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Paper Memories: A Visual Memoir

Stephanie Trinidad

The Graduate Center, City University of New York

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Paper Memories:
A Visual Memoir

By

Stephanie Trinidad

A master’s capstone submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York

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A Visual Memoir

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the capstone project requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
ABSTRACT

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By

Stephanie Trinidad

Advisor: Carrie Hintz

Adolescence can be considered one of the hardest times in any person's life. Growing up, we are confronted with two very different possibilities of how our lives will turn out. One is the flawless version that is continuously on display in television series and movies. The other is the real-world version where a person is questioned and ridiculed for everything they’ve done. News headlines about students who, under pressure from their peers, take their own lives are a common occurrence. The focus of many of these headlines is on the bullies and on whether prosecution is possible for the crime of bullying someone. Sometimes the pressure isn't only from the victim’s peers, but also from their family, who believe in the picture-perfect image of who they want their child to be. Some parents want a flawless child who they could boast about to others, without regard to what the child desires.

The goal of this capstone project is to show how bullying—from friends, family, as well as other students—can affect how someone sees themselves. I unfold a story of a teenage girl who no longer sees her mind and body as her own, but as a vessel of what others interpret it to be. This project will also explore how someone can overcome their insecurities after years of listening to what others believe is best for them without regarding the person’s emotional needs. I also discuss the process of finding friends and mentors who encourage them to find their own strengths as well as helping them overcome their weaknesses. This memoir tells the story of an individual’s personal history with bullying, by both family and friends. The stories show how
they’ve coped with bullying throughout a period of their life and have found a way to overcome their past.

The creative part of the project is accompanied by an analysis of how the project was written through studying the works of authors who have written both fictional and autobiographical works about bullying. These authors have written stories regarding their personal experiences with bullies. In addition to fictional characters who have endured bullying over time, I consider my personal memories, artworks, personal journals, and mementos. I have created a memoir that deals with my own personal issues with bullies, and how their actions have impacted my mental health over the course of my life.

Recreating the same type of three-ring binder I used throughout middle school and high school, will allowed the narrative to take form in a format that will help bring together this period in my life. The Graduate Center Library will also have an archived a digital facsimile of the work to allow those who would like to access the work the ability to view the memoir.
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Narrative Description of the Capstone Project

*Paper Memories* is a memoir project using journals, art works, photos and mementoes that encompass my teenage years from the age of twelve until I turned eighteen. The memoir focuses on my own personal experiences with childhood bullying from both friends and family and how over the years it created a system in which verbal abuse has shaped who I’ve become and how I interact with others. Through a series of chapters, I will piece together the years that have shaped my life and how I’ve learned to overcome these experiences so that they have less control over my life. Each chapter offers a reflection at the end where I confront my past self and point out the fact that everything that had happened wasn’t my fault.

The research for this project started in my second semester at the graduate center, when I was required to write a final project in one of my classes. The assignment was for the class to write a chapter of a biography or an autobiography that covered the life of the subject over the course of a single year. At the time I had chosen to write about my senior year of high school because I was in the class of 2002, and had lived through September 11th through the lens of a camera. While looking through mementos stored away in a small box I had found various pieces of my childhood, from a teacup to a small troll doll. What had stood out above everything else was a single diary page dated for January 5, 1997 that began with the words “I want to die.” It was the only part of the diary that survived. I have no recollection of what happened to the rest of the diary.

That single page was what started the journey to writing this memoir, and while my final paper for that class was still centered around my senior year of high school I couldn’t get this piece of paper out of my head. Over the course of the summer I looked through various other pieces of my teenage years, from black and white composition notebooks filled with poems to a
single sketchbook filled with drawings drawn after high school. The drawings of myself were always of my back, or of my face half covered in wings wishing to fly away from the life I had. The one constant part of my life from those years until now has been my love of books; they had become the one friend who had always been there for me without fail. In reading young adult literature as an adult I learned that I was not alone when it came to childhood bullying. Authors use their own experiences in order to shape the characters on the page and through their experiences I’ve learned that we all confront our past in our own ways.

*Dear Bully*, edited by authors Megan Kelley Hall and Carrie Joes, is an anthology of stories written by 70 authors about their experiences with the bullies that they encountered in their childhood, or about their experience being on the outside watching as someone is bullied. Some of the authors featured have been a part of my life since childhood, such as R.L. Stine, who is well known for his book series, *Goosebumps, Fear Street,* and *Mostly Ghostly.* Stine wrote about dealing with three childhood bullies in his entry “The Funny Guy,” in which Stine talks about how he had been the funny kid in his class until one moment changed everything.

