

Destiney Brannigan

English 3 5<sup>th</sup> period

Ms. Feher

3 October 2019

### The not so good childhood

Growing up I lived with my mom, stepdad, my two stepbrothers, and my stepsister. I don't have any "biological" siblings, but my step siblings have been around since I was a baby, so they're all I've known to have as siblings. My family doesn't believe in the word "step", because regardless we're family. We were a pretty close and ordinary family until I was in about 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. We moved. We had lived in a house in the country that our uncle owned, but he called us explaining that he had sold the house and we had to leave and get out as soon as possible. When we moved, we didn't move to another house in the same city or county. We ended up moving to a city where I knew absolutely no one. My siblings and I were miserable. We didn't want to be "the new kids" at a new school and make new friends. Although I really liked the new friends I had made, I still wish we never moved there. That's when everything went downhill, and my happy family wasn't so happy anymore. My dad at the time didn't have a job and struggled for months after to find one. There was always an excuse. There were times that he would get a job, quit, then tell us that he got fired. My mom was not happy, and that's when you could tell their marriage was also going downhill. My dad began to run around with the wrong people and started to act like he did when he was a teenager. That's where it all started. The thing that ruined our whole family. My dad started selling and doing drugs. He told us he was going to "work", but my mom knew what he was doing. It's not like it was an occasional thing;

it happened all the time. It's still a shock he didn't get caught way before he did. I remember growing up knowing my dad was wanted. I guess you could say he was "on the run". After years of all of that going on, you could tell that my mom was sick. Depression like sick. My mother was not happy with the decisions my stepdad was making. So, instead of leaving him, she stayed with him. She didn't stay with him because she wanted to be with him. She stayed with him because of his kids. My mother knew that if she left that my step siblings wouldn't get the care they needed because my dad was broke and couldn't support them properly. She didn't want to have to put them through that kind of life. Eventually, when I was in seventh grade, we moved back to my hometown where we were from. I was so happy because I would be able to see my old friends that I had before I moved. The house we lived in was about five to ten minutes away from my grandmother's house on my mom's side. When we moved, my grandmother kept on trying to convince my mother to move in with her so her and I would be out of the situation we were in. My grandmother never really liked my stepdad from the get-go because my mom would sneak out with him as a teenager. Since we lived in a small town, word got around fast. I remember kids on the bus coming up to me saying "My mom and dad told me that there is a meth lab in your house.". I honestly didn't know the difference between meth and marijuana at that time. I thought "drugs" was all the same thing. I never knew there were different types until the middle of seventh grade. I don't think there ever was a meth lab in my house, but it wouldn't surprise me. I got home from school one day in the month of November of seventh grade. I opened the front door and started walking to my room, when I looked over and saw what my stepdad was doing. He had a dollar bill rolled up in a straw like way and started snorting a fine white powder. I knew instantly what he was doing. I froze. I didn't know how I was supposed to react. I didn't know if I should confront him or just ignore it, but that's not just something you

can ignore. My emotions about the situation were going crazy. I started tearing up, but I was trying my hardest not to cry after witnessing that. When my stepdad looked up, he saw me standing there looking at him. When we made eye contact, I remember just bawling my eyes out. I went straight to my room and ignored him anytime he tried to talk to me later that night. The next day was a Friday. I remember it being the last day of school before Thanksgiving break. I was so excited to get off the bus and be able to sleep in for the next four days. When I got off the bus, I saw that my stepdad's car was gone. When I went inside, I went to my mom's room to ask her where he was because I wanted some Wendy's on his way home. When I got to my mom's room, I opened the door and saw my mom with several boxes, and she was packing up all her things. She told me to go in my room and start packing. I said, "Where are we going?", and she said, "We're moving in with Nana.". Nana is my grandmother that lived right down the road from us. My mom told me we needed to be gone before my stepdad came home. As I was packing, I remember it being one of the hardest things I had to do. I was told I could only pack up things I absolutely needed. While packing I remember cussing my stepdad out in my head. I was thinking of things I was going to say when I saw him, even though I knew I didn't have the guts to do it. When we finally got out of the house and to my grandmother's, my grandmother tried to make me feel as much at home as she possibly could. Overtime living with my grandmother payed off. I never had to worry about living with someone who wouldn't get a job. I never had to worry about my guardian not caring if I went to school or not, because my grandmother works for Rutherford County Schools, and my education was and still is very important to her. While living with my grandmother you could tell my mom was getting better. She got herself a job, and even became lead manager where she was working. When we moved in with my grandmother, my mom and I had to share a room. We argued all the time nonstop. It

was like she was the older sister I never wanted. No matter how much we argued, and still argue, I am forever grateful for my mom and everything she has sacrificed for me. Not long after my mom and stepdad split up, he got locked up. For a long time.