

Third Place Prose – Middle School

“Forever Home”

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7th Grade

St. Francis Xavier

Home after home. School after school. That's my life. Did you know that the average kid in foster care usually gets adopted between the ages of 7-9? I'm Izzy and I'm 15. People often treat me like I'm a lost puppy, like I don't know how the system works. That's false. I've been in here for a while and have a pretty good idea how this works. Granted not all the places I go are bad, actually most families are sweet and kind. But, it's more like an act, they believe they can do it, until they can't. That's when I go to a new home, most times a new school.

Currently I'm staying with an old lady, Miss Anne, she calls herself. She's not bad, but sometimes I get this feeling that she forgets I'm there. When she's cooking, I'll come around the kitchen corner and she'll scream as if she just saw a ghost. Despite her forgetting, she's nice in the way she makes my lunches and wraps them up with fancy paper and leaves a note that writes “You can do it!” It's cheesy but I appreciate the thought. Miss Anne thinks schools overrated. She believes that kids learn more by doing and experiencing, not seeing and watching. Legally I'm required to go to school, but there are days where instead of going to school she takes me shopping and teaches me how to coupon. I like those days.

A social worker came to my house yesterday and had a long talk with Miss Anne. Not sure what it was about but Miss Anne has been walking around the house looking confused and honestly a little more bonkers then normal. It concerns me a bit. The social worker came again tonight, and suddenly now I'm packing up all of my stuff again and hauling off to a new place with no explanation. I always ask myself “When does it end?” The answer is, it doesn't. The lady's car smells like Lavender, it's nice. She says she's taking me to a new foster home. Each house I go to a different place I wonder if it's the one. She says it's a family, mom, dad, and two boys. I like that I'm optimistic. The minute I walk into the house I'm welcomed by hugs. The house is nice. The Mom [aka Mallory] shows me to my room. The dad [Steven] was getting the boys to bed. The boys [Braden and Josh] are twins. They are two years old and the cutest things I've ever seen. It makes me wonder why they would even want a foster kid when their life is already so perfect. I'm unpacking all my things when Mallory comes into my room. Mallory sat on my bed and said, “I know this must be scary for you, Izzy, but I intend to make this place feel like home to you.” Home, wow. I've never really thought about a home. What she said comforted me and made me feel like maybe this was really it.

The first month went by in a blast. I'm still going to the same school as before [which was a relief]. I've become pretty good friends with a girl named Becca. She is nice, quiet, and super smart. We sit together at lunch and trade snacks. Every day I go home, play with the twins, eat a snack, do my homework, eat dinner, and go to bed. I love it. Mallory and Steven have taken a

strong liking to me. I guess it's my irresistible charisma. Mallory always tucks me into bed every night, I tell her that I'm too old for it but she tells me that's nonsense. Steven likes to take me fishing on clear days. Going fishing is a good time, very calming. They both have been talking to me about a more permanent situation. Not exactly sure what that means, but I know that I shouldn't get my hopes up. Mallory texted me while I was in social studies saying that She and Steven wanted to have a serious talk with me when they got home. When I got to the house I walked inside and they were sitting on the couch waiting for me. They explained to me that they really enjoy having me here. They love how I bonded with the twins, and basically, they love me. They also said that they didn't want to risk me ever having to go anywhere else, and before the conversation was over, they asked me if I wanted to be adopted.

What world am I living in, how could possibly want to keep me forever? I would have a permanent home, and a family. I said yes.

We met with the social worker and she said that I would have to have consent from my biological parents, meaning they would send their parental rights away. I soon learned after that my "mom" died. Strangely I felt nothing. Not sorrow or hate, just nothing. But that means that I still have to get my "dad" to sign the paper. I don't want to see him, I don't want to talk to him, and that's what I explained to the social worker. She said that it wasn't a problem and that if he agreed to sign the papers, she could do it herself. Not surprisingly he agreed to sign them. The social worker [who I just learned is named Marcey] took the consent papers to him and had them signed just like that.

The next week we went to court. I was adopted. I had a home. I had a family. The feelings that I feel are indescribable, it's an out of this world feeling. Since when did I get this lucky? I change my answer I had before, the feeling of never belonging somewhere and always worried about your next move, does end.