Creative Writing Portfolio

Calling Upon the Muse and Looking for a Peaceful Something
“We do not read and write poetry because it’s cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race and the human race is filled with passion” –Dead Poets Society
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All of my life, I have been fond of writing. I have numerous journals dating throughout my childhood proving this fact. When I became aware of a creative writing class, I was extremely excited – I knew it would be a relaxing, enjoyable change from my normally exhausting schedule. And I was right. My year has improved tremendously with the introduction of this class, providing an outlet for the creative energy so often stifled in other courses. I enjoyed the variety of the assignments and opportunity to express my own thoughts and opinions. I am consistently forced to write in an inflexible, structured PIE format. This class, however, granted me the freedom to break free from those constraints and write freely about a topic of my own choice in my own individualized style. By taking this class, I hoped I would, through constructive criticism and practice, develop my own artistic integrity and writing technique. I believe my goal has been achieved. Perusing my portfolio, I notice a definite shift in both proficiency and style, my assignments becoming progressively more expressive and personal. They are creations I am proudly able to call my own, masterpieces forged from the depths of my creative mind. I have effectively developed an individualized technique and style I feel is personal to me.

Out of all our assignments, I feel as though I excelled the most in writing the ode. This piece allowed me to express my feelings in a poetic fashion, granting
me the opportunity to implement extensive vocabulary in order to create a beautiful, flowing masterpiece, exhibiting my emotions through the expert use of language. Conversely, my least favorite assignment would be the sonnet due to my inability to deviate from its strict structure. These restrictions were exactly what I had hoped to escape by enrolling in this course, and their implementation disappointed me. I felt my creativity was smothered and I was not able to effectively communicate my thoughts. Throughout the creation of my portfolio, I noticed that family and the wonders of nature appeared most common in my work, reflecting on my deeply ingrained familial values as well as my fascination with the outside world. I am deeply concerned with the state of the environment and largely advocate for environmental preservation. The assignments completed in creative writing not only widened my perception of the world and literature, but altered my understanding of professional writing. In order to pursue writing as a career, I believe a deep well of creativity is a definite necessity. One who wishes to write for a living must ensure their passion for the activity – writing can be entertaining, but when you’re stuck in the middle of a piece with a stubborn case of writer’s block it can be all too easy to give up. A love of writing is not enough to ensure success. A true professional writer must face their tasks with an unwavering, steely determination to succeed. I was exposed to a taste of this life throughout this course, faced with pressing deadlines and my own case of writer’s block a handful of times. Through this experience, I am able to sympathize with the plights of writers, gaining a new admiration for their steadfast resolve.
Upon the completion of my portfolio and reflection of knowledge gained from Mr. Costello’s wonderful creative writing class, I am able to conclude with certainty an increase in my confidence, both in my work and my willingness to present what I have written. Through the ample opportunities to share our work aloud, I have slowly broken down the unease I used to associate with the sharing of my private thoughts. I have, furthermore, improved my ambition to write by taking this course due to the deadlines that I must meet in class. Looking back on this course, I would add more free-write assignments where students have the time to take their everyday thoughts and events and transform them into beautiful pieces of writing. I believe this no-pressure practice is vital to the success of the student, allowing a time to improve upon writing ability, technique, and expression of ideas without worrying about the grade. I hope to one day gather the required determination to go out on a limb and publish my own work as an author, an achievement that would solidify my success as a writer.
I remember it was hot and there was a roar ripping through the air from every direction. I tried to piece together my surroundings. I was haunted by the scene playing on repeat in my mind. No knitting of words could quite frame the feeling but I would describe it as an overwhelming rush of gray. It was like the whole world was painted this color and it was all I saw down a long tunnel ahead of me. The boundaries of the cars, the guard rail, the stop lights melted to be a blur. I jolt back into reality by the sound of Jennifer’s voice. She was swearing and starting to panic and although I tried to reach out and calm her with a squeeze of her hand, a stormy pain rockets through my body. It began at my shoulder and pumps into my chest before escaping to my legs. A groan and a tear escape but I quickly brushed it away while unbuckling my seat belt with my left hand which thankfully doesn’t bring me pain. Although so much chaos was swirling around all I could think of was how an injury would not only cripple me physically but would damage the bones of my ticket to college. My plate of AP level classes would be derailed. This time I made a crash landing back from my thoughts when a hit from behind made impact. I remember a crunch of metal and an unfamiliar drop of blood running down my brow. Most of all I remember fading, fading into blackness.
I wake up to a game of tag between beeps coming from a wall of monitors. Waiting by the end of my bed are four anxious eyes - a doctor and my mother who looks like she had been crying.

