me having to take extra classes in order to graduate. It was a daunting task but Patrick never let me give up. He did anything I needed in order for me to finish a paper or study for a test. Yet again, he never complained.

People like Patrick don't come along often. They are few and far between. I miss him. I miss his smile, I miss hearing his voice, I miss hearing his laugh, and I even miss hearing his god awful snoring at night! I don't know how I'm going to get through life without him, but for our kids sake, I have no choice but to learn to manage our pain and loss.

I want to thank everyone from the bottom of our hearts for the tremendous amount of love and support we have been shown. Although I would much rather have him back, I truly appreciate all of the efforts in raising money to ensure our children will be taken care of. My heart will forever be broken. Our lives will forever be incomplete. I hope and pray this hatred and ugliness stops. Hatred is a waste of time and killing solves nothing. Please be kind to one another. Thank an officer and educate yourself on why there is such a divide in todays world. We have an obligation as human beings to spread love. Stop the hatred! Stop the evil! Stop the ugliness!