

REVISION

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101

Paper #5

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The Paper that Changed My Future

Something is special about winning something, especially if it is of monetary value. Do not misunderstand me. I am not some penny pinching scrooge. But having money, especially when one is planning to go to college, helps a lot. Well I did not actually receive cash, but close to it. It all began when I received a letter saying that I had won a scholarship covering full tuition at Western Maryland College. Now entering my third month of college, I am still feeling the effects.

The first repercussions of my winning the scholarship were that my choice in school was entirely altered. I had applied for early decision to Dickinson College, and regular decision to American University. I was accepted at both. At this point I thought I was going to Dickinson. They had taken me under early decision. Then came the question of money, and my parents were starting with financial lectures on how much things cost. Growing up my parents had both gone through financial straits. My father worked his way through college, and my mother through nursing school. I was hit from both sides by a bombardment of complaints, all connected in some way with dollar signs. I obtained no financial aid, for my parents were so careful with their money that they had saved enough to get me through school, but in such a way that it was hard for them to get at it quickly. (I did not know this until after I had decided to attend WMC.) So I ended up choosing WMC, where all I had to worry about was board, for I had

a State Scholarship that covered my room.

Of course having to pay almost nothing should have made me relax, at least about monetary concerns. On the contrary, my parents suddenly became tyrants. They hassled me over every tiny expense, including having to have my glasses replaced after I had a bicycle accident. I could not help falling. For a while I became as bad as they were, saving up all I could. Along with finances, my parents became more protective of me. They had been overbearing before, now they were ridiculous. I turned eighteen on June 8th, and in August they were still telling me to be home at midnight. It was not like I was some kind of party animal. My parents saw that they were losing me, and were trying all they could to hold on. My Mom was raised on a farm where she did not have electricity, and my Dad grew up in a back water fishing town on the Eastern Shore that has not changed much in more than a decade. Both of them saw any form of disagreement from their children as a sign of disrespect. My father especially needed control. He even called the school and tried to have me put in the honor suites, where WMC originally had me placed. I did not want to feel isolated, so I had myself roomed in a regular freshman dorm, Rouzer. The school called me and told me what my father had done, so things went from bad to worse between us. I felt like there was a two generation gap between my parents and me that would never be bridged.

Now that I am at school I am still feeling the effects of having won the scholarship. My parents have changed their tune entirely. They fear that they have lost me, and are trying to buy me by getting me a computer. They are even talking about getting me a car next Christmas, but part of my problem with them over the summer was the car. They

would lecture me every time I went out about safe driving procedures. They gave me the keys, and then tied additional qualifications to it, such as having to call them when I arrived at a friend's house. They did not trust anyone, even me. I think that winning the scholarship made them realize that financially I do not really need them, so they are trying to grasp on anyway they can. I have decided to let them pay for this year, then over the summer I will get a job and pay for next year on my own. Thanks to the scholarship I do not owe a lot. I can work hard to get money over the summer, and during the school year devote my time to getting the most out of it I can. I realize the scholarship saved me a lot of grief between my parents and me, my pocket and me, and basically in the overall picture of my future. I am not dependent on anyone, except perhaps the school, and I can keep up my grades, and not have to worry about a job. Perhaps I am too close to home, only forty minutes away, but financial independence is worth it. My relationship with my parents has not changed much, at least from my point of view, though my Mother seems to have changed a bit: we can at least communicate civilly. I can not even talk to my father on the phone without wanting to strangle him, for somewhere the lines of trust between my father and I were severed, if there was any trust at all. I am not sure the scars will ever heal. I only hope that when I have kids I remember to treat them as friends first, and to trust them to be able to make their own mistakes and face the consequences. Mind games and deceptions only ruin relationships. I can not change who my parents are, but that does not mean I have to like it. I will never be perfect, as my parents always want me to be, but I have learned that I am me, not Dad's and Mom's little girl anymore. I thought winning the

scholarship would make my parents realize that I am not a child. Instead they seem to try to grasp on even tighter: over spring break my parents tried to inflict a midnight curfew, though they know that at school I do not follow any set time to be in, nor is any enforced. I made sure they knew this. One day maybe they will accept and understand me for who I am, not the child they used to bounce on their knee. Until then I intend to live life as I chose. My parents will have to learn to accept that, as I learn to accept them, but not their rules. Having the scholarship allows me the freedom to be able to strike out on my own and express myself without the fear that they will financially cut me off.

Overall the scholarship has affected me in almost every aspect of my life. It has determined where I am, local and grade wise, how I am, at least with my parents, and most of all who I will be: having a free ride through college will allow me the chance to achieve more, and therefore, affect what career opportunities will be open to me. The scholarship has also changed my perspective on my parents, and the unlimited possibilities open to me to improve myself. Thanks WMC.

Better
New grade: (B+)