“Oh, jade, how are you feeling? I’ve been so worried, sweetie” she whimpered while rushing to my side. I finally notice the cast hugging my ankle that is strung up and elevated. The doctor picks up on my confusion and starts to methodically flip through papers on a clipboard. He begins his obviously rehearsed speech by saying that I was in a serious car accident and luckily walked - or more or less was dragged out – with only a broken elbow, shoulder and ankle. He goes on about the biggest injury being a blow to the head that caused swelling of my brain that was to blame for me being in not the best of shape. I begin to fill with anger and confusion which are almost always accompanied by sweaty palms. I sternly order for the doctor to spit out the news a little too harsh and am cut off by mother pleading me to be patient. I look over to her and notice she is wearing an apologetic look. I also see new lines formed on either side of her mouth and a sad droop to the sides of her once youthful eyes.

“Jade” my white-haired doctor says, “you were in a coma for 6 months, that’s how long it took for your brain to heal. You were transferred to new hospitals all across the coast every month until you found yourself here in San Fran where doctors like myself successfully pulled you back. ” San Francisco, California was 748 miles from Olympia, Washington. 748 miles from home. The news paralyzes me and I’m drowned in how much time has
passed. I run through a timeline of missed events consisting of cross-country states, half of field hockey season, early admissions to my dream schools.

“What happened to Jennifer?” limps out of my throat.

“Jenny’s just fine, had a slight collarbone surgery with a quick recovery. Already back in school and back to normal.” mom sums up.

Of course. I can’t help but think how typical her luck had played out. Jen, even since the days of fairytales and nightlights, always got the longer end of the stick, the winning draw of the wishbone. I’ve had to work twice as hard to be ahead of her; to be ahead of everyone in my class at Saint Floyd Academy. Not like the valedictorian slot is saved for one who slips into a coma. The doctor chimes back in with a treatment plan that includes something about me staying here for reassured recovery but I am not listening. My attention channels to a shape that appears to be more of a shadow than a man. Broad shouldered, tall, and clinging to the outer edge of my doorway. He remains still when our eyes lock and I instantly am showered with oasis blue. His paradise inhabited eyes read mine for the first time but it feels there like there is a familiarity about the way my heart beats in their presence. When the concerned toned adults realize my lack of interest, the turn to see what is catching all of my attention and the boy with hazelnut hair vanishes from the doorway. I apologize for my rude behavior although I feel no remorse for soaking in as much clarity as I could from the shadow boy. After talk of hospital forms and little words of encouragement are established and neatly folded away, I was given time to rest and assigned which recreational centers in
the hospital that I could go to. Luckily the library was one of them and I planned to spend most of my time in the sun that shines beautifully on the spines of books.

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The next morning I head down to the cafeteria and waiting at the double doors is the mysterious boy from yesterday afternoon. I walk closer to him and when he sees me, he approaches as if we have been friends all our lives.

“We’re eating lunch together.” he proclaims.

“Sorry, but do I know you?” I say, hesitantly.

“Well technically, no. I’m Alex. Now you know me, good enough?”

“Well I may know your name but I don’t know who you are.” I argue back.

“You’ll get to know me, just have lunch with me.” Alex says

I make a sweep around the cafeteria full of people, sick and healthy, and finally give in. When we walk to the table nearest to the sun-filled window after getting our lunches there is awkward silence filling the air around us. He fills it in by saying, in a monotone voice, that he was sorry.

