

Taylor Kriebel

ENG 100

Narrative Project

Due Date: September 15th, 2018

### Plastic Bins

It started with a stupid, stupid lie. Something I was good at doing from the circumstances I lived in.

I felt as though I had **swallowed bricks** and they were slowly making their way to my digestive system the way the nervousness had come over me. My stomach tightening around them, constricting and scratching it's rough surface on my insides. What I was most concerned with was where will I sleep next week, more importantly how do I tell my four and eight year old brothers, Rhyan and Scotty, that their big sister won't be living with them anymore.

Kathy, my boyfriend Dk's mother, and Amara, his 15 year old little sister, accompanied me to what I thought would be the last time I step foot in my house, large plastic bins and containers that Kathy bought me stuffing her infamous minivan top to bottom giving Amara only few inches of legroom in the backseat. You can only have so many containers to stuff a homeless teenager's belongings in and only so much room in a mini-van. The ride felt four years long although the drive from Dk's house to mine was only five minutes. I gazed out the window with a straight face, watching trees pass and

go, **shaking leaves** from the **mild breeze** that broke from the succumbing heat of that July day.

I picked the day my **mother was working** to come get my clothes and other necessities. We had both agreed we didn't want to see each other yet. After pulling up and gathering the bins, I step inside my home to my two dogs barking and frantically jumping around, excited at the new visitors behind me. Trying to keep them from jumping anymore, I nudge them aside and guide Kathy and Amara to my room up the short flight of steps to upstairs. My room felt more vacant than ever even though it was lived in and just how I last left it. My room always felt vacant to me, the reminders of lonely, sleepless nights filled with overthinking stained the grey painted walls underneath happy pictures of family and friends, posters and the large, burgundy tapestry that hung above my bed.

I get to business, grabbing clusters of t-shirts and jeans handing them to Kathy for her to strategically place them in a bin to make room for more. I was careful to grab the items of clothing I wore most often, not to forget my favorite pair of sweatpants, or my pair of black flats I need specifically for work. I was told this living situation would only be temporary, feeling confident leaving behind a pair of brown boots I haven't touched in two years, or dress shirts that occupied my closet with tags still on them. I didn't need them like I thought I didn't need my mom. Sure enough, I would be wrong. An outfit I curate in my mind one day will require those brown boots to look good, just like I'll require my mom's help when I need to make my annual dentist appointment.

“Definitely need deodorant,” Kathy mumbles to herself quietly as she’s placing some of the toiletries sitting on my desk into a smaller bag I had brought with.

“You need this makeup brush cleaner?” She also asks hopefully.

“No,” I reply. “I can just get a new one. It looks like you pretty much got everything I need.” I say as I take a look around my desk and shelves, a majority of it empty minus some irrelevant knick knacks dispersed around.

I take my last glance around the whole room, double checking for anything important left behind as I stuff my last pair of shoes into a container. This is going to be the worst part.

“I’ll meet you guys in the van, if that’s okay? I want to say goodbye to the boys real fast,” I say to Kathy and Amara giving them a hint I need a second to be alone. They agree and make their way out with some storage in hand. It takes me a few minutes to muster up the courage to walk into the boy’s room and gather my thoughts and what even to say to such young kids who won’t understand this situation whatsoever.

The boys are circling around their Philadelphia sports themed room, walls kelly green for the Eagles, questionable little boy stench prevalent when I walk in. Just arranging different toys and talking about fortnite and stuff little boys are into, I stop them in their tracks and I sit down near the window sill and tell them to come here so I can talk to them, a more serious tone hovering my voice. I already saw the confusion in their eyes, I wasn’t being silly with them like usual.

“So... I just want to tell you guys-” holding back tears, swallowing another brick in my throat. “I won’t be living here anymore... but- I’m.. still going to see you guys as much as I possibly can.”

“Why?” Scotty asks in his quietest voice, Rhyan was smirking because he usually smiles when he’s shy and feeling confronted or nervous. I think he was feeling that way because he’s never seen his big sister cry and it’s new- and weird. They both shrug their shoulders.

“Me and mommy had a little disagreement about something very very stupid.. We- decided it’ll just work out better if I’m not here for a little bit.” I wipe my wet face.

Scotty just simply says “Okay,” he was never one to be outspoken unless he was talking about something he was passionate about. Rhyan is still silent and looking around, becoming distracted from his four year old mind.

