

What can I say?

Christie was growing into an amazing young woman. She was bright, she was funny, she was stubborn, and she knew how to work people better than anyone I know. She could find peoples' buttons and figure out exactly which one to press in order to get what she wanted. I know she had *me* wrapped around her little finger.

It started when we were kids; we were vicious towards each other, at times. Many of you probably already know this story, but it's one of her favorites: I think I was around 10, so she had to be 6 or 7, and we were walking down the hallway of our parents' house. She kept bumping into me, thus bumping me into the wall. I asked her to stop, but she didn't. So I *told* her stop and she came back with "You can't tell me what to do, you're not my mom!" So I grabbed the back of her head and slammed it into the door. I got in quite a bit of trouble, and a couple days later, I accidentally slammed her finger in our bedroom door. She decided to make me an offer: rather than telling on me and getting me in *more* trouble, I could let her do whatever she wanted to get even. It ended with *me* lying on the floor, *her* on top of me, punching me right in the nose. And *that* is where her "negotiation" skills started.

Christie was not someone who took "No" for an answer, as I am sure many of you are familiar with. If she ever asked me to do something that I didn't want to do, she would just harass me until I caved in. It had reached the point where, just to save time and frustration (I'm sure on both of our parts), I would just agree immediately. I would do *anything* for her, because it was *her*. Just recently, she called me at work, of course – everything was urgent to her – to ask me if I could go to the Laundromat with her because she had never been before and she didn't know what to do. I remember thinking, "How does she not know what to do? You put the clothes in, you put the detergent in, you put the quarters in, and press start." But, instead, I answered, "What time do you want to go tomorrow morning?" And as tedious as some of her requests were, I can't even begin to tell you all the amazing experiences I had because of her persuasions.

Probably my favorite of those, though I never admitted it to her, was our trip to Disneyland together. Christie talked me into going and promised I would have a good time once we got there. We stayed at the Disneyland Hotel and had Park Hopper passes for three days. I went into this trip thinking it was going to be horrible – we'd end up fighting about something stupid, probably involving clothes, and then spend the rest of the trip irritated and miserable. I couldn't have been more wrong. Turns out, when it was just the two of us, we made great traveling companions. We'd get up and go to the park right when it opened; as soon as one of us got too hot or annoyed by the screaming kids, we went back to our hotel to swim in the pool and take a nap; and we'd make it back to the park for the end of the night. We actually talked like friends, not just "sisters." And we even managed to share our clothes amicably.

That's another thing about Christie, she loved clothes and she loved shopping. If she found a particular store or brand she liked, she obsessed over it and obsessed over getting everyone else hooked on it, too. I've purchased many articles of clothing myself, based on her very strong recommendations. She'd drag me all over to find the perfect Volcom sweatshirt or to Palo Alto to buy who-knows-how-many American Apparel Deep V-neck t-shirts. When I was looking for an apartment to move in to, I was so busy, but she

wanted to go to American Apparel so badly. She pleaded and pleaded with me – “Please, *Jamie*, I’ll help you when we get back. Please, *Jamie*, it won’t take that long...” – until I surrendered and made the trek with her to American Apparel. Once we got there, she picked out one shirt for herself and four for me, as well as, a zippie. Once we had both paid, she noticed a jacket that she *had* to have, but then insisted that *I* had to have it, too. She noticed my hesitation – I was supposed to be saving my money –so she said, “It’s okay; I’ll put it in on the card that Mom pays and tell her I made you get it.” She always had a solution.

I don’t know what else to tell you about her. I just know that I will treasure every memory I have of her and I hope that you can do the same. And I hope that you can all find a small amount of comfort in the belief I hold: she took the best memory she had of each of you with her; regardless of what the current status of your relationship may have been.

One more thing: The other day, a family friend told our Mom that Christie’s favorite quote was: “Imperfection is beauty, madness is genius, and it is better to be absolutely ridiculous than absolutely boring.” I can see why (she loved it), it fit her. She was beautiful, a little mad, and most *definitely* not boring. Christie, you will be forever missed and forever in our hearts.