“For what?” I ask

He looks out the window to the bay in the distance and after a moment or two anxious waiting he says, “I’m the one. I’m the one who made you like this.” You know the blow to the head? That was me, that was my car, I hit you. I learned that you had slipped into a coma and I felt too bad to return home until I knew that you were okay.”
I sit and soak up this new information while not allowing my feelings, my confusion, my anger, and my acceptance, to escape to the shore. I decide, as a token to the new me who has just awoken to let it go.

“I forgive you, it wasn’t your fault. It was a car accident and no one can help those. Plus, I took off my seatbelt thinking it all was over, I was the stupid one.” I say trying to take his guilt away

“I want to show you something,” Alex says “I want to make it up to you.” After lunch we head down the twists and turns of the hospital and I realize he’s bringing me to the library- the place my skin has been itching to walk into. He leads me by the small of my back into a dusty corner in the back of the room that is equipped with an old couch and ceiling high bookshelves. It is this sanctuary we go to each day after breakfast and lunch. We exchange stories and poems, our background lives and it is here where I fall in love with the hazel haired boy. On one rainy day while sitting on the couch surrounded by Stephen King novels Alex inches closer to me and pulls me in. I am blanketed in a warm, fuzzy feeling and he whispers two lines of a poem.

“I love thee with a love I seemed to lose, I love with a passion put to use.” It was one of Elizabeth Barret Browning’s and it caused an awakening inside of me. It makes our departure a million times more difficult when it comes three weeks later.

~

He brushes my hair out of my face and folds me into his chest. I press my ear against his beating heart which aligns the valleys and hills of his plantation to
mine for what seems like the last time. Too short of a time passes by before mother turns down the hallway, looking for me. I break apart from Alex, run my fingers down his muscular arms and interlock my fingers with his. I whisper into his ears what was once whispered into mine, “I love thee with a love I seemed to lose, I love with a passion put to use.” Our two favorite lines of the Elizabeth Barret Browning poem we found in the library. He replies with a gentle goodbye kiss on my forehead and I walk out of the sliding glass doors of the hospital. I notice the sun beams down strong, making the air thick and hard to breathe. Mom keeps a short distance from me as she claims that I’ll love sleeping on my own bed for a change and how much my family has missed me being around. These attempts of encouragement don’t take my mind off of Alex. I’m not focusing on where my feet should be going and within seconds I’m stumbling over the curb of the sidewalk and crumbling against the hot pavement.

“Are you okay, honey? Are you hurt?” Mother yelps.

“Yes, mom. Just trying to process all of it all” I reply.

I sweep off the pebbles embedded in my knee caps and try to stand up but I feel weak; like my legs will buckle underneath my body weight. I think of the endless poems and paintings that were shared in that sunny loft library in efforts to regain strength and focus. Monet rushes through my head. My heartbeat returns to normal and I grab mom’s hand so she can help me to the hot velvet seat of the car. My mind is still running a million miles per hour and when I go to reach over for the seatbelt I realize that this will be the first car
ride since the accident with Jennifer. I breathe deeply and recite Browning to myself but the memory comes back too fast. There is a balloon in my stomach expanding so far that it blocks off my throat. I try and force the air into my lungs and wipe the constant tears rushing down my face. I try so hard but I'm a feather in the wind. I'm a feather in the wind and I whisper

“I am not okay.”
“Ready to go”

I long for his gaze of oasis filled eyes but he remains to stare straight, Minutes pass while I wait for this look and when it finally happens I see a solid wall of cold snowy storms building up behind his pupils. I am puzzled by the absence of the warm feeling I usually am blanketed by and try to form words but none come out. I quickly look away while brushing my hair off my neck as I run through the possibilities of what made Alex so cold. I want to run to him and wrap myself in his arms but my mother cuts me off by asking “ready to go?”

