There was an audible crack as the three of us pushed the ladder up onto the rack on the back of the truck. Jimmy and I didn’t realize what had happened, but it only took my sisters brain 225 milliseconds to feel her right middle finger sandwiched between one of the rungs of the ladder and the rack on the truck. I knew she felt it, but there was no facial expression to accompany the pain. Having had similar injuries, I knew that it couldn’t have been easy to mask it. But this was so typical. Libby never really was one to show weakness in these types of situations; she always put on a stern face as a way of telling others that she would be fine. That was down in New Orleans in the summer of 2012. Her and my youth group was down south for a conference put on by our churches’ denomination for a week and two days of that week we went out into the city to do work on local churches. It was a Wednesday, late afternoon; we were cleaning up after a long day of painting the side of a church that had been damaged by hurricane Katrina, which had ripped through New Orleans in 2006. Part of cleaning up involved putting away ladders of various sizes. One of the ladders was a 40 footer so it required three people to move it. The task fell to my sister, Jimmy, and I to carry it to the truck and put it where it belonged.

Libby’s injury didn’t slow her down a second as she, despite having a freshly broken finger, continued to help with the rest of the cleanup. It’s inspiring really: the way she makes things happen regardless of whatever personal issue she is facing. I see it all the time whether it’s performing menial chores around the house or running for class president. It’s really great to see in someone her age especially as she is surrounded by people who will so easy sap anyone of any shred of decency. I am referring to the high school that both she and I attended, but I digress.

Growing up, she and I got into countless squabbles. We fought about everything that you could think of, personal space, belongings, who’s in charge, everything. But despite all the fights, there were countless times when I was glad she was there and she was my sister. Our relationship has followed a kind of pattern whenever a fight had taken place. We would avoid each other for a day or two but after that, we would be better than ever. We stressed each other out a lot, but we always made up and have grown nothing but closer over the years.

Now that I’ve left the house and gone off to college, the present stress is to keep the relationship as vivid as it has always been. I am convinced that this will present no issue at all seeing as our relationship has grown to a great strength in the recent years and I know we will continue to teach each other things and grow closer as siblings part of a family.