

### **From flying for the First Time to NYC shortly after 9/11**

Two days after 9/11 I took my first plane ride. I was only six years old, the world was just a simple place to me, I was young and naïve....

Suddenly the seatbelt sign made a ding, and the pilot came through the static and said that we were flying lower, over New York City. When the clouds cleared and I saw the city, my eyes were bigger than my head. There were skyscrapers that looked like mini figurines. I felt like a giant, knowing how big these buildings really were. One spot caught my eye in particular, some sort of gray cloud over the city? It was like a huge chimney. As we got lower the cloud became bigger, and I could see people in uniforms. My grandma wanted me to look at a book she held in her lap, and she was telling me there is construction and the view is dirty from the window. I thought it was weird to have a storm cloud in that formation over just a portion of the city. It seemed to be lower than the other clouds.... The captain was waving to us at the door, he was such a hero, up in the sky, making sure we didn't hit anything, and we made it back to Earth so smoothly. He stopped me, shook my hand, and stuck a pin that said "pilot" securely on my shirt. I stared at that pin and smiled, I never wanted to take it off. We walked out of the airport and to the car. It was a sunny day, almost no clouds, and a perfect day for a six year old to fly.

### **From The Loser at a Martial Arts Match**

I had been told that the three most important things to think about are speed, accuracy, and agility, and the rest will come with time. Of course, you need to follow the rules, show respect, drink fluids, and use your brain. The one thing never associated with sparring, but was very important in class, was Humility, the big looming H. Humility was one of the most important aspects in martial arts, and arguably the hardest to reach. In my youth, I wasn't even quite sure I understood the term fully.

This day, I walked into the gymnasium, chopped up into separate rings, each with a group of people of different age and belt levels inside, and I gripped onto my gear, shiny and white. Passing friends, instructors, and masters, I performed quick bows, waves, or fist bumps as I headed to the Black Belt 15-17 rink. I was fifteen years old, and one of two females. It's intimidating, yes, but I have been training as the female minority for as long as I can remember, and I had quite a big handful of tricks up my sleeve for those scary giants of the opposite sex. Sparring was my favorite category

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This uniform I wore was more than competition and being rough. It was about representing my school, and my state, and fighting fair, and with what? Humility? I thought of every class I went to, every speech on humbleness. This sport wasn't to hurt people, not at all. I reluctantly loosened up, and fought the fair way. I lost that match, but

I clapped when first place was being announced, and held a firm handshake. I walked out of that arena with my head held high, a second place medal and my humility.

### **Part of a longer paper from a Poetics Class at Ithaca College**

My poem *Canine Love* is a poem I wrote around 2 years ago about my dog. I've always valued the love that we find in dogs, and back when I was younger I had only really had one valuable relationship with a dog, my dog. I grew up with this dog and I loved her and this poem is a snapshot about my first time seeing her since I went away for college.

"The old plastic doormat sitting unevenly by the door

Welcomes me now, never noticed it before.

Before the door is at the opened angle

I hear nails scurrying on already scratched wood,

An overly excited brown blob slides down the stairs to meet me,

Body wagging, tongue hanging out, inviting me in to say 'hi'."

This was my first time being away from home for so long, so for me this was a big and important thing, this is something that I will never forget, I'll always remember that day. After writing this poem, I have a way of preserving this memory.

### **From an Original Song written for my Great Grandmother**

#### **Verse:.**

**C   Am               Dm    G7               C**

I thank you for putting music in my veins

**AM                               Dm                               G7**

without that I don't know where I would be

**C                               Am               Dm               G7**

And thanks for telling me all your stories

**C     Am**

I can't thank you enough for all the lessons

Dm
G7  
 you taught that were passed down to me  
Am
Dm
G7  
 Thank you for teaching me some Yiddish words (oye veh)  
Am
DmG7  
 and talking about our families history  
C
Am
Dm
G7  
 your Passover sedars brought out so much fun  
C
Am
Dm G7  
 for everyone, i don't know if you can see

**Refrain:**

F
G
C
Am  
 Everybody loves you, yes they do  
F
G
C
Am  
 Your children, grandchildren, great grandchildren too.  
F
G
C
Am
D  
 The way you inspire your friends and family, its beautiful  
F
G7  
 and we thank you