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Ms. Glass

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Bad Things Happen to Good People

She was walking towards the car, smiling as usual. Talia Agler was the most kindhearted, overly nice person I have ever met. She was about 5'3" and smelled like strawberries, just like the color of her hair, which was strawberry blonde. As she entered the car, she enthusiastically said, "Hey Jeff!" to my dad and turned around to see me in the back seat and grinned the largest and kindest grin I have ever seen and said,

"Hey, buddy!" From that moment on, I sort of realized that she would eventually have a huge impact on my life, just like she did on everybody else's.

Tali was my second cousin. She grew up in Florida and then she returned to Washington D.C. to find a job in the town where she had enjoyed going to college, and leave the grasp of her parents. I was so fortunate that Tali chose to live close to my branch of the Agler family. We all felt that she was a bright, shining star.

Tali came over to my house often for dinner. She always offered to help prepare and clean up the meal. We had an inside joke that I remember her by. "Can I pour you a glass of water?" We would tease Tali by saying this at times when she was being "overly nice," as I put it. She consistently put other people first before herself, which was a unique quality and I admired her for it.

I also really respected the work that she did, helping others. She helped women and children in Africa who had fled from abusive situations. She supported them through her

teaching and compassion. In addition to Tali's kindness, I also remember that turquoise tank tops were her favorite clothing to wear. I never realized that that shirt would be going to be of no use to her anymore.

The last time I saw her was the week before she passed away; we went out to dinner to catch up and celebrate Hannukah with my mom and dad. She wore the turquoise tank top and in her usually thoughtful way, she came with a silly card and gift for me.

One week later, very early in the morning, my mom knocked on my door lightly. I could sense her sadness and grief through the door. I told her she could come in. "Adam, Tali was in a terrible accident. She is in the hospital."

"Is she going to be okay?" I asked hesitantly.

"Honestly Adam, I don't think so...But who knows? Maybe there could be a miracle."

Later, my mom told me what happened to Tali. She was jogging in Washington D.C. I could just imagine the dark, dry, icy weather that engulfed the atmosphere while her heart was racing with every footstep she took on the road. But why the road? Was she wearing all black clothes? A car didn't see her and Tali got completely run over. Every wheel trampled her body. All I was thinking was, why didn't she just wear turquoise?

She died a day later. Her funeral was two days after she passed away. The atmosphere felt really eerie and depressing. Everybody was crying. I don't blame them. Shortly after she died, the town in Africa where she had worked dedicated the "Talia Agler Girl's Shelter" in her memory.

The influence she had on me is everlasting. I think about how much Tali helped other people, not just her family and friends, but also less fortunate people across the ocean. This helped me realize that I should always try to be the best version of myself and to not be a selfish person.

From then on, that's what I always wonder when I have to make a decision. Tali was only 26 years old. I had known her for only 2 years. Why must bad things happen to good people?