

## **Second Place Prose – Middle School**

### **“Remarks”**

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**Grade: 7**

**School: Charlevoix Middle School**

I walked down the street, feeling it hovering over my shoulder. I walked past a group of girls chatting and giggling. It whispered in my ear, “What are they talking about? They’re probably laughing at the ugly outfit you picked out today.” I tried to shrug it off, but its words rang throughout my head. I pulled my hood over my face and tried to keep my head down. I, slouching more than before, continued to trudge home.

I passed by a bakery, breathing in the sweet scent of fresh donuts. I opened my wallet to see how much money I had, hoping to get an after-school snack. It tapped my shoulder and remarked, “Do you really need a donut? I mean, look at you! You’re practically the size of a house!” I sighed and put away my wallet, and continued the walk home. I stuffed my hands into my front hoodie pocket, in hopes to hide my stomach a little.

I shuffled past an ad for makeup. It poked my face and muttered, “That would be a better use of your money, maybe it would hide all that acne.” I looked up at the ad pondering. I wandered into a nearby drug store to look at concealers. I picked one out and walked up to the counter. I paid and went on my way, backpack and soul heavier. Even so, I continued the journey home.

I looked at the time and realized how late I was. I sped along the sidewalk hoping to get home before Mom worried too much. It cackled in my ear, “Wow, your short legs and fat thighs really DO make you slow. Haha, you can’t even follow the simple instruction Mom gave you. All you had to do was get home on time. But no, instead you’re over here messing around. Great job.” I felt tears fill my eyes as I bounded towards the front door of my house, praying I didn’t worry Mom.

I rushed in to find Mom pacing in the living room. She looked relieved and angry at the same time. It screamed in my head, “Well you did it, you worried Mom just because you can’t follow simple instructions. Worthless piece of garbage.” Mom quickly strode towards me.

“Honey, where on Earth have you been?! It’s over fifteen minutes past the time we agreed on! What happened?” She asked with concern.

“I’m sorry, Mom. I didn’t mean to make you worry. It’s just- I don’t know, it’s been like there’s a monster on my back calling me worthless and telling me not to eat. And I try to ignore it, but it just won’t let me! And I don’t know what to do.” I replied nervously.

“Oh, Sweetheart, you should’ve told me sooner. But I think we should schedule an appointment with a psychiatrist to see if there’s anything we can do for you, ok?”

“Ok, thank you, Mom. But since I don’t have a doctor right now, can I have a hug?”

“Of course, Sweetie. I am always here for you if the monster comes back. You never have to be afraid to talk to me about these things, I love you unconditionally.”

“Thank you, Mom. I love you so much!”

“I love you too, Sweetie.” Mom cooed, pulling me into a tight hug.

\*Disclaimer: Remember; you never have to be afraid to talk about your mental health. Seeking help doesn’t mean you’re weak, it means you’re strong enough to know you need it. Depression, anxiety, ADHD, they’re all real and valid. If you experience anything like severe depression, unusual hyperactivity, or extreme anxiety, or other red flag symptoms, make sure to tell a trusted adult. They will help you decide the next step, be it seeing a doctor or psychologist,

or something else entirely, it will help immensely. Take it from me, a girl who has struggled with ADHD and depression her whole life. Having mental illness doesn't mean you're messed up, it is just how you are. And it's ok to not be ok. Because in the end, it will get better. Never gone, but better.