

Point Blank: Suicide.

Disclaimer: The content of this audio piece is not light and fluffy. It's not even close. I will be covering a hard topic for many people to listen to. These are events that happened in my life and involve my family. Please do not listen to this podcast if you do not think you can handle it.

Younger children should not listen to it without parent approval. So without further ado. This is Point Blank: Suicide.

When I was younger, a lot younger, two important people in my life committed suicide. The first person was a sixteen year old boy who got into a fight with his girlfriend before taking some drugs and killing himself. The second one was the boy's mother and one of my mom's best friends who helped raise me.

Suicide is one of the leading causes of death amongst teenagers and adults with roughly thirty thousand Americans committing suicide every year. Undiagnosed depression is the number one cause of suicide. While I do not know if she was diagnosed, the boy's mother was depressed. Will, the boy, had killed himself a couple months before she died. Mrs. Robin, the woman, had killed herself in November.

Growing up, there were a lot of jokes about Will and I getting married or Will and my older sister getting married. It was always said that one of us would end up with him and I remember how during one of my mom's halloween-birthday party things, him and I were dancing together and he looked so awkward and uncomfortable.

[That was, Mrs. Robin, she was supposed to be our godmother if Mom or Ryan ever died. Will, he was cool. We played pool all the time.]

That was my brother Joey. You'll be hearing from him throughout this episode.

Will was older than my younger brother and I by about six to eight years. It's hard to remember now, but neither one of us wanted to be dancing with each other for some stupid picture or video, or whatever it was our parents wanted. It's one of my last memories of him.

So, when I was on summer vacation with my dad, I was sitting on a bed in a hotel room with my dad and my brother. I had just recently gotten a smartphone and facebook and I was super excited to check my account every day, so naturally I was scrolling through facebook when all of the sudden I see "Rest in Peace, Sweet Baby Boy Will." It was a nickname we gave Will a long time ago.

I was really confused at first. I thought he did something stupid like getting rejected by a girl or something, I'm not quite sure. Eventually I look up at my dad and ask him "what's going on."

He starts going off on a rant about how "This is exactly why I didn't want you to have a phone or a facebook page. There's no need for you to have one," as he avoids telling me what's going on.

[I saw a post, or something, seeing R-I-P, Will.]

Eventually I get told that Will had a fight with his girlfriend, and he took some drugs that caused him to have really depressing thoughts. Afterwards, he found a shotgun and... He was that one person out of twenty five that actually died when attempting to kill themselves. This was a somewhat difficult time for me, although it wasn't nearly as hard on anyone as it was on his mother. Mrs. Robin was the sweetest lady. She was goofy and danced whenever she wanted. Her and I used to stay up late at night and just talk and I felt so cool because I wasn't supposed to tell anyone that she let me stay up past my bedtime on a school night. Remembering her so happy, it makes it hard to think about how depressed she was. After Will died, she was absolutely devastated. There was nothing worse that could've happened to Mrs. Robin than losing her son.

A couple months later, it was about midnight and for whatever reason I just couldn't sleep. Everything felt off but I couldn't figure out what it was so I walked upstairs. On my way up the stairs I heard crying. It was my mom. I was confused at first and her boyfriend was there comforting her and I all I could think was, "Why is my mom crying?" It was actually her boyfriend who told me what happened. It turns out that Mrs Robin had committed suicide as well. I guess she just couldn't stand the idea of living without her Sweet Baby Boy Will anymore.

Her death hit me pretty hard. It hit all of us pretty hard. It felt like a piece of my family was missing. It was a lot harder than Will's death because I was a lot closer to Mrs. Robin than I was with Will. He was more like a distant cousin I was told to converse with two or three times a year whereas Mrs Robin was like another mother. That's the way it was with my mom and her friends. We were a family and it hurt me so badly when she died. It hurt when Will died as well, but nothing like this. With Will I was sad that I would never see him again and I wouldn't have anymore awkward memories of us dancing at one of my mom's parties. I couldn't watch as our parents teased him or pestered him about girlfriends and laugh quietly because it was funny seeing him uncomfortable.

[I was sad, they were apart of our lives for so long.]

It was like a piece of my family was missing. But with Mrs. Robin, she helped raise me. She was there during some really difficult times in my life and now she's gone. There are songs I refuse to listen to now because she had a habit of dancing specifically to those songs and sometimes my ears will ache because I want to hear her laugh again. I don't remember what it sounds like, her laughter. I barely remember what they look like. I have an old christmas card, it's red and orange, the color of falling leaves. They're just posing in the designated picture place thing, and

there are leaves all around them, Her red hair looks vibrant, and although Will's smile doesn't quite reach his eyes, he seems so full of life and it hurts thinking that I could've helped prevent his death. And in turn, I would've stopped hers as well.

I think that's the hardest part to deal with. Thinking that you could've stopped it. There are too many "What if's?" to really know what could've happened if you had done something differently. It's been hard, I've spent many nights laying awake in my bed thinking about what I could've done. But it's getting easier and I know I've come a long way since they died. All I can do now is hope it doesn't happen to me or my family again, and be there if it happens to my friends.

This is Autumn Larkins for WHJE. More stories like this on WHJE dot com.