“Close Only Counts With Shovels and Snowballs”
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Close Only Counts With Shovels and Snowballs

About seven years ago when I was seven, my family and I lived in Olathe, a suburb of Kansas City. I was in first grade and I went to public school because I was not homeschooled, yet. It had snowed so school was not in session. My family had built a snow fort in our front yard and the next day we went out to play. My two older sisters Lyssa, and Alexa, and I wanted to play outside in the snow fort. We asked our mom if we could play outside and she told us we could. She did not come outside with us because it was cold and she could watch us from the front window. Lyssa was ten and was responsible enough to watch us out front, finally we went out to play.

I do not remember who’s idea it was or why the metal garden shovel was in our front yard in the first place but we imagined that the snow fort was a huge castle. The shovel became a catapult that launched the snowballs which we pretended were flaming tar balls. Alexa was a knight fighting a pretend enemy army outside the castle while Lyssa and I ran the catapult. We put the shovel on the wall of the snow fort so we could launch snow balls. To test it, out Alexa told us to try to hit her and we decided to try. I made a snowball and gave it to Lyssa who put it on the shovel. We got ready, and I took a couple steps back so I would not get hit.

As Lyssa was going to launch the catapult it slid backwards. When she pushed the shovel upwards the snowball did not go very far, because the shovel hit me in the chin. It was a miracle that the shovel had not had hit any higher, because if it did then that could have caused mouth problems later. If it had hit any lower, than it would have cut major arteries in my neck which could have been fatal. My chin started bleeding, and I cupped my hands around my wound so my blood would not get on the snow and turn it red. Lyssa says I did not cry at all, that the only way she knew the shovel hit me was because it did not launch the snowball. She turned around to see what had stopped it and saw me trying to keep the blood from reaching the ground.

My mom was watching from the screen door when it happened, and she saw it happen. We applied pressure to my chin and drove to urgent care. It was not severe enough to go to the emergency room, and we could not go to the doctor’s office because it was full. We went back into a room and I sat down on a bed. The nurse put some numbing gel on my chin, while my mom and the doctor decided if
they could glue it or if I would have to get stitches. Personally, I wanted them to glue it because I was not fond of needles, but they convinced me to get stitches since it was on my chin. The wound could easily reopen while I eating or talking if we glued it, so we could not glue it if we wanted it to heal properly. After my chin was fully numb, they started cleaning it and putting what I thought looked like barbecue sauce on my chin. It was not actually barbecue sauce though, it was iodine. Then the doctor started stitching. While he was stitching, the doctor started talking to my sister Alexa about the knots he was doing because Alexa had been learning how to tie knots. The doctor said he was tying a square knot and some other knot that I did not recognize. After he was done with the stitches we went home.

I went back to school the next day with a plain brown band-aid on my chin. For about a week people in my class kept asking why there was a band-aid on my face, I told them, and they asked to see my stitches. There was only one occasion that I took off my band-aid and showed them my pink chin with the black stitches in it. We went back to urgent care a week later to get the stitches removed. I guess I’m lucky because that is the only time I’ve had a severe enough injury that we had to go to urgent care or the emergency room. From this experience I learned to be careful when you are playing with garden shovels, especially metal ones, and close only counts with shovels and snowballs.