

GROUP ONE: IFE, LAISHA, SHAUNTAI, EDISON

SHAUNTAI SMITH
The Education Process

So, it's going on three years and I've been dedicating my precious time, hard work and patience to the most crappy school known to mankind, New Dawn High. If the beige prison walls weren't enough to drive me insane my teachers definitely passed that test with flying colors. As you can probably guess this was not my favorite place to be. For starters, everyone began at 7AM and left at 4PM which is awfully long compared to the average school day and for some strange reason the fact that this didn't bother anyone else bothered me even more. As I began to rest my legs on a chair that was laid out before me, I couldn't help but think about my future, my life and what I wanted it to be like. My fellow classmates were "grown", either they were in their early 20's, the loudest babymothers you've ever heard, babyfathers trying to get their life together, pregnant girls, dropouts, drop back ins, thugs and so on the list goes. All the kids were either sleeping or sleeping, exactly.

Carrie Hall 2/22/19 10:23 PM

Comment: Great intro. I'm already hooked.

I hated it there. For three years I felt misunderstood like no one including the teachers got what my "problem" was. They had no clue that I simply didn't find the things they taught valuable to my life, I couldn't focus because I didn't want to and because of the mindset I had set in play I had zero intent on doing so. I grew tired of what was expected of me and so I made myself more available to other areas of life, this included getting a job.

Carrie Hall 2/22/19 10:24 PM

Comment: This whole paragraph is great. So much concrete detail.

That was the beginning. After dropping out and going against what society thought to be true about the education system being "needed" for one to succeed I thought to myself "you gotta make quitting school count for something". Every morning I got my ass up with only one thought in my mind, money. I had no idea that I was in for a rude awakening but let me get to

Carrie Hall 2/22/19 10:25 PM

Comment: This sentence is a little confusing, in part because of the way it's structured, but also because we don't know what they're teaching you that you're so annoyed by. You don't have to spend too much time on this, but can you give us a little? Also, maybe let us know how you ended up in this weird school!

Carrie Hall 2/22/19 10:26 PM

Comment: Maybe say, "so I dropped out." Just clarify the events.

that part. It's Friday! I could feel my check already in my hands before it actually got to me. Shopping, chipotle, even a bit of weed all circled continuously in my head as I stood in line to grab my envelope with the words "Shaunta Smith" on it. I've never seen my name on anything regarding to money, just turning 17 I had no idea what to expect but I knew whatever came out of that envelope was mine, all mine. I reach for my envelope and there it was staring at me and sadly to my surprise I stared back in disbelief. It wasn't a very good number at all. A total of \$296.75, more like a total of disappointment.

Carrie Hall 2/22/19 10:27 PM

Comment: Dang!

My nose began to burn, I was fully aware that I was a few seconds from crying and thinking of how much the money did not match the pay nor the amount of energy that was expected at all times. How much could I expect from a job that let a high school dropout like myself come work for them at 17. I was a baby compared to my fellow coworkers. They had children, rent, mortgages and yet they were still were comfortable. They collected their money every week happily without a complaint in the world. At this point I began to question everything. Do I really want to be here, working my ass off for hours and hours to receive a shitty paycheck or do I want to feel good about the work I do along with a higher paygrade? The one thing I knew is that I did not want to be like these women who were stuck under these circumstances because they couldn't or didn't want to commit to school as well as furthering their education. After a hard look on what was laid out in front of me I had to make a decision. I could hear the voice of my parents with the whole "I told you so" face and then it hit me. Trying to grow up too fast wasn't in my best interest and this dreadful draining place was not my calling but instead going back to school, getting into college and finding myself.

Carrie Hall 2/22/19 10:27 PM

Comment: This is a run-on. You can look run-ons up on the Purdue OWL.

Carrie Hall 2/22/19 10:28 PM

Comment: This is doubtful. You just didn't hear their complaints.

I'm aware that pursuing my GED wasn't going to be an easy task shit if anything it would be harder than high school or at least this is what I told myself for preparation. I sat in the front of every class, breathed in every technique and material my instructors had given us. I knew I could

Carrie Hall 2/22/19 10:28 PM

Comment: Again, the wording gets a little confusing here.

not play around with my opportunities anymore, I couldn't be the old lady at some job getting paid less for more. Day in and day out I studied my life away, attended each tutoring session I could get my foot in. At this point in my education process putting my inner feelings to the side to receive that diploma I was so ready to get was top priority. The day for testing came quicker than the flash! My baggy sweats and furry sweater comforted me in my long hours of sitting down and answering questions. I received the news exactly 2 weeks from the day I took it and to my surprise I passed. I passed everything, all five subjects in one shot. I realized that it was not about me in particular, I didn't have to be the best I just had to want it more than anything else and let fate take it's toll.

Carrie Hall 2/22/19 10:29 PM

Comment: It would be really interesting to see some of the scenes we see in the intro about GED classes. Who else was there? What were the classes like?

