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Writing 220 W14
Sketch Draft
January 21, 2014

Format: Journal entries.

I write because I can't speak. I write because when I was bullied in the fifth grade, I couldn't speak. Dramatic and traumatic as it might sound — I do not deny that that year impacted my personality in ways I am not always aware of — what that year did for me was give me a voice in my writing. I have long been sure that my inability to ask questions, to confront people and to be put in a position of judgment are a result of cyberbullying. Ironic as it may seem, though, the bullies who hid behind words showed me the power of words — the way that writing can impact people has since amazed me and made me a better writer. In writing I found a voice I have yet to harness in the public sphere.

This is me ruminating, though. It's too simple to say: I was bullied, I didn't speak up, now I write. Too conveniently sympathetic. Too subjective. So why not make it a history?

I struggled to dive right into fiction with a very real story, especially one I tried to tease out several times, in several formats. It has been so difficult for me to recount with enough emotion, and often times lack thereof, in my story to deliver it effectively. My intention is to write the memories that I have in a sequence of journal entries, writing the scenes and resonating trains of thought exactly as I remember them. It is fiction in the sense that my memory is subjective now, and the dates are, though aiming to be accurate, probably off. I hope that this draft does as much for my audience as it should for me.

Part I:

In the "first semester," I hope to introduce my status at a new school, without including the clichés. Though I will argue to the death that my thoughts are my own, but I also have to remember that I was 11 years old, and to capture that smarter-than-average fifth grader voice. My sentences will be short, exactly as I remember these scenes. The events of the first half read as follows:

1. September 7, 2005: The first day of school
2. September 2, 2005: The play date
3. October 16, 2005: The broken foot
4. December 2, 2005: The whispers
5. December 18, 2005 : The Christmas Party

Part II:

This part is the one that is going to be much more difficult for me. There are scenes, but because I spent a large part of my "adolescence" trying to erase bad memories, they are blurred by emotion and time. I feel that unpacking emotion into events will be the best way to get that across.

1. January 4, 2006: It wasn't a phase, winter break didn't help
2. January 10, 2006: Francesca, be my friend

3. February 14, 2006: The papers
4. February 15, 2006: Erin, Katie's on the phone
5. February 20, 2006: The principle's office
6. January 18, 2013: Why I Write