The automatic doors to the hospital slide open and the sun beams down stronger than any other day; making the air thick and hard to breathe. Mom keeps her hand on my back as she exclaims that I’ll love sleeping in my own bed for a change and that my family has missed me so much. These positive reinforcements don’t help the sense that my world is closing me in. The boundaries are inching towards each other and I’m stuck in the middle. I am not focusing on where my feet are going and within seconds I am crumbling against the hot pavement. I try to help myself up and brush off the pebbles now embedded in my knee caps but my weak legs do not suffice. Instead of getting angry and frustrated I think of what Alex told me to do- think of poems, to think of paintings. Monet rushes through my head and clarity breathes thorough me as I imagine the short brush strokes of the paint brush. I finally grab my mother’s hand as she helps me to the warm velvet of the car and its
empty seats. “Are you okay, honey?” she asks gently. ‘Yes’ I blurt while my fingers find my seatbelt. I too soon realize that this car ride will be the first since that hot day with Jennifer. I breathe and recite Shakespeare to myself but the memory comes back too fast. With tears streaming down my face I rip off my seatbelt and feel like I can’t breathe. As if there is a balloon in my stomach expanding so far it reaches my throat. I try to remind myself that things could be worse. I try so hard but I am a feather in the wind. I am a feather in the wind and I whisper “I am not okay.”
Who am I?

I’m the lovers icon and

Besides my crown I wear a scarf of prickers.

You can find me in Shakespeare’s sonnet,

I’m red and pink and all shades of ones ticker.

I bloom from the ground and have the scent of an angel

In a bush

I grow

In a tangle.

My cousins of tulips and daises are jealous of my fame

I kept it a secret, but do you know my name?
Imagist Poetry

“Engine Number 5”

Going through the motions. Upon getting swallowed by the muck a cherry red monster rips though it all. The glance I get; a single number 5, glazed in gold. Holding onto it for as long as I can, then it too enters the belly of the beast.

“The Singing Sun”

So much depends upon the song of the sun. It embarks upon all it sees and blankets it in a godly glow. The days where it hides its face and refuses to sing are the days we realize its beauty. The days where the fires of the treetops are extinguished are the days we too hide and refuse to symphonize with the remaining creatures of the world.
Haiku

“A Warning”

My match it lit, but
It is burning out. I’m waiting
For you to ignite.

“Revealing”

It sparkles, it shines.
Through the aged photo I see
A world forgotten.

“Habitat”

The creatures hidden
Below the mirrored surface
Chase the calming green
**Tanka**

*“Embark”*

A staircase of song
That tiptoes over the strings.
It’s one sound, one pluck,
And you’ll never be the same
Once you start to dance with it

*“Moment of Truth”*

You prepare and work
So hard and long. It’s your life.
The blood, sweat, and tears
You think it won’t be enough
But you hope, you pray, you wish
Cinquain

“The Autopsy”

I won’t.
I will not let.
I will not let you rip.
I will not let you rip apart
My words.

“Last words”

Just try.
Try to promise
You will experience
The beauty in the sun, in words,
In life.
Music & Poetry

“Dancing to Coltrane”

The rain didn’t stop me
because it was sunny in my heart.
My smile would be the sun
And I
would light up the park.
The bluebird’s song was mute and unfound
But the pitter patter on the benches
Made a wondrous sound

“A farewell”

Staring down the long hallway
For what seemed like the last time
I take off my cap
And wipe tears out of my eyes.
I was here for four years
And the passed by too fast.
I know where I’m going next
But I can’t help to want to hold onto my past.
Dance after dance
And bell after bell
I have to say goodbye, so long
Farewell.
“Summer Storm”

A scream of anger
Strikes straight through a pink August
Cloud and wakes up fall

“Typical and Tropical”

An oh so cliché
From what looked like a postcard
Was oh so boring.
Ode

“An ode to good music”

It starts with a beat, it sets you off on your endeavor
You think the being that painted this is oh so clever.
It blows chills down your spine.
The harmonies, they are more than fine.
Your ears ring with sounds that inspire thoughts.
It makes you feel these fights are battles well fought.
You realize you share scars with creatures from all over
You soon want to rip off this mask, take off your cover.
It heals the wounds that occupy your mind
Every strum, chord, melody, lyric line.
Good music, great music. It compares to no other feeling.
How can you hide love from something that gives you healing?
“An Ode to Family”

