

Encouraged
by Joanna W. (age 14)



Symphony sat down at her desk, it had been a very bad day. She had lost her patience with her mother that morning, and many mornings before that. She was getting less, and less sleep due to the terrible recurring nightmares, and just felt overall terrible. Sometimes she wondered if this whole thing was worth it. Symphony was a sophomore in high school. She was tall, and well proportioned with short rich brown hair, and blue grey eyes. As she came back to earth her teacher looked at her with concern.

"Are you with us Symphony," she asked standing right in front of her desk.

The boy next to her snickered, and some of the other students smiled with suppressed laughter. The teacher had been taking role when she was thinking, and even though she was present she hadn't said anything. Hence the teacher's comment.

"I'm here," she said, not knowing what to do next. She glanced across the room to her friend who was elbowing the giggling girl next to her, and whispering furiously for her to stop. Her friend Jazzy gave her an apologetic look. Jazzy was a wonderful friend, but she was also really pretty, she had wavy black hair that fell past her shoulders, tan skin, and a glowing

personality. She was also the kind of person who drew people to her. Sometimes, Symphony felt like she was living in her shadow.

Symphony put her head on her desk trying to block out the snarky looks directed by the boy next to her.

That day the teacher just told them to finish the work assigned the previous day. Symphony just didn't have the heart for that right then. It looked like this would be yet another assignment turned in incomplete. Symphony had been a really good student before she started feeling terrible all of the time, but now she had lost the heart for doing her school work, and turned most of her assignments incomplete. The rest of her classes went similarly with the exception of the embarrassment.

Once her lunch break came along, Symphony was in a really bad mood. When her friends invited her to sit with them she declined them with a pained smile that her friends unfortunately were getting well acquainted with. She went outside to the back of the school building, and slumped against it. Then she cried. No one heard her, no one saw her, and she cried. It certainly didn't fix anything. She didn't even know the problem, or how it had started, but all she could do now was cry. Then someone came round the corner carrying a lunch tray. She was tall, and blond, and there was some kind of silent strength that mingled with her optimistic glow.

"Bad day" she said.

Symphony looked up at her with her tears streamed face, saying nothing. What must this girl think of her? But then the girl said something that surprised her.

"Yah i've had those to"

"Really?" Symphony asked, " You don't think that I'm a wimp."

"Everyone has hard times." Said the girl sitting down to eat her sandwich, "so why in the world would I judge you?"

After a good while of sitting in silence Symphony pulled her lunch out of her backpack, and began to eat. The bell rang just as she finished her lunch. "Well see you around!" said the girl standing up, "hope you feel better soon it never lasts forever."

Symphony gathered up her garbage then dumped it into the nearest trash can. As she went through the rest of the day at school she tried harder on her school work, but her enthusiasm soon faded into intense anxiety. "This is what I get for trying." She mumbled at the end of her last class. She then proceeded to slump onto her desk.

When she got home from school she felt absolutely terrible, and as she walked into the door her mom welcomed her enthusiastically.

"Need a snack?" She asked, "I made cookies!"

"No thanks," Symphony mumbled she wasn't hungry.

Symphony walked into her room, and slouched onto her bed. She heard something crumple as she sat down, and stood to see what it was. It was a note from her mother that read...

Dear Symphony, I know that being you is hard, and I would like you to know that me, and many others are on your side! I love more than tongue can tell! Keep fighting.

-Love mom

Symphony smiled, and for the first time in a long while her heart swelled with joy. She then remembered her teacher's concern for her, Jazzy's attempts

to help her during class, her friend's invitation for her to sit with them, the girl who sat with her at lunch, and finally her mom's letter. People really did care about her. For their sakes, and her own she would try. Shy would try in her schoolwork, and she would try to have patience with her mother, and siblings. Most importantly though she would try to fill her life with as much joy as possible. Though Symphony's life wasn't automatically perfect with time no one could deny that she had taken a turn for the better.