“Come here,” I gesture them to give me a hug with my arms open. “I love you guys- so...much..okay? I’m sorry.” I felt a little dramatic knowing I’d still make arrangements to see them very shortly despite the terms my mom and I were on. But at the same time, I wasn’t sure if my mom would accept that. I was scared, yet hopeful. I was so conflicted and wrapped around the thought of not seeing them everyday after school and not being involved in their lives, not knowing little details. It wasn’t like I was going away for college and I’d be missing out, because I’d still have bright things ahead and my family still at reach whenever I please. It was painful and confusing for a young and anxious mind, nothing in the near future to look forward to.

After the boys exchanged their I love you's and goodbyes, I yelled a brief, "See ya later, Scott," up the stairs to my stepdad, still choked up and struggling to hold my bags, in which he responded. "See ya, T." That was usually the deepest our exchanges were, we both didn't mind it. Kathy looks at me when I enter the van and reassures if I'm good. I just nod my head, trying to hide my red, puffy face from her as much as possible, my tears and sweat from the heat combining and leaving my face once the air from the open window hit me. I look at the air drying my tears as a loss of vulnerability. Time to be strong for myself in this new chapter of my life.

My mom was my best friend growing up. We were all each other had, she says I was the reason she was still breathing. Sadly, our codependency diminished as she met my step dad and began a family with him. It was understandable and I never held a grudge for it. It helped her better herself and out of it, I got my two boys and someone respectable to care for my mom in ways I couldn't. But this also meant our distance and me growing into a teenager meant we would butt heads a lot. It was a rocky road, a lot of what felt authoritarian mixed with my hormonal changes and self discovery. It wasn't until Dk became my boyfriend that I started talking back to her more, defending myself.

Dk noticed from things I told him about her, slightly dramatiscized I'll admit, that I just sit there and take it, I don't speak up. I never saw a point in doing so since my mom was always right in the end. Once I had started, things got even worse. More defiance, me lying my way around things because I despised how strict she was compared to my friend's parents. I wanted more independence she wasn't willing to give me. Both our communication skills weak, it never worked out. I don't blame Dk for ruining anything, I

like that he encouraged me to have strength I didn't know I had- but I blame myself for going about the things I wanted to do in a wrong way in result of how she treated me.

It was the night before I put my life in those bins. I wanted to spend the night somewhere I wasn't allowed. I pestered my mom for a later curfew at least and she gave it to me, said I had to be home by 1:30am latest and I HAVE to come home. I replied "Okay." 1:45am comes and I'm waking from a faulty sleep I shouldn't have even fallen into. I notice the time and I say "Fuck it, I can get out of this somehow." I return to sleep, knowing this was a bad idea but feeling redemption in my near future.

10:16 am, I'm brainstorming how I can spice this up.

My text to my mom reads, "i got home at 1:15 last night but i forgot i had work at 6am so i came home and slept for a few hours then left, thats why you didn't see me this morning, im still at work."

Perfect.

An abundance of texts from "mama," bling my phone as if I'd just committed mass murder and the FBI was contacting me.

"Send me proof you're at work." "Thats bullshit how'd you even get to work no ones driving you at 6." "Theres still art supplies on your bed you slept like that?" "Im calling the store and asking if youre in today."

The texts kept coming and then they stopped. I assumed she was really calling my job and that I was fucked. I lay there in bed wherever I wasn't supposed to be, KNOWING it wasn't worth it.

“I just called, youre a freaking liar youre an asshole, return your key and find a place to live. I’m done with the lying and wasting my breath about responsibility and communication come get your stuff and think about where you’re going.”

Damn, just like that I’m out. I felt resentment popping out of my ears and spewing everywhere. My resentment towards her was already past the full line in my 5’4 being. From past issues, traumas glossed over, and built up anger and regression that never made its escape from my brick lungs and glass brain- from all the times I felt verbally and mentally abused by her when things started going south way back when. Looking back at it, she had every right to kick me out. I lied and took advantage of her. But when a child feels the need to lie to just feel independent, to just let go of all ties holding them captive, are they the only one wrong?

NOTE TO SELF: write up until your talk with rhyan and scotty, then step out and tell what happened to get you in this position, VERY BRIEFLY EXPLAIN mom’s relationship with you in the past and what it came to. Mention somewhere in the midst of all this you’ll be staying with dk which turned to living with him.