An embrace calling you home
Wrapping you in warmth, showering you in love
Washing the foreign dirt off of you, from wherever you have roamed

Cut from the same cloth and grown from the same seed
It’s one large, complicated puzzle
It’s a messy love, but it doesn’t need to be clean

An unbreakable bond that’s stronger than any stone
No matter what obstacles get in the way
With family, you are never alone

No more than a phone call away, or a couple steps down the hall
With family, the door is left open
With family, there is a hand to pick you up when you fall

No matter how hard I try, my words won’t suffice
Being part of a family is pure magic
And it’s something no one can describe

I know at some points we fight and I take them for granted
But when my life comes to a close and my heart stops beating
In my mind, my family will be the last thought planted.
Elegy

“Oh Ashley”

Your bellious life was cut off before the bud could bloom
I can’t imagine how scared you were, knowing you went too far
It was a cold and anxious battle being on this side of the line.
But I looked down to see that my fingers could form the three-pronged sign
that you taught me The one that you said meant ‘I love you’
It got me through it
It brought me back to warm, long days of sunshine and blonde hair and your
bright eyes that sang a song of fun
Looking through the screen door, with an old country tune in my head will
forever be a token of my favorite cousin
I’m getting stronger, knowing that you’re healing
Up in the sky, I will see you again, and we’ll sing and dance and laugh until
our bellies hurt.
Up in the sky, will be our next meeting.
Sonnet

English Sonnet:

“Food, glorious food”

Taking vastly different ingredients
That result in many different outcomes.
Changing rebellious into obedient.
From mashed potatoes to candy; dum-dums,
Reese's peanut butter cups, or smoked ham.
I would not have made it this far along
Without food. With it, I am who I am.
Many different styles cooked slow, cooked long.
It holds the most unique flavors and taste
It's what makes our bellies full and hearty.
It keeps us going at such a fast pace
And spices up any bash, ball, and party.
I love food; it practically is my life
Here comes more, hand me a fork spoon or knife.
Italian Sonnet:

“tick, tick, ticking away”

Oh dear life. It has twists and it has turns.
It is a test, for one you can’t prepare.
Ending in tragedy; death or despair.
It’s a lesson some say. It’s how you learn.
With some elements out of your concern,
You toughen up and fight back if you dare
But against the wind you’re small. It’s unfair.
It’s a battle in which for victory you yearn.
But given the battles, the wounds, the scars,
Life is a gift that some take for granted.
So don’t blink too often or breathe too fast
Or waste away life behind prison bars.
Don’t sleep too long or rip up roots planted.
No matter what you do, life surely passes.
Carpe Diem

“It is unraveling”

The ripe fruit will once rot
And the bright light will fade.
Hold onto the silk fabric of time
For it unravels constantly and it unzips out of control.
Time ticks on though some don’t see it or pretend not too.
Time ticks on though some hold onto time, but they must let go.
So enjoy your stay here
Envelop yourself in the unbreakable bond of family
Travel the unmarked path and pave your own roads.
Say I love you too much.
Notice the beauty everyone has to offer.
Because the ripe fruit will once rot
And the bright light will fade.
One Scene Play

“Ralph”

Ralph is a man in his mid-twenties. His parents have been hounding him for not getting a job to pay for his car insurance. He finally gets one, and starts to hate his life. He is discussing his new situations with his friend, Charlie.

Ralph: “Charlie, you don’t understand. The kept hounding me, the kept yelling “You gotta get a job if you want to drive because we’re not paying for the insurance” and it makes it even more frustrating because my dad’s this big shot VP in charge of over a hundred people working for him and making him big bucks. But not me, not Ralph. Ralph has to know what it’s like to be poor and underprivileged and learn the value of money. I already know about money, it’s the green stuff that no one can get enough of. It’s like I just know he was this regular lazy kid with poor grades and his mind on babes.

