

DIRECTORS NOTES:

When I was standing with a full crew outside Cody's dorm room at 6:30 in the morning and she came to the door and said "I'm sick, but come in anyway", I knew she really was committed to sharing her entire life with our audience. I should have known that was the case when I first had lunch with her over a year earlier and the talk centered on "peeing". Cody is the only person I've ever met, aside from my doctor, with whom I would feel comfortable talking about various body functions (and I wonder about my doctor).

But with Cody, it's not about shock value or fear or even awkwardness, it's about explaining the reality of living in a way that people can understand. Cody is so comfortable with herself that we are comfortable with her and all she explains. And that is why this project works.

Through her eyes we see and begin to understand what it is like to be paralyzed. We begin to feel and appreciate how important the little things are that we take for granted every day. And this doesn't cause us to feel sorry for anyone, but to look in amazement at all her abilities and determination to make a difference in people's lives.

When we filmed the consultation with Dr. Doug Kerr at Johns Hopkins Hospital, I really did not want to be in the room. By that point we had gotten to know Cody and her mother pretty well. I did not want to hear that the pain in her back was Scoliosis and that she truly had lost her chance to walk someday. Cody and her family did not want to hear that either. We all hoped that there would be a different answer and one that would be extremely positive. And, before we walked in that room, no one knew what the answer would be. I wondered if our crew should be there. But Cody and her doctor and her mother and her boyfriend allowed two cameras in the room. And there we were, everyone waiting for the verdict. And that is what makes this project work; the unfettered access to both good and possibly very bad parts of her life.

I'm thankful for Glenn Close taking the time to help us with this and for all the energy and time our crew spent developing and working on the project. I'm particularly grateful that Cody has let me be a small part of her life over the past two years.

My hope is that seeing this film will make you laugh, cry and cheer and give you a much better understanding about living with paralysis. It certainly has for me.

Chris Schueler