

Mr. Fitz,

As an assignment for english class I was asked to write a letter to someone who has influenced my life and changed me. This may be hard for you to finish reading, but I write this for Lauren. I first heard her story at the academic awards banquette last year. You stood before all those people giving a testimony to your daughters life and tears came to my eyes and I could not keep them from falling to my lap for two reasons. The first being guilt. I could not understand, for years, why I could be saved but others could not. And I wished so hard that my life could be given to someone else. Some other daughter, someone else's sister. I am so like the others I have heard about, others who were lost. Why was I still here?

The second reason was Lauren lived out her time after being diagnosed with the quote "I may be changed by what happens to me, but I refuse to be reduced by it." I had not been living my life that way. I was being reduced, I was letting myself be reduced by my guilt. God has given me a second chance, and I don't know why that is, but I know now that I need to live. ~~I~~ I need to live to my fullest potential. For Lauren.

This year I have been through more than I thought possible. First was the ~~scare~~ <sup>scare</sup> that I would need to have another operation, then came depression, followed by an eating disorder. I don't know why these things happened and I assure you I did not intentionally stop eating. And everyday I'd walk into your class and I would be reminded of Lauren. I was being reduced again. I was letting myself be reduced. But not anymore.

I feel like you should know, you deserve to know ~~how~~ how much your daughter has positively influenced my life. I will remember her every single day and I will continue to pray for you.

Mr. Fitz, thank you for this year. you have been a wonderful teacher and I would recommend everyone who asks me to take your classes just so they can get to know you. There's not much I can say other than thank you.