

## **Endeavors Of Rapid Magic:**

I don't remember much of being 8 years old. I remember watching cartoons like 'Tom & Jerry'. I remember talking to my mother about school drama, which at the time consisted fervently of "Guess who skipped me in the lunch line?". I remember little of big moments, but in increments lies my childhood, in the folds of my brain that I now enter for rest and relaxation as I now enter adulthood ever so slowly like a soft drizzle of rain soon to turn into a downpour. However, one thing I so masterfully remember, a moment so vivid to this day in my mind that if one were to display this memory of mine on a projector—they may mistake me for having photographic memory. This was done manually though, remembering this painful set of images, sounds, tastes, feeling, and, of course, feeling. I went over, and over it, again and again in my head because, at such a young age, I could not buy flowers, nor set up a headstone for a sad little grave I would end up hearing my loved one be buried in. So, in lack of what felt like proper veneration at the time, I decided to honor one of the greatest loves of my life by surrendering my very brain, hippocampus, and prefrontal cortex to. By condemning that part of my small, feeble brain, to replay this moment again and again within it so much so that if I lifted my eyelids at the right moment and looked at you, you may even be able to see it flash in my head on a continuous loop, such as the 'Barbie' tapes I used to watch at that age. Yes, this was when my dog Magic died. He was 9. I was 8. It was fall. The trees drooped as they were, themselves, hugging their old friend: Death. The grass was browning as if it were in a pot of soy sauce, and even the cement looked a bit darker, even though the skies above head were clear. Orange. I remember orange leaves falling down and into my lap too. I was left alone that day, both my parents working for money that would be put into the investment of my future. I had done just about everything. I had eaten, I had 'cleaned', I had called my mother and swung my feet off my bed as we talked about

maybes, yes's, and no's; ending the call in an 'I love you'. I had even touched my homework briefly, and fed Magic some bacon treats I knew he favored. That's when I decided I wanted to go on an adventure. I put my hat on, my thinner coat, and boots, and took Magic out into the yard. We didn't go anywhere outside the yard, I hadn't gotten permission. I sat on the stoop, people watching, toying with my iPad, listening to conversations I had no part in, and watching leaves fall; looking for a pretty one to gift my mother upon her return. It was a slow adventure, certainly not what came to mind when the word 'adventure' came up, but to me and my imagination, it was a world on its own. Just then, a blind man and his seeing eye dog, a big, burly thing, crossed the street. No matter how many times I replay it, I have no idea what set Magic off. He barked, and barked, and barked loud, growing louder. I watched, silent, as the scene played out before me. Magic barked all the time, this time surely wouldn't be any different, right? Except it was incredibly, and distastefully...different. Magic knew how to open doors, gates, and maybe even knew the code to top governmental secret codes. He got through the gate, looked as if he was going straight for the other dog, and just before I could process, and just before I ever had a chance to figure out how to diffuse the situation, it diffused itself mercilessly. A screeching halt hit my ears first, then a limp body met my eyes, and the last thing I noticed was the car halting at the full stop its murder commanded. Not only did the car stop, but so did the world—or mine, at least. Time didn't slow, it stopped as if time followed road commands better than the car did. It had been speeding. Fast. Like a bullet. It hit my dog with a loud thud. I still remember the sound of his body hitting the bumper, and then the road. I remember screaming and crying—both reactions heavily delayed. I remember the blind man standing there like some kind of omen, and his own dog looking down at my own as if it was watching the Grim Reaper collect my dog's soul. I remember frantically calling my father. I don't remember

when, exactly he had arrived. Just that his friend had picked Magic up from the road and brought him to me. No one believes me, as it is believed Magic died on impact, but I saw Magic, from the arms of my fathers friend, look me right in my eye with his own reddened ones. He looked me in my eyes before closing his eyelids and leaving me behind. I wondered then if he had been angry with me for letting this happen. As angry as Magic may have been, his anger couldn't compare to the boiling guilt that took over my body, mind, and soul. How could I have let this happen? Magic always opened the gates and went out on his own. I thought this time would be like the others, not the last. My father told my mother while she was at work and all she said, after momentary bloated silence, was: "I have to go." She sounded tearful. He was buried later that evening, I tried to just...forget it. But, how could I? We called him 'Uncle Mag' because he had a good *paw* in raising me. He guarded my crib during my entire infancy. He taught me how to walk: Me holding onto the fur on his back and hoisting myself up when ready because I wanted to be able to more efficiently follow him around the house. He greeted me at the door after school. He woke up with me. He licked my hand even when food did not remain in it. My mother said he was my brother. Her first child. My fathers best friend. How could all that be gone in the span of 0.25 seconds? I made sure the house was clean, the dishes washed, my homework done after much previous negligence. I wanted my mother to come home and only have to worry about handling her encroaching grief rather than a cauldron, pan, or broomstick. The next day I came home from school to find no evidence of Magic's existence. Poof, it was all gone. My mother said her way of barreling through grief like *John Henry* was to remember: "Out of sight, out of mind." I nodded, and understood. I followed my mothers way of conjuring light, trying to forget and wash my hands of it, but soon realized I could not wash my eyes. Even if I did wash my eyes, and in error blind myself, I'd only see Magic's face and dark fur brand the

inner skin of my eyelids. So, I found my own way to not rip through grief, but to hold its hand and let it guide me back to love, as grief was love mutated as a direct result of the point of love being decimated, and hell finding home in a home that no longer felt like one. I went to his grave everyday for a while. I sat on a big stone, and talked to him, at first tearfully, but then as if he were still animate. I told Magic's puppy friend next door he had died and he seemed to understand my dialect, as he stopped barking or 'calling' for Magic to come outside—a routine they'd had for years. I saw Magic in my dreams and realized he was never angry at me, just incredibly saddened at our time cut short by the scissors of fate. Now, at 17 years of age, I see slightly bent flowers growing from his grave, right where his head would be. In that is eternity. In that is immortality. In that is him still reaching for me in ways others may not understand. In that is...Magic, Beautiful, relentless, undestroyable Magic. I am comfortable in the factoid that energy cannot be created nor destroyed. Whatever Magic was made up of—will never leave me nor cease to exist. Grief is a channel of daunting discovery, and remembrance that I've walked through. From one end I left Magic, or tried to, and on the other—the far lighter side, I simply found Magic again. Yes, I remember.

- **Mia George; 9.5.25**