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English 1101

### *The Beauty of Growth*

“We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty” Maya Angelou once said. People only judge you by the present, which means that they do not know the obstacles that were faced in order for you to get to where you are standing now. The butterfly symbolizes the outcome of the transition from starting at the bottom to accomplishing your goals. Growing up as a child I was the timid, smart, quiet girl who would stay to herself until a classmate or teacher talked to her. “Hey Shania, what answer did you get for question five?” and I would actually give my classmate the answer. I was the Shania who did not know exactly how to say “no” and I lacked confidence. There are a variety of factors but the main ones are dance and the people I surrounded myself with, that helped me improve my character and become a strong-minded, young adult.

It was a blazing hot spring day towards the end of my school year in seventh grade. The birds chirping as if they were trying to send a warning to me. “PACK AND GO..... PACK AND GO” the Walkie talkies cried. Ms.Iesha came into my classroom and says “Shania your mother is here to pick you up” but I could feel my bowels being forcefully pressed from all the juice and water

provided during after school. Rushing to the bathroom as if I was a pregnant woman with a water that was nearly about to break. Yells begin to fill up the halls crying “LOCK YOUR DOORS” and “THIS IS A HARD LOCKDOWN”. My body was snatched by a staff member and my eyes filled up with fear and all I could think of “Is my mother okay?” or “Where is my mother?”. BOOM! BOOM!. About two gunshots were fired outside and the roaring noise of a helicopter’s engine infused the classroom. A blur covered my eyes from the tears that formed because all I could think was “What’s next?”. The start of a new school year I was on my own in a new middle school. New environments traumatized me, I was comfortable with the people I knew. Glares were exchanged by the students and I when our eyes met. FRESH MEAT. I was the new girl, everyone wanted to try to figure me out and this was the start of my life. Confidence kicked slightly as I surrounded myself with loving and supportive friends and the best friend that I am still friends with now. My best friend never failed to let me know how much love and support I had from her.

Loudness and madness echoed in the staircase and hallways during transitions between classes. Girls wearing dresses and embracing their character. Who am I? I am now a freshman in high school. FRESH MEAT AGAIN! This time “FRESH MEAT” was shouted as my friend and I climbed the stairs to go to lunch. Self-esteem plunged itself back down to zero, I could not find who I was and I did not have my own style since I practically wore uniform all my life. A paper fell off the hallway wall that had the words “DANCE TEAM IN ROOM 546 @ 3:00-4:15”. This was an opportunity to participate in an activity that interested me, I danced the whole session and later became the choreographer for multiple performances in front of the school. The dance team

was shut down due to the dance coach leaving so I joined the step team stomping out all of the attitude out of my body. I met new people and received even more support that made me feel like I can do anything. 1 year later I became captain of the step team leading a group of girls to have confidence when it came to performing on the stage. I finally found who I was, I was creative, outgoing and hard-working.