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ENG 100
Formal Assignment 1
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She Blew Out My Candles

It was my 17th birthday, and I had just come back from work. When I entered the house, my mom was downstairs smoking a cigarette. There were bags under her eyes, but I didn't bother to ask why. I knew why, and I don't ask questions that I know the answer to. She took a long drag from her cigarette and let it hang dainty between her fingers. She started up some random small talk.

"How was work?" Her head was still down, but I knew she was talking to me. Her words were slightly slurred.

"Fine" I coughed, smoke getting into my lungs.

There was no need for us to talk, so I went upstairs to change. I looked outside, the once bright sky was beginning to darken. Time seemed to warp at this point, because before I could understand why, me and my mom were fighting again. It was about something small, it's always about something small. My sister had told me before she left, not to feed into the small things. That the small things were just an excuse for her to take her emotions out on someone, but I couldn't help it. I didn't view her as my mother, and I didn't talk to her the way a daughter talks to her mother. She put her cigarette down in the ashtray, still lit. It must have been hard to scream when smoke was in her lungs. I screamed right back, and I didn't stop until I knew I hurt her. I wanted my words to hurt her the way her recent actions hurt me. I knew what was coming, because our fighting never ended any other way. I put my dog in my room so he didn't become afraid of he yelling or get hurt, I grabbed my phone, and wallet. However, this fight must have gotten her worked up more than usual, since she decided to throw the glass bowl at me. No one

screamed or acted shocked, and the world didn't stop turning from her choice of actions. I stepped over it, and looked directly at her.

" Yes because throwing glass at me, and breaking all of our dishes seem to really get your point across." I heard her lighter click before I opened the door and left. I called two people when I left that house, my sister and my friend Eric. I had made my way to a nearby park, it was getting dark out, and strangely chilly for the beginning of August. However, the fresh air was nice.

Seated on a dark park bench, my sister answered after a few rings.

" Hey, happy birthday Mia. You okay?"

" Thanks, not really no." Hot tears started to roll down my cheeks, but I tried not to let it change my voice.

" It's mommy again, I just don't know what to do. I just want her back, and I don't want to stay here alone."

" I'm sorry Mia, I just couldn't stay. I've been through this once before and I can't let that environment affect me anymore. My advice is to just stay away from her. Stay busy and out of the house as much as possible, when she uses again, her mood swings won't be as bad."

It was selfish that I wanted to ask her to come back, so I didnt. I don't ask questions I know the answer to. She continued to speak.

" Listen if it gets too bad, you can always come stay here for a while. If you don't want to because of school, I understand. Do you have any friends you can stay with?"

" I have Jordan, but I also have work."

" Yeah but that job will be over in a week or two right? When everyone goes back to school?"

" Mhm."

" You know i'm always here for you okay Mookie? I love you."

" I love you too Tess."

The phone then went dead. I stared at it for a minute, before deciding to call Eric. The phone answered almost immediately.

“ Hey Marie, it’s been a while.”

After three months of hating him, I poured my soul out to him that afternoon. I had told him everything I was dealing with, I held nothing back. I told him about my mom, my sister leaving, the stress from work, and getting ready for school. He calmed me down, and I let the fresh air crash into my lungs. We talked about our lives, until our conversation drifted on a less important, unrelated topics. We talked until it was becoming too late for me to stay outside.

“Happy birthday Marie.”

I thanked him, telling him I would talk to him when I got home. I looked at my phone as I started to walk away from the park. Jordan’s name was staring through me. Her mom knew about my situation, and had offered to let me live with them in the extra room, everytime I came over.

Jordan came from the opposite family situation than me. A nuclear family, as an only child, her parents focused all their love and attention on her. As I walked home, I couldn’t stop myself from wondering what it would be like if my life was different. If my dad wasn’t dead, if my mom wasn’t an addict, if I had Jordan’s family. I wanted that. I wanted to feel the love of both parents. I also wanted my life to go back to the way it was before we had moved. I walked back in my house. It was dark, but I could see clearly. I took a deep breathe, it smelt like smoke, it felt like home.

No matter the pros and cons of leaving, no matter how much I thought about it, I never really considered it to be an option. My mom has been there for me for 17 years, and maybe she isn’t herself now, but she’s my mom, and I love her. It’s my turn to be there for her.