Stine wrote, “I felt helpless. I couldn’t tell my parents. And I couldn’t fight back. I was outnumbered three to one, and they were tougher than me. It’s had to end sometime.” (77)

These words rung in my mind as something that most bullied people think while someone is targeting them. You can lose confidence in others, even your parents, if they brush off the encounter as “kids being kids.” Although Stine says he uses his experience to write his books, the same cannot be said by everyone who had encountered a bully throughout their lives. Sometimes it takes a long time for a person to be able to let go of their own failure to stand up to those who had bullied them.
Alyson Noël, popular author of the *Immortals* Series, wrote about how even though she looked as if she had everything, a lack of communication was the reason why she had been bullied for five years while classmates composed and sung a nasty song about her. In her essay, “Silent All These Years,” Noël addresses how vastly different bullying is in a time where parents chalked it up to “kids being kids.” They also believed that girls could not bully other girls. Noël writes,

Those were the days when nobody spoke about bullying. It was something boys did. Primal. Survival of the fittest. Perfectly normal. Kids will be kids. Easily handled with a shrug, a look the other way, a mumbled comment about soon growing out of it and moving on to better things.

And certainly no one acknowledged that girls were capable of it. Capable of crafting a systematic form of social terrorism that consisted of snide looks, passed notes, and whispered insults when adults and teachers were present—progressing when they weren’t to outright lies, rumors, physical aggression, and, in my case, a horrible song I couldn’t escape. (229-230)

This brought forth the question of why no one had done anything when I had been bullied, but like Noël, I had grown up in a time where bullying wasn’t seen as a problem. This helped see me through the writing of some of the hardest parts of the project in which I had to separate myself from myself. I was both the author and the subject in the story.

In order to understand how to write a memoir through short biographical stories, I drew on my own personal journals as well as reading from various classes throughout my years as an undergraduate and graduate student. These readings have been an inspiration for this project. These novels, stories, and biographies show characters who have been bullied by both friends
and family, or characters that have over time created two identities for the world to see. These identities never really intersect until an event in their lives pushes them together and forces the person to evaluate their lives as a whole person and not as halves of one being.

Reading books about characters overcoming problems with friends, family, or the circumstances of their lives has given me the chance to understand how writers write about difficult subjects while empowering their readers to overcome their own difficulties.

Two books from my class on the “Bodies and Minds of Children’s Literature,” taught by Carrie Hintz, stood out over the rest because the experiences of the characters related to my own life. The first was Angie Thomas’s book *The Hate U Give*, because of the split in the main character’s relationship between her home personality and her school personality. Thomas writes about how Starr separates her home life in the American Ghetto from her school life at an upper middle class high school. After being the witness to her friend Khalil’s death at the hands of a police officer, Starr returns to school. She has a chance to put aside everything that happened. She didn’t want to think about it for once; she wanted a moment where she wasn’t the girl in the car who had seen her friend die for doing nothing:

I get out the car. For at least seven hours I don’t have to talk about One-Fifteen. I don’t have to think about Khalil. I just have to be normal Starr at normal Williamson and have a normal day. That means flipping the switch in my brain so I’m Williamson Starr. Williamson Starr doesn’t use slang—if a rapper would say it, she doesn’t say it, even if her white friends do. Slang makes them cool. Slang makes her “hood.” Williamson Starr holds her tongue when people piss her off so nobody will think she’s the “angry black girl.” Williamson Starr is approachable. No stank-eyes, side-eyes, none of that.
Williamson Starr is nonconfrontational. Basically Williamson Starr doesn’t give anyone a reason to call her ghetto.

I can’t stand myself for doing it, but I do it anyway. (71)

The reason why this stood out to me is because I could resonate with the dual personality of the character: the two sides of her life were similar to the one I had had in middle school. Sometimes people hide their true selves in order to fit into the places that life had taken them. In the case of Starr, Williamson was her other life. They were both her in some ways: neither world saw the complete person.

The second book was Sherman Alexie’s *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, because of how the protagonist Junior’s best friend was a very toxic part of his life as well. In addition to this, his own extended family rejected him because he wanted to get an education. I was also struck by the way in which his sister gave up on her dream to become a writer and the main protagonist Junior wasn’t sure when it had happened or why:

Had she been hanging on to her dream of being a writer, but only barely hanging on, and something made her let go?

