

Jennifer Caldwell

Eng 100

Formal Assignment #1

We had argued the night before, he was super angry with me for not making it over the night before for his birthday. Truth was? I was avoiding him. Not because I didn't want to be with him anymore but because I had to keep myself safe from the events that would happen the following day. So, I told a little white lie about why I couldn't make it over after work. My Dad was annoyed with me about my room being a mess. It was 2014, I was 19 and still living under my parent's roof. Rules still applied.

HIM and I would migrate to his room shortly after I had gotten there. He'd walk in, I would follow, and he would shut the door slowly behind him and he would be sure to lock the door. The fury would be unleashed. HIS skin would skin would turn a hell-ish red. The white of his eyes would turn yellow and his beautiful almost innocent blue eyes would turn black and narrow like a jaguar's. He'd attack with me vulgar language and aggressive physical contact that would paralyze my trembling body as I sunk to the floor, closing my tear-filled eyes deciding if this was what I wanted the rest of my life to be like.

This entire scene played in my head while I drove home from work that night. This same night it was decided I needed to take my life back into my own hands. To tell the two people who want the best for me, what was happening for the past two and a half years. Tonight, I would tell my parents that I was being abused physically, mentally, and emotionally by my boyfriend. The thought now still makes me cringe and have that lump

in my throat. If I didn't have any help from my sister and neighbor that night, I strongly believe that the events of this night would have gone a lot differently.

I ended up stopping at HIS house on the way home. I asked to speak to HIM when I walked in and without argument he agreed.

"We need to talk" I said

I had never sounded so confident and empowered in my life. I felt it in my body, I felt like a superhero saving the day. It wasn't just anyone I was saving though. I was saving myself. My stance was Superman, Batman, Wonderwoman. He could feel the vibe I was giving off. I was feeding off of it like a lion waiting to pounce on it's prey at the waterhole. I had him right where I wanted him.

"What do you want to talk about?" His voice was nervous and his breathing had picked up.

"I don't love you anymore, I actually hate you with all my being. I'm not taking your shit anymore."

Now picture an evil or awful persence you felt taking over your personality just leave your body and go off to find a hiding place to die off. That's how I felt. Just in that very statement, I had taken my life back. It was mine again. With a smirk of dominance on my face, I turned to leave and I didn't look back.

The ride home that was all of five minutes, I thought about how I was going to tell my Dad. My mom was in the hospital with my Nan so I wasn't going to bother her. As soon as I got home, my

first move was to go upstairs to my room. Thankfully, my sister was sitting on her bed and I walked in slowly like I wanted her to know something was going on. I had clearly been crying and she looked at me like she didn't quite know if I needed a hug or a little space. To be honest with you, I didn't really know myself. I sat on my bed and poured out my entire life in the past two and a half years.

I explained to her that everything was my fault, I was always in the wrong. I couldn't go hang out with my friends if one of their boyfriends were there because he was nervous I would cheat on him, which still doesn't make sense to me since he basically knew my life inside and out. I remember the one time I told her about that still haunts me to this day. I blocked most of this terrible time out of head but this time specifically stuck with me.

His family owned a beautiful farm house on 400 acre land, so all of the pictures you see on Facebook of the really pretty country houses and the land surrounding it that's what it looked like. Going there and just sitting on the porch, drinking morning coffee, feeling the summer morning breeze on my face was just like being in a movie. It was blissful when I was by myself on the porch in the morning. But one of the last times I went down was one I wasn't able to block out. It was someone's birthday, might've actually been his dad's, his parents allowed us to drink if we stayed on the property. We were all around the bon fire they had made and everyone was having a great time. I needed to go to the bathroom and warned HIM that I might go to bed. We'd been drinking for hours at this point and I knew I reached my limit so it was time for me to go to bed. He said alright and that he would be up soon since he felt tired himself. I passed out as

soon as my head hit the pillow. I'm not sure how long I was asleep but I did hear him come in and he turned the light on and he was mad.

"Why didn't you come back down? You know how embarrassing it is to have a girlfriend who can't hang? I got my balls busted for you coming up early!!"

"Why do you let them get to you? Who cares what they say?"

"I care, because then I look bad!!"

"So how you feel is all that matters? Because you saying that to me just makes me feel like a piece of shit."

"Don't flip this on me, you're the reason I'm pissed. This is your fault, if you had come back down, this conversation wouldn't be happening right now."

"I think I'm going to go sleep in the living room, I can't be near you right now."

