

898 grams.

I watched the water gently pour over his body, declaring his relationship with God, knowing that it would only be a few hours till they officially met. He was never coming home.

Amidst the dimly lit church, the figures in the stained-glass windows stood as silent witnesses, their once vibrant hue had now faded, casting sombre reflections on weathered pews. They stand powerless, unable to intervene in the tragic narrative unfolding beneath their infinite and watchful eyes.

His white lacey dress and booties adorned his precious but sickly skin. Mason Abel Langsworth. He was my candle flame. His spirit and warmth lit up the room, but one simple breath could change everything. He was so beautiful. With big blue eyes and fair hair scattered on his cheeks, arms, and head. I couldn't imagine loving anyone more. He moved his chin and lips as if trying to speak. A bit early for that I thought. Maybe he knew he didn't have much time, maybe he was trying to say goodbye.

As the pastor spoke, my eyes brimmed with tears, unable to contain the flood of emotions stirring within me. With every word, tears streamed down my face and tightened the scratchy knot in my throat. I struggled to compose myself, but the reality of the situation was too much to bear. I couldn't enjoy and live in the moment knowing that he wouldn't even live at all. Roger took my hand and caressed his thumb forwards and backwards against my own; hoping I would find comfort in the knowledge that I wasn't alone in this as much as I really felt that way.

The pain of his loss, even though he hadn't gone, was unbearable. I couldn't help but dream about what could have been. No first word, step, laugh, smile, friend, or swim. Day of school, crush, test, job, holiday, lover, or baby of his own. No time, just pure innocence, and fragility. Injections and tubes to keep him alive a little longer. Nothing except a beating heart and a lifetime of love crammed into his tiny fleeting body.

It was such a waste of a perfect life, but I know it was no one's fault. He was just born too soon. I wish in all my pain, physical and mental, that I could have had it ten times worse and for ten times longer, just to have kept Mason.

A fourth-degree bleed to the brain definitely eliminated any chances of that happening. He was never going to live on, but I will still forever carry his weight with me, all 898 grams of him, though it won't be in the way I had once hoped. His weight won't be carried on my shoulders or cradled in my arms, but will linger on in my heart. 898 grams of grief, loss, and burden, carried with me wherever I go. Aching and cramping me but yet reminding me that I'm alive. My heartbeat is just him knocking at the door, he's here. Reminding me to enjoy each step as he could never take one. To smile each smile as he could never make one; and to ache each ache as that means he's with me.

