

The Strength To Move Forward by Hazel Krueger

Angie felt like her heart had been ripped in two by her mother's harsh words. She was overwhelmed with a flood of emotions and could feel her own life slipping away as she helplessly replayed the conversation in her mind. Her eyes were stinging, and her body felt like lead, weighted down by the sting of unjust accusations and smothering misunderstandings. Angie frantically searched for an escape from this suffocating situation, but no matter where she turned she encountered another brick wall.

Angie took a deep breath and forced her thoughts away from the hurtful words of her mother. She had been feeling overwhelmed ever since the argument, but now she was determined to focus on the present and make the most of what life had to offer. She reminded herself that she was a freshman in college, living in the dorms, and had so much potential ahead of her.

Angie stepped into the spring sunshine and walked toward the campus buildings. She could feel the sun's heat on her face, and she breathed deeply into the morning air. The grass felt cool beneath her feet, soft and wet with dew. The trees surrounding the quad held a dozen shades of green, an ocean of color stretching to meet the blue sky. Waves of birdsong washed against her ears, gentle music that told of a new day beginning. She was back at school, finally living out her dream.

As Angie walked, she thought about the powerful emotions she'd experienced while talking with her mother. She thought about her mother's words, and how hurtful and unfair they had been. She wanted to be angry and lash out, but she knew that wouldn't help her situation. She wanted to be understanding and forgiving, but at the

same time, she wanted her mother to understand her and take the time to listen to her.

Angie thought of all the times she had tried to empathize with her mother—to try and understand where she was coming from—and of how her mother never seemed to return the favor. She felt like her mother didn't truly see her for who she was.

Angie sighed and decided to put her thoughts aside for the time being. She was determined to make the best of her situation and not let her emotions get in the way of her dreams. She walked into the student center, ready to start the day.

The student center was bustling with activity, and students eagerly discussed their classes, projects, and plans for the future. Angie felt a little overwhelmed by it all, but she also felt like she was where she was supposed to be.

Angie walked to the cafeteria and purchased a cup of coffee. She sat at a table and began to sip it slowly, watching the students around her. She noticed a group of freshmen who were discussing their futures, and a feeling of envy started to settle in as she listened.

Angie was struck with a sudden realization. Everyone was in the same boat, trying desperately to find their place in the world. While some were succeeding others, were fighting an uphill battle with all of their might. A flood of empathy washed over her and the immense weight of all their struggles settled on her shoulders like an avalanche.

Angie knew that if she could put aside her hurt and learn to empathize with her mother and others, she could find the strength to move

forward. She knew that if she could learn to forgive, she would be able to find happiness and peace in her life.

As Angie tossed her empty coffee cup into the trash can, a small smile tugged at her lips for the first time in what felt like a lifetime. She was finally beginning to find hope again – it was a fragile thing, but she knew it was there. Taking a deep breath, she stepped out of the student center and into the crisp morning air, feeling an inner strength growing within her that would help her make it through whatever adversity crossed her path.

She decided to do what was right and gathered up all of her courage inside of her. She took the bus home and focused on the colorful blurs of cars passing by. When Angie got home, she walked to her mother and started talking. Despite all of their differences, Angie let out a breath and collected all of her understanding. And so did her mom.