

Now that we've begun our separate lives in college, nothing has changed. Nothing changed when we started high school. Nothing changed when we started elementary school. Even the first weeks of preschool after moving to Edgemont, nothing changed. We've stayed close and in touch. When problems would arise, the other would be there. That one faithful day would change our lives completely. I remember that hot summer day in August 2004. The day my sister moved into the School of Mines and Technology to attend school.

A musty, odd smell as new comers gathered in the entrance hall to check into their rooms. Everyone quiet, everyone moving belongings in and out. Every door opened. Every window showing in sunshine, but inside oddly felt like a prison with a bathroom and a four-person bedroom. As we slowly moved my sister's things into her room, I couldn't help but think that we would never actually live together anymore. We would never share the same room. We would never share the same bathroom. We would never again share those hour-long talks about boys and our girlfriends before bed. She would never tell me to wake first in the morning because I took longer to get ready. These thoughts were roaming about in my mind as we were carrying her things inside of Peterson Hall. As she began to put her things away in her dresser and all throughout her closet, I began re-evaluating my plans for college. Did I really want to leave my sister and attend Black Hills State?

After all her things were unpacked and the tubs were put up top in her closet, and her shampoo and body wash in the shower, we had to say our goodbyes as the sky was turning dark. As I look to my mom as she gives her a hug and kiss before we leave, I see a slight tear come down her face as she asks if she needs anything else. I couldn't believe we were leaving. We were leaving her here. And I wasn't staying. At first confusion struck me for the first time that afternoon. As I give her my hug goodbye, my mind was telling me to cry but for some reason I couldn't cry. I didn't want to leave. I didn't want to leave her there. Then we all walked out to the car together. That walk seemed an eternity to me. The rocks brushed up against my shoes as we walk across the street. As I drag my feet on the ground, I realize that it won't help the fact that we had to leave her anyway. I walked as slow as I possibly could. Then at the pickup we said our last goodbyes. As we all gather in the pickup, all except my sister, I knew it had to be true. We were leaving her. We were leaving her at a place we thought we would never go. We were leaving her at college.

It didn't occur to me though that I was next. I was next to being dropped off by my parents and without my sister. As we road home that night in the pickup, I just kept thinking of my sister. Is she lonely? Is she hurt? Is she crying? Is she going to be all right? As I think the whole way home, I didn't say much. All I could think is, I miss her. Already.

To be continued...