I grabbed my pillow, my blanket, and my headphones so I could listen to my easy listening station on pandora since listening to music was the only way I was falling asleep anymore. I got myself situated and laid down. I closed my eyes and my thoughts were going from one place to another. Do I want this to be the rest of my life? Where I would be right now if I had left the very first time he touched me? Should I leave him? Am I able to do this on my own and still keep it a secret? So many thoughts. I wanted to call my mom but she wouldn't know why I was upset so I let it go. I can't describe a feeling of wanting comfort and you know you can't get it because no one knows what's going on behind the closed doors. I had thoughts of suicide for a very long time because for a very long time, it was just me and only me. I thought of ways to do it and always somehow pulled myself out of this dark place by thinking of my parents, my sister, my

brother, the bright future I could have. I was circling in my thoughts when I heard the bedroom door open, I turned around and he was already to me when he gripped my neck so tightly and pulled me up right. Still squeezing my neck, he whispered to me:

"You get back in that room, you lay the fuck down and you better not pull a stunt like this again." He threw me back down and I was paralyzed.

All I could think of was: "This is it. I'm going to die tonight." I held back tears because I did not want him to see how weak I was. He couldn't know that I was scared, he would know that he had full power over me. I think I always kept in the back of my head that I wasn't going to let him get away with what he was doing. After regrouping, nervous and scared, I gathered my pillow, my blanket and my headphones and went back to the room. I laid down and he put his arms around me.

"We're going to be just fine." His words were soft and tired.

I didn't sleep that night, I cried a lot after he fell asleep and thought to myself again "Am I really capable of doing this on my own?"

If I remember correctly at this point, my sister was hugging me and mentioned she would stand in the kitchen out of view from my Dad but so I could see her for moral support. He was watching a movie and I started shaking I was so scared of how he would react. I asked if I could speak to him so he paused his movie. I explained that I had been lying about my relationship with HIM for two and half years. My parents knew that my relationship with HIM wasn't sunshine and rainbows. I've never seen my Dad so wide eyed. He asked to speak more in the morning and dive into this with a clear mind. I agreed.

The feelings I was encountering were so over whelming. I cried a lot that night, I had the biggest fear after telling my parents that they would be so mad at me. They'd curse me out and ask how could I have done this to myself. I used to think the same thing. The truth is: you almost feel safer staying with them. I stayed up a lot that night too. After being brainwashed into thinking that every move I made was wrong or I was breaking some kind of law, I felt like a disappointment. I hated my life. I let my parents down! I was a terrible excuse for a daughter. The insults I was subconsciously throwing at myself kept me up all night and in tears. I was a failure. A poor excuse for a human being. I even convinced myself I wasn't worth staying my parent's house anymore.

The following morning, my Dad had asked me to take my sister to school and when I got home we would discuss the situation further. There was an aroma in the car and my sister kept looking at me like I was some kind of broken glass that if she said anything I would shatter.

"Jen, you have to say something."

"What would you like me to say? I'm scared? Okay fine, I'm scared!"

It was true. I was scared. I just told my father about being psychically harmed for two and a half years. My heart was still in my stomach. I was still holding back tears because I wasn't ready to cry again. The thought of feeling pathetic and that the people that love you the most are looking at you in total disgust is the most heart tugging feeling in the world.

"I just want you to know that I love you. Mom and Dad love you. You have people that care about you and you aren't going through this alone"

Hearing that made the ride home a little bit easier. I knew in the time that I drove my sister to school and got home, my dad had already called my mom and she was probably losing her mind.

I pulled into the driveway and my Dad was in the kitchen.

"I want to know everything. Don't leave anything out" I've never heard my Dad be so stern with me before

"Dad, I can guarantee you that you don't want to hear everything but I can send you the texts that were exchanged that night."

The look of disgust on my father's face was I needed to see to feel like the biggest disappointment and to break down right there in the kitchen.

"Jen, I didn't tell you to come home last night."

"I know..."

He's definitely mad at me for lying and making him the main reason for my lie.

"You lied to this bastard because that's how scared you are of him that you couldn't be honest about why you wanted to come home?"

Yep...he's definitely mad at me

"Dad, I'm sorry. I don't know what I was doing, I'm just stupid!"

My Dad isn't a hugging type of guy. He's a fist bump and a pat on the back in the most sincere way kind of guy. I've never seen him rush to hug me quickly in my life.

"Babe, I'm not mad at you at all. I just want to destroy this kid's life."

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A friend of my Dad's who was a detective in the area came over to talk to me about the situation at hand. Mr. Marshall gave me some of the best advice I could've gotten but knowing that my sister had been right about being cared about. One of the biggest set backs for me was finally telling someone and them not believing me. I can't even begin to explain the feeling of feeling like I was alone through all of this. Six months later, feeling happier that I had taken control of MY life, the grass suddenly looked greener and I've been in a better place.