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Sometimes We Laugh Sometimes We Cry

20 year later after becoming an adult Walter the bully from Ariel Henley's class finds himself in a sticky situation. Now with a 9 year old daughter Leah who was born with Crouzon syndrome he must now help her with the same thing he once bullied a girl in his class for. Only difference now is this is happening to his little girl and it's taking a toll on him. Leah is being bullied at school because of her condition. He doesn't feel he is doing enough to help her and feels he needs a female perspective seeing that he is a single father. One day his daughter Leah comes home and says the bully is back at it. Today he once again talked about her face and eyes. Feeling a moment of déjà vu Walter says that he thinks he where he can get Leah some guidance. Once Walter came upon this idea he started to think to himself was this karma for his past actions coming back to get him.

Walter gets Leah to bed later that night and he begins a google search and he happens to find Ariel Henley on Facebook. Walter reaches out to her via direct message he beings with a long sincere apology for his behavior as a child. Stating he wasn't aware of her condition and was young and immature to understand the long lasting effects of his words and actions. He then begin to explain to Ariel how his daughter has the same condition and is going through the same issues as she did with him. He ask her for assistance with his daughter. After a day went by thinking his apology wasn't enough Ariel Henley reached back out accepting his apology and

asked for a face time with him and his daughter. She also said she would like to speak with him first before for a little more details. They exchanged information.

Walter gave Ariel a call the next day. He began with another apology for his younger self and his words. She accepted the apology stating that “he was young and uninformed.” She then asked about his daughter and how old she was in which he responded “9”. A little younger then when him and Ariel were in school together. They then begin a conversation about how long she has been being bullied by this kid. Walter says he believes about for about half of the new school semester being that his daughter is new to the school system. Walter then asked Ariel how did she overcome such bullying and hazing growing up. Ariel talked about how it wasn’t easy at all and it took a very long time to accept her body and love the skin she is in.

Leah soon walked in on the facetime call and beging listening to Ariel speak to her father. Leah introduced herself to Ariel and vice versa. Ariel then continued talking about how art help her when she was younger which is why she is an artist today. She asked Walter did he remember Ms. J. He replied “of course.” She told him how she helped play a big part in explaining art to her which helped Ariel accept herself more. She told Leah something that Ms. J told her. “Art isn’t about what you see it’s about what you feel.” She told Leah she should apply that same method to herself she said that Leah needs to love herself inside first and once she does that and feels that love from inside she can love and not be ashamed of the skin she is in. That will help her ignore any negative comments people have towrads her. Ariel explains that because Leah is starting this process of self love early it will be better for her in the long run. She will be already prepared. Leah ask her afther can Ariel be her art teacher on the weekends. Walter then proceeds to ask Ariel is that okay with her to which she responds “absolutely”

WORKS CITED

Henley, Ariel. "There's a Mathematical Equation That Proves I'm Ugly or So I Learned in My Seventh-Grade Art Class.." Wong, Alice. *Disability Visibility*. New York: Vintage Books , 2020. P 39-46.