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Creative Writing

Mrs. Arters

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### Second Chance

Neglected from a young age, Troy had little positive influences in his life. He grew up in a foster home and had been living here for almost 18 years. From what he had been told, his parents were young when his mom got pregnant and they weren't mature or financially stable enough to care for a child. He was the oldest in his foster home and often secluded himself from the other kids in the home. Each night he spent locked away in his room listening to music until his headphones started to irritate the inside of his sensitive ears. His eighteenth birthday was tomorrow and the only thing he was looking forward to was a letter his parents had written when he was born. Given the opportunity to open the letter at the age of 12, Troy passed it up, he was angry that his so called "parents" would just give away a child so carelessly. Years and years spent feeling abandoned left Troy bitter and irritable towards every person that he encountered.

Senior year was dreadful for him. Each day dragged by and Troy had no motivation to put effort into any of his classes. Nothing was planned for his future. College didn't seem like an option to him, his grades were pathetic. Teachers had attempted to reach out to him, he turned away all help that was offered. Some of his classmates tried to include him in group discussions but were only greeted with a sarcastic and offensive comment. Sitting alone at lunch, he glared at his peers that tried to join him at the table, which he claimed as his own. The walk home from school was the best part of the day. He plugged his headphones into his phone and blasted his

music as loud as he could possibly stand. The world was quiet and all that was left were his own thoughts.

Troy awoke the next morning to find that no one in the house had remembered his birthday. Shoving the 3 little boys out of the bathroom he locked the door, showered and waddled back to his bedroom. While slipping his white nike socks on, Troy's eyes traveled to the small, tattered box under his bed. Every morning for the past 10 years he thought of that letter, and today he could finally open it. Looking past his dusty textbooks, he pushed the garbage and crushed school yearbooks out of the way. The light blue box had faded to a foggy gray. His fingers traced over the pen marks on the sides of the box he had drawn. "DO NOT OPEN UNTIL 18" read the lid of the box. Hands trembling, Troy lifted the small paper from the box.

"Dear Troy,

Although you won't remember meeting us, we will forever hold onto the small amount of time we had you. Our hearts are broken as we have decided to give you away. With the best intentions, we want nothing but the best for you but can't provide it ourselves. We hope that as you grow older you keep us in mind. We will always love you and are already continuously thinking of you.

As you learn and grow throughout your special life, we wish that you keep a few things in mind as you go through your journey finding yourself. First, always think before you act. It is easy for us to get ahead of ourselves and not think of the consequences that lie ahead. Second, say "I love you" to the people you adore, it is completely unknown when their last moment will be. Third, schools sucks but having a group of friends that support you will benefit you. That

being said, willingly try your best everyday. Give your best effort with everything you do and do it with passion.

Finally, we want you to remember to always act with kindness. It costs absolutely nothing to be nice, even if it's the smallest act you can muster, it's something. The world works a little better when there is more kindness. We in no way expect you to be kind every moment of every day, everyone has their moments. Through our lives we have experienced some of the most absurd humans. It is entirely avoidable and you will attract positive people and energy by being your best self.

We love you endlessly and wish you the best as you grow into the amazing man we know you are more than capable of being. Keep pushing through and you will go far.

Love always,

Mom and Dad"

As his tears smeared the dark blue ink on the lined paper, he had a change of heart. Almost exactly how the grinch's heart grew two sizes, Troy's did too. By this time he was running late for school and couldn't afford another late this year. Running down the sidewalk, the words "act with kindness" resonated with him. He's had more than enough moments of being the inconsiderate kid that he let himself become. Slowly but surely maybe he could change his reputation. His first few classes passed and the anticipation for lunch grew more and more with each brief minute. Troy had a plan.

As the freshmen searched urgently for a place to sit, Troy moved his backpack and books which took up two seats, in the hope that someone would want to sit with him. Eyes scanning nervously for an empty chair, a small freckled boy hesitantly moved towards the table. Without

saying a word he sat himself at the shiny seat across from Troy. Noticing the boy had forgotten to get a drink in the amusingly long lunch line, Troy reached into his bag gripping his unopened water bottle. Rolling the plastic across the table, he looked up and with a shaking voice said “Hey I’m Troy, I noticed you don’t have a drink you can have mine.” moments of silence passed before the boy replied with a simple “thank you.”. Through awkward eye contact and short replies, Troy managed to make his first friend with a little bit of kindness.

Moral of the story: it’s nice to be nice.