

Alexandra Ross

ENG 112

Narrative Project: Draft #3

Due: 09 December 2018

Strength in Disguise

Alexandra drags her feet through the grass towards the minivan to load it. Tears stream down her face as the plastic trash bags crash into her legs. The girl's 13 year old arms ache, She has never carried so many bags in her life. Amongst the four children present, they have more than what can fit and little time. The family will have to sacrifice treasures and leave memories behind in the process. It's 8 in the morning. The sun is absent, It is pouring. This October morning feels bitter.

It is so painful for them to watch everything that's important to their childhood mostly vanish. The children's hearts became heavy as they witness their mother Sandi in a state of weakness, a state they barely recognize. Their mother's appearance screams she hasn't slept in days, displaying dark circles under her eyes and tangled hair. Sobbing, she sits her three children Steven, Alexandra and Jadyne down on their living room couch. Preparing them for the news, she looks down at the floor swirling her coffee, "I'm drowning. The trauma is unendurable, and I cannot keep up with the payments. To me, this house is untenable, and the government notified me they will be foreclosing our home." She looks as if she is shaking, the siblings look questionably at each other, immediately wanting it to stop.

With trembling hands the youngest Jadyne asks, "What? How?" Alexandra looks at her mother's white, blank face and gives her a hug. "I know we'll be okay mom. You can beat this," says the oldest, Steven.

The children have never seen their mother this weak and torn. She needs them more than ever. The kids feel it is mandatory of them to step up. Alexandra looks out the window and watches raindrops slowly race down the glass. She thinks, “when it rains, it pours” and it keeps pouring. She feels heartbroken and angry, but cannot let that come between the family now. With the foreclosure, there is even less time to say goodbye and transition. The family is struggling and needs each other in every way. After hours of packing the kids decide to take a break and sit out front. There are no plants or decorations to show anybody lives there. Staring into the empty house with a new lock on it posting the sign “foreclosed” creates a knot in their stomachs.

Alexandra starts feeling dizzy. It is all hitting her at once, “I feel so lost and confused. Not only am I losing my family structure, but my childhood home we created every memory in”. Every member needs to be strong, pack and move along to the next house within a few weeks. During this time, the family is miserable and falling apart due to a traumatic event that occurred previously that week. As the parents destroy each other and their love, the pressure damages the mother severely. Marriage isn’t just love and commitment but being jointed in various ways. For example, income and housing even though their mother solely contributes. It is detrimental for the children to actively be involved in this toxic relationship. This creates pain and confusion within them all. It is always hard to watch people you love hurt each other.

In 1999, the family moves in when Alexandra’s born and plan to reside there forever. The girl’s have pink bedroom walls, wooden floors, bunk beds and a blue bathroom. Steven and Weston share a similar room, although with blue walls. It is a luxury to have a home and their own space. Although Sandi doesn’t feel the same about the house. The memories she possess” are torturing. Trauma and fear control her, nightmares, paranoia, anxiety, and depression are

eating her alive. Giving it a few days, she comes to conclusion they are going to move out and stop fighting for their past. The kid's recognize their mother willing to give up even though it is unusual and rare. She is the strongest woman to look up to, a person who can get through everything and always has.

It's so easy to ruminate on the most negative or impactful moments in life when you're experiencing them. Negative or positive, this is a blessing in disguise. But, as a family they optimistically think of all counterfactual outcomes and possibilities. Importantly, how different situations have potential to make a difference in life. By contributing to their self-growth and their life. They relied on each other as support and eventually, the family figures out a living situation. While figuring that out, they all decide to go to their grandmother's to decompress and vent. At this time it's dark outside and all members pile out of the blue-minivan into their grandmother's twin house. When they enter her home it's silent but, she has the brightest smile from cheek to cheek. "I love you all so much, how are you? She says enthusiastically. Everyone shrugs their shoulders anxiously and do not respond. Grandma takes a deep breath and exclaims, "I talked to my brother and we've found you a place to stay"! Sandi starts crying with joy and the entire vibe changes quickly.

The little sister Jadyne smiled, "I knew we were going to be okay! I was so afraid earlier we were going to have to split up".

"No matter what we wouldn't split up. You know mom wouldn't let that happen", the older brother Steven shouts.

Alexandra looks at her siblings with great relief, "I'm so thankful for you all." Her grandma smirks and says, "I can't wait for you all to see the new house, it's huge"! Feeling

excitement to move into the beautiful, temporary home the family plans to scope it out. Everyone hops into the car and the car ride is silent. It takes only 10 minutes to arrive at the new property.

As they pull up, Jadya shouts “wow, this looks like a castle compared to our house”! It is blue with many windows and a backyard. This time everyone was able to have their own room and more space. Skipping around, Sandi has an enormous smile on her face while she checks out the house. Everyone seemed very comfortable, calm and pleased. The new home was absolutely gorgeous and is a fresh start. At the time the family could not catch a break but their mother is always there to catch everyone. Overall, their struggle became their strength and led them to new opportunities.