That had to be it, right? Something bad had happened to her, right? I mean, she lived in the fricking basement. People just don’t live and hide in basements if they’re happy. (39)

This grows into something stronger when he asks his parents, “Who has the most hope?” (45), after a teacher tells him that he’ll find hope the further from home he gets. Junior in many ways throughout the novel gives hope to his sister’s dreams by imagining her stories and her life into his own art. While writing this memoir, I tried to think of Junior and his sister Mary almost as two parts of a single person. One side is a person who wonders about hope, and wishes for the chance to get out, a person who attempts to achieve everything they can with the little resources
they have. The other side is the one that had once given up on everything only to find themselves
stuck in a form of limbo without anywhere to go.

Through reading these texts I learned that there are other ways for a writer to creatively
express themselves in the characters that they create. These stories have given me the
opportunity to see this project as not only as a reflection of my personal experiences but also as
one to build on creatively and artistically. What I learned the most from these books was that
when it comes to real life topics, the kind of topics that are so often headlines in news broadcasts,
people tend to fear those tough subjects making their way into their children’s classrooms. The
reason they cannot be ignored is because you cannot ignore the reality of life, because without it
no one would really learn anything. Sometimes you have to read something uncomfortable in
order to understand what others are going through.
Relationship to the Study of Biography, Autobiography, and Memoirs

The study of biography is seen as the study of the history of a single person, through their journals, letters, photographs and memories. A biographer can piece together the life of the subject and weave a story that can demonstrate how that person lived and worked during the period they lived. Memoirs themselves are an art that makes the person come alive on their own.

Throughout my coursework I’ve learned that some biographers do not trust memoirs. This is something that came up in a conversation during my class for approaches to life writing. Yet in order for a biographer to have the ability to write about an individual person they also have to rely on the memories and writings from the individual. Without these personal writings a biography it would just state the dates and locations. People make history happen: their memories, their experiences, and their writing. The study of life writing is not just the study of history but also the study of an individual’s history. It is through their eyes that we see their struggle, that we experience what they experience, because without these moments in time there would be no biography. Carolyn Kay Steedman wrote in her memoir *Landscape for a Good Woman* that “Memory alone cannot resurrect past time, because it is memory itself that shapes it, long after historical time has passed.” (29) The living memory of an individual is what shapes how their lives are written whether it’s the person themselves writing the story or those who take what the person has life behind and written about them.

The lessons learned from the various classes that I have taken while at the Graduate Center and made it possible for me to write my own story especially in terms of the importance of memoirs. I can learn the millions of words from an array of authors without understanding a single part of what I’ve read. It takes writing the words on paper and thinking about them in depth before I can truly understand what I am attempting to achieve. This is something I’ve
learned from studying life writing. Authors often struggle with how to write something on a subject, even when the subject is their own lives. While writing a presentation on Sigmund Freud, his biographer Adam Phillips wrote,

> the childhood in any biography—however contemporary the subject—is a dubious fiction. Partly because it is reconstructed from the putative knowledge of the completed life; and partly because children are rarely brought up to be the subjects of biographies. Children live their lives forward, and biographers understand children’s lives backwards.

I wondered how this quote relates to the memoir this capstone project is about when there are photographs, and entries to accompany the basic life story. There is so much that I still need to learn before I can truly understand the concept of how biographers understand childhood and how they can write it.
Evaluation

One of the most difficult aspects of this project was compiling all of the pieces of my past and slowly reading through all of the entries to my journals. This is difficult because I hadn’t realized how much my life had been impacted by not only friends but family as well. Sometimes it’s difficult to see how those who are supposed to be there for you so easily criticize and demean you in ways that hurt a person so deeply.

There was also the diary entry that I had discovered, because I hadn’t realized just how close I had come to killing myself so early in my life. At that time bullying wasn’t viewed in the same lens as it is now. Cyberbullying didn’t exist yet, and computers were still something that were slowly entering people’s homes. Author Kiersten White’s entry into the anthology Dear Bully, “Never Shut Up,” addresses social media, as well as how different it would have been if kids bullied before social media would have been able to speak out more. White writes,

In this era of visibility, where everyone can see what anyone says about anything on social networking sites, it’s even more obvious to see kids being hurt, being bullied, being the victims of cruelty. I wonder if I’d had access as a teen, would I have been the one to call out bullies and tell them to shut up? Would I have stood up for the people too exhausted by ceaseless torment to stand up for themselves?

