Someday

I sat there, diligently tracing my fingers across, down, around the notches in the wooden table. The sky was an onyx stone, just like my grandmother’s ring that was twirling around my finger. Our dining room was dimly lit -- just enough so you could make out the transparent rain drops plastering the window panes. It’d been ten years, coming to this day, and she’d never understand. For years, my mother had enveloped the role of Switzerland between us, and today was the final day of her involvement. I boldly glanced up to catch a glimpse of my mom and step-father glaring at me, before my eyes glazed over. *I don’t care what she says, I will never budge. I’ve never liked him, never will, and I will never forget all the things he did. Oh, how I wish she could apprehend.*

In 2002, my mom met a man named Ted. I was four. He pursued her several times, and every time she shut him down. Except once. Oh, that fateful day; it changed my life forever. At first, everything was fine. He seemed like a pleasant man, and we didn’t get any creepy vibes from him. Ted made my mother very happy, which was what she needed having just sifted her way through a nasty divorce. My dad and mom had been married for 12 years -- they were college sweethearts. Around their 11th year of marriage, my daddy was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis or MS. The disease caused him to become a more forgetful, mellow version of himself, and my mommy couldn’t handle it. So, she left. She moved on to Ted; thus, forcing us to relocate from Chicago, IL to Battle Creek, MI. *What a joke.*

…

The pause seemed like it had lasted ages. My mom and Ted -- both pinned against me -- rustled in their light, cocoa, wood chairs that were west of my position. My mother’s hair burned a more prominent ruby today, and her gems were piercing, jade daggers to mine. All the while, I kept peeking around, twiddling with my ring. Eyes down. Suddenly, my mother let out a prolonging sigh, “Ahhhhhaaaahhh. Alright....” And that’s when I blocked everything out -- in one ear and out the other. I felt hollow.

“Sophie...you two have so much in common...work it out...we are a family, whether you like it or not”, my Mother started.

Of course Ted had to put his passive, two cents in, “Yes, Rachel. We are a family, but Sophie does this...and this....and it’s her fault that I...”

*Shut the hell up.*

“First of all, Ted, don’t talk about my daughter that way. Second, it’s not her fault that you...”, my mom barked, “You’re the adult here, so start acting like it.”

*Damn straight.*

“But, Sophie always treats me like scum, and she always…” Ted fumbled.

*Alright, play the victim card. See where it gets you.* I felt the rage fill my body cavities, and bubble over my hips. Ted scowled straight into my corneas, and I hoped to God that he could see the flames igniting in my sapphire eyes. *You got another thing coming.*

“We are not a family”, I grimaced, ”I’ve never mattered to him, and I have always come second to his precious daughter Brittany. I needed a father figure, and he wasn’t there for me. Screw him. I’m done with him. Mom, you always taught me to forgive, but never forget. It sounds to me like you might’ve forgotten all of the jabs he made at me. Did you?”

“No”, she swiftly spoke, “But that doesn’t make it okay for you to…”

My mind trailed off. Nostalgia set in.

*In 2003, the movie Hulk had just been delivered to theatres near me.; I was five years old. For once, Ted desired to do something nice for me; therefore, he plopped me in the car, and told me we were going to see it. With Brittany. Suddenly, Ted realized he had forgotten his wallet inside our home, so he headed back through the garage towards the evergreen hued home. I wish he’d never left the car. The second he departed, Brittany started chipping at my self-esteem -- I remember her distinctly announcing, “Oh I wish you would just shut up Sophie. You’re so annoying, and ugly. My daddy likes me better than you, and I really wish you weren’t going to this movie.” After she spoke those insufferable words, I recollect that I sat in dismay. How could someone say something like that to a quaint five year old? How?*

*When Ted entered the car again, I immediately blurted out what had happened. Of course. Brittany had an alternate story. To my shock, he believed her. Brittany started to weep -- for effect -- and Ted scolded me like a piece of tenderized meat. Following the berating, Ted snatched me by my arm, and dragged me out of the car into the driveway. He stomped back to his vehicle, opened the ebony door, revved the car up, and backed away. With briny tears streaming down my face onto to the corner of my quivered mouth and sticky snot gushing from my nose, I traced the dynamic duo as they reverted from my driveway -- I could just glimpse the gigantic glare coming from princess Brittany, as they sped away. That was the end of our relationship.*

Several years later, Brittany left Ted; I was 12 years old. She moved in with her white trash mother, Amber, who she had spent every other week with for most of her life. One day, Ted dropped Brittany off at Amber’s dump of a hearth, and she never came back. For about a year, Brittany kept preaching to Ted that she return. My mother knew she wouldn’t. I knew she wouldn’t. Brittany was doing what she does best; running and being a people pleaser. Eventually, my mommy and I gutted her room -- we gave every scrap of Brittany’s to GoodWill. Now, Brittany only chats with Ted, if he calls her. She “forgets” to call him on his birthday and Father’s Day. Sometimes, just for a fleeting moment in time, I’ll catch myself feeling remorse for Ted; however, he swats that away the minute it floats into my eyes. I’ve spent years being forgotten to be picked up at school, told I was a “piece of shit”, and how I’d “never be as perfect as Brittany”. Ted has a history of depression in his family, and he has awful mood swings; he’s like a girl. Since he has all those issues, he strives to take his emotional outbursts out on me. I have *always* been the enemy. Nevertheless, it’s difficult to make someone a doormat that you can wipe your problems on, if you occupy no area in their heart.

It’s been 14 years, and I can count on my hands the number of times he’s attempted to redeem himself for the all the heinous crimes he committed against me. But, no one can *ever* achieve full redemption. On a positive note, the past half a decade hasn’t been too mal. Ted and I will go weeks not speaking to each other, and I adore it. But, he’s *so* odd that the format of our relationship changes daily.

Nowadays, Ted’s a little peculiar. He actually ventures to complete enjoyable tasks for me; such as, changing the brakes on my car, going to dinner together, and rocking out to Van Halen together. I speculate all the strides toward redemption are due to two facts: he did something extremely nice for Brittany, and I’m leaving for college. He only does delightful things for me, if he did something spectacular for Brittany. He once questioned my mother, asking her where I wanted to go to college, and she proclaimed, “Somewhere -- not anywhere near here. You should know she’s not coming back”.

“Why?” Ted inquired, “Is it because of me?”

“Yes,” she slammed.

It’s calming to know that Ted finally -- somewhat -- comprehends how I feel, and that he screwed up. He will never be able to mend the relationship that we might have had so very long ago, and I believe he knows that. I have a lot of anger, dourness towards him, and what could have been. Our situation is just melancholy and disappointing. But, over the years the pain has slowly ceased. Now, when I epsie him, I feel emptiness. It’s marvelous to just not care. I know that the person I am today, and the person I want to become was never influenced by him -- it was determined by my extraordinary mother. Without her, I would’ve never persevered through the years of torment, hatred, frustration, pain, heartbreak, and bullying brought to me on a silver platter by Brittany and Ted. Looking back, I stare at Ted and I’s situation, and strongly trust the everything happens for a reason. All in all, I’m hopeful for the future, and I’m optimistic on someday discovering why everything panned out the way that it did. **Someday.**