"He was repelling off of our roof. He wasn't doing it with repelling gear, but with two normal, hardware-store ropes," said Nicole Fang, '95, a Baker desk-worker and friend of Duff.

A Baker resident heard Duff and called the campus police at 11:22 p.m. Two officers responded within a minute and paramedics took Duff to the hospital. Duff was conscious after the fall but could not feel his legs, Fang said.

Duff was taken to Beth Israel Hospital, where he entered surgery at 3:30 a.m. Duff suffered a vertebra in his neck and was in surgery for 14-and-a-half hours, according to Robert M. Randolph, associate dean for student assistance services.

Because of the spectacle created by the fall, rumors that Duff tried to commit suicide were started, Fang said. The rumors are completely false, according to Randolph.