Would I finally have decided to really have something to say?

I don’t know. I hope so. Because being a bully is easy, and being a victim is all too common. But standing on your safe middle ground and deciding to reach out where you can make a difference? That is a rare and difficult choice.

Make the choice. Do something. Never shut up.

I wish I had. (150)
In writing this memoir I had the difficult task of having to understand this concept, the concept of why no one spoke out against what was happening, as well as understanding why I was being bullied in the first place. It was a difficult task especially when writing certain parts of the memoir because it brought back feelings that I have been trying to keep away for so long. That’s why makes memoir writing so difficult especially if you’ve buried the thoughts and feelings for so long.

Furthermore, in reading several articles on teen bullying I found one that struck me the most because it focuses on Latina girls and their association with bullying. In the article “Latina Teen Suicide and Bullying” by Andrea J. Romero, Christine Bracamonte Wiggs, Celina Valencia and Sheri Bauman, and published in *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, the authors define bullying as, “generally defined as aggression that is intentional, repeated, and characterized by an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the target” (161). Bullying becomes a vacuum in which the victim is repeatedly attacked by the same person consistently, sometimes with the help of others. The article further states that bullying itself can be placed into several categories:

Generally, bullying behaviors can be divided into four categories including direct-physical (e.g., theft, assault), direct-verbal (e.g., threats, insults), indirect relational (e.g., social ostracizing, rumor spreading), and cyberbullying. In addition, research indicates that youth who are victimized, or who bully others, are at high risk of depression, suicide ideation, and suicide attempts compared with adolescents not involved in bullying behavior. Moreover, preliminary results from a U.S. study of bullying indicates that students who are involved in frequent bullying—regardless of their role as the victim, perpetrator or both—without concurrent depression or suicidal ideations at the time of bullying, were found to later be at risk for depression and suicidality. (162)
According to the article bullying has effects on both the victim and the perpetrator, including increasing the risk of depression. While reading this article I understood much of what had happened over the course of my adolescence and how it could not only affect myself but those around me. Romero, Wiggs, Valencia and Bauman also write, “There are typically gendered differences in the types of bullying behaviors that individuals engage in with males more typically experiencing overt and physical victimization versus females who are more likely to experience indirect and relational victimization” (162). After reading this I was able to understand a portion of what I was attempting to understand about myself as a demographic, though more research is needed to understand how this concept is correlated to bullying before the time of social media.

Originally this was going to be a five-chapter short memoir, but the farther along I went into realizing the project the more I began to focus on three stages of my life. I had to leave out two whole sections in favor of going deeper into the three main portions of the memoir. This gave me the freedom to bring more into the memoir, with each chapter possessing its own faults and strengths. If there are mistakes in the writing from the past I left them, because it meant that those mistakes were supposed to be there. The third chapter changes format halfway through, because I understood that there was no other way to understand that part of my life. That part of the memoir had been written for one of my core classes, and it was grueling to think of ways to rewrite it to fit the narrative of this memoir. Later, I realized that this is when my lives merged: the past self and the one that I would eventually become had found a middle ground in that moment in my life.

The concept of a visual memoir came from my professor and my classmates in my “Bodies and Minds of Children’s Literature” class. They had seen the pictures from my personal
archive that I had inserted into the end of the original document and asked if I would add them into the project as I continued to write it. They helped the project go from a plain memoir to the colorful project that it now is. The original idea was to create a box to submit, but the binder had stuck in my head during this conversation. Binders were one of the staples of my life during these years. I had carried them and decorated them, so to use one for this project seemed fitting.

While researching ways of how to create a graphic memoir Carrie Hintz suggested Anne Carson’s *Nox* as a model. “The book that isn’t a book” is how I would describe it. On the back of the box that contain Carson’s writing, she wrote: “When my brother died I made an epitaph for him in the form of a book. This is a replica of it, as close as we could get.” The replica is a box that looks like the binding of a hardcover book while the inside is filled with accordion style pages filled with images and words put together by Carson for her brother Michael. Throughout these pages the reader learns about Carson’s brother through her eyes. There are no page numbers because every page is connected to one another. Instead Carson writes her entries with numbers,

2.2. My brother ran away in 1978, rather than go to jail. He wandered in Europe and India, seeking something, and sent us postcards or Christmas gift, no return address. He was travelling on a false passport and living under other people’s names. This isn’t hard to arrange. It is irremediable. I don’t know how, he made his decision in those days. The postcards were laconic. He wrote only one letter, to my mother, that winter the girl died.

It took looking between several pages in order to put together the story Carson was putting together. This wasn’t just a story in her words; it was a story crafted from the letters he had sent to Carson’s mother while he was in France. *Nox* is a story that is stitched together of the life of a
man that Carson didn’t truly know. It’s about his loves, his failures, and the struggles he had faced as seen through the eyes of his sister.

What I learned from looking through this heartbreaking journey was that piecing together my memoir would be as much a story of myself as Carson’s Nox is a story of a man she hardly knew. The pages are not only filled with Carson’s words or her brother’s pieced together life, but also definitions of words that revolve around history and the human conception of history. There are photos on a single page and nothing else. The photos are their own story as Carson takes you through this journey into the life of her brother. This is something that inspired my own memoir because sometimes a picture or even a phrase in the middle of the page is all you really need to know about the person you’re looking at. Even if that person is yourself.

Another book that I had found during the journey into understanding visual memoirs was Ellen Forney’s graphic memoir Marbles: Mania, Depression, Michelangelo, + Me. This wasn’t like Carson’s Nox; this book was a graphic novel about the life of a person trying to understand whether taking medication for their mental illness would affect their creative process. Forney’s book gave me a different perspective into a visual memoir. I couldn’t draw as many images as she did but it did show me the importance of being yourself when you’re writing about something deeply personal.

The images that Forney has put together are a story that I’ve come to know as an adult who has learned how to deal with depression. There are moments in my life where moving becomes a chore, and where certain words from the people closest to me can cause an episode. How I’ve coped over the years has changed. There is a drawing that Forney put into the book that represents how many people with depression live when they truly cannot function. When I saw this image my mind thought “yes, I know how this feels” because there are days where
depression makes getting up impossible even when you seem as if you’re the happiest person in the world.

It was interesting to see how Forney put together this graphic memoir as I was putting together the pages of my memoir. This also helped me understand how writing my memoir is giving me a chance to heal as a writer and a person. It makes it easier to understand myself when others are going through some of the same problems I am.
Continuation of the Project

The future of this project as a whole is for it to become a part of a young adult fiction novel that explores the lasting effects of bullying on the main character. As I wrote this memoir I thought of it as a draft into a bigger story, one that I hoped would touch the lives of its readers in the same way so many authors have touched mine. When I write an original story, the conceptualization of the story can take anywhere from a week to several months. This memoir has been in the works for almost a full year and while I feel as if it would never truly be complete I also know that one day I could make it into a novel worth reading. Sometimes the greatest stories have a little bit of truth in them and if a reader can see this and they can connect with the story it means that I would have been able to reach out to someone who needed help in the same way I wish someone had helped me.

As someone who reads young adult novels, there are so many authors who use their real-life experiences in their stories. I want to have the opportunity to use this memoir to write something that can reach out and touch the reader’s heart. There may come a time where I could even create a novel in the same fashion as the capstone project, with images and journal entries, so that it looks like a diary within a novel.
Appendix: Scans of Capstone Project

Image 2 Binder Cover Image: Kindergarten, Elementary School, Middle School, and High School Graduations pictured.
To...DON'T ASK!

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She had been the first time. It had happened, but it had been the one in which she realized that she had been forgotten by her family. Left behind by her friends.
As she stood on stage, winning her only award at graduation, a small medal on a ribbon around her chest, one of the few things that had stayed with her after everything that had happened over the year, she cried. The award SHOULD have been hers. A moment when she should have been proud of herself but the tears turned sour for the girl who deserved it.

An award given to an individual after a year of hard work, when they get to stand in front of the graduating class. It was just a small medal worn during middle school, it shouldn't matter so much unless it had. Yet it had become something that symbolized whether she was deserving of what she had accomplished.

They were friends, the award shouldn't matter, it shouldn't matter. The words repeating themselves in her mind over and over again.

Her family was proud, of course they were. It was another achievement for her, they only celebrated the achievements they were more important, but for this girl, the memories, the stories, and her time didn't matter any longer.
They had moved into that big blue house at the top of Martie Hill just before the end of middle school, there was grass in the front yard, and vines creeping up the house. There was a bay window in the living room and hardwood floors that creaked like old boxes did. The basement was crony and deep, yet the air was stale, and it was always dark down there. There were kids her age and a library at the bottom of the hill for her to go to. It was a quiet neighborhood, and she had liked it for those reasons. The school was the only thing that she didn't like.

One of the friends she had kept from middle school had gone to the same school, her sister transferred into her school as well. Since she seemed to get to know people, she joined the choir, auditioned for the school production of Blood供水's Dracula. She tried to put her foot behind her, it was a new school, but somehow she could feel the sadness step into her heart and would cry in the shower as she leaned on the cold porcelain tub as the water hit her back, where no one could hear her, where no one could see the tears. Sometimes the sentiment of the past couldn't be shaken off.

She didn't get a part in the school play, they gave it to the other, her sister got a lead role even though she had only gone to the audition on a whim, her best friend got a role as well, even one of those neighborhood kids she had made friends with had received a role in the play. She felt left out, and alone, she felt like she wasn't good enough to be a part of the show. They gave her an assistant director part, but even then, it turned into just running errands and never being on production.

Even when everything was settled, and she was back at school, the thoughts of so many people bring around her, so many people talking, gossiping, looking at her. When she used to walk around with her hand held high, it was now constantly looking down at her feet at the ground. She drew little stars on her hands, on her knees, everywhere she could cover. Suddenly joined the stars were often, burns as well, reminding her that there was beauty in the small things.
I am not myself. I am no One in Particular. I don't exist. I am not myself. I am no one in particular.
During this time, she allowed her words about her weight, her body, and her mind to take hold, and they allowed her to make decisions that shouldn’t have been made by a fourteen-year-old girl. And look ahead to this moment: I see her going under the knife for a surgery that shouldn’t have been allowed to a child, all because of the pressure of living up to what they wanted her to be. The most significant part of having a conclusion surgery at this time was that the pain lasted for her entire life. Her head told her that she wasn’t good enough because she had done it to live up to the expectations of who they wanted her to be.

When school began to fail, she was a new person, a different person, but the same feelings came up as the students stared, and they knew what she had done, and once again the confidence that she had gained had slowly faded away. She was struggling more than ever. In a sea of students, she tried to go unnoticed, while they pushed her downstream and she had no control over her power over her.

STOP LOOKING AT ME...

Keep looking at me...

Keep looking at me...

She began skipping school again, and she would attend the band writing and the love that her mother was gone but was working hard to hide in her rooms. They didn’t notice when she showed up at school every once in a while. It became easier and easier for the peer group to take them, or lie to them, to keep herself from the world. They never really cared so long as she tried her best at school.

The only change the school had made was after she had been invited to separate her sleep from a fight. They had one or her classmates who worked in the offices, and if it was too much of a burden to physically do it themselves, but by then it was too late to go back to that school. She didn’t feel comfortable there, she couldn’t be comfortable there.

With the help of a school counselor, she had decided to go to another school one that was smaller in size, and needed her there because they knew she was smart, but the large environment was branching her progress.

She knew now that it had nothing to do with the size of the school that had done it, but the mixture of being scored in middle school, the thought that I wasn’t good enough, and then everyone would eventually hate me, or call me names.
New York, Daily News
September 12, 2001

Terrorism

Extra

ASSAULT ON AMERICA

TERROR IN AMERICA

The Makeover
May 7, 2001

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GOOD MORNING!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

“Words are more powerful than perhaps anyone suspects, and even deeply opposed in a world of men: they can not easily be undone.” — Margaret Fuller

TEACHERS

1. Congratulations to the East 187th Street students. The video presentation entitled “Who’s The Smaller Clone?" was selected to be screened in the Brooklyn Arts Council 30th Film and Video Festival at the Kingsborough Community College, 300 Jay St. Brooklyn, NY. The screening is on May 14th, 6:00 PM.

2. Congratulations to Stephanie Trinizol who was invited to receive a free make over and pose during the photo shoot of the magazine, Gossip Girl. She will be featured in the Friday 9th issue. The event took place on May 14th, 10:00 AM.

3. Our S.F.T. special representative, Anna Garcia, will visit us on Friday, May 15th. She will speak individually with each student who does not have permanent make-up. If you would like to speak with her and have not already told our书记, please let her know.

4. The students in Mark's class will help in setting up for the project. Please be aware that they will be in the hallway and briefly in some of the classrooms during this time. Let them know if you have any questions or if there are any concerns. Thank you for your cooperation.

Extra

ATTACK ON AMERICA

The Makeover
May 7, 2001

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Select Bibliography


Thomas, Angie. *The Hate U Give.* Balzer + Bray. 2017