Charlie: So what? You get a job, you get yourself wheels, and prove to your parents you’re not a regular lazy kid too.

Ralph: No, no no, Charlie. I did get a job. You know this shop, the one in the alley behind the Sears? The one that looks like 1920’s warmed over? Yeah, that one. I’ve been working there for three weeks, three to five, Monday through Friday, and eight til’ noon on Saturday. All those hours separating hot, greasy, steel parts. Doin’ monkey work in some place with no windows. And the worst part? Well, get a load of my hands, man. Got enough grease on these puppies to lube up your Chevy. More or less permanent. So what’s the diff if I drive or not? No lady is gonna want to date a guy wearing gloves. I’m quitting Charlie, to hell with this back when I was a boy and lesson teaching bullshit. I don’t need to prove them anything.
“Dave and Joe”

Characters:
Dave- goofy, wealthy, fit and kind landscaper. Good friend to Joe.
Joe- Comical, slightly obnoxious and on the larger side bus driver. Good friend to Dave.
Dave and Joe have been friends since high school and are meeting up for their weekly morning coffee.

Dave: Hey! Joe Schmoe! What’s kicking?
Joe: Big D! Fancy meeting you here, sit down!
Dave: You see those niners? What a crazy fourth quarter.
Joe: They made a comeback I’ll say.

Dave and Joe keep talking football until waitress comes and takes their order.

Joe solemnly sips on his coffee.

Dave: Something bothering you buddy?
Joe: Eh, you know, the road just gets more bumpy as I go on it seems. That’s all, I know you don’t want to hear it.
Dave: No, trust me. We’ve been friends since god knows when.
Joe: Well to start off, ever since Robin left Kate storms around and doesn’t come home until well after midnight.
Dave: She’s a teenager, Schmoe! What do you expect?
Joe: Yeah, but does your girl do that? No, of course not. She come straight home and does her homework like a little angel. And that’s not even the worst of it. The school is doing all of these budget cuts and there’s talk that they’re gonna cut my run out of the loop and give it to the new guy, Rick. Oh, Dave, I swear if I could get my hands on that guy, I would back him over within a second!

Dave: Alright Joe, let’s take a breath. No one is going to be backing anyone over. Now I’m sorry that this is happening to you and I wish I could help Kate
get her head straight but the school hasn’t done anything yet so don’t do something you’ll regret. I’ll tell you what though, something goes wrong you just call me up and I’ll set up the beach house for you and your girl until the road straightens out.

Joe: Really, D? Oh, you don’t have to do that.

Dave: Yeah. I also didn’t need to be dragged out to Vegas for bachelor party but you did that, didn’t you?

Joe: Oh hell yeah I did and you’re a better man for it. Now let’s finish up that pie.
One Act Play

“Doin’ Things Right”

Characters and Synopsis:
Eli St. Claire is the son of well-known and highly successful banker and investor Richard St. Claire. Richard wants Eli to follow his path but Eli has other plans. The play begins with Eli having a phone conversation with his sister Rachel St. Claire.

Scene One

Eli: It’s like I can’t drive a half a mile in this city without seeing dad’s grinning billboard. It’s taking over my life and I swear he loves that job more than us, Rach. He doesn’t even smile like that for family photos!

Rachel: Aw, come on Eli. Just be happy for dad. He’s been building this from the ground up since he was your age. He may just be a little excited.

Eli: Yeah well I don’t need his excitement causing traffic on my way to my final. I just need to pass this and I can finally have a ticket to somewhere where no one knows me, where I can make my own success story and build my own dream from the ground up.

Rachel: Well I’m sure you will, Eli. You got this in the bag, kid. I’ll see you back at the house to celebrate after, alright?

Eli: Yeah, yeah. All I’m asking for is one night without dad blabbering on about his precious empire, but I’ll see you later, sis.

Road: Phone clicks as Eli pulls up to his exam hall. He gets out of the car carrying 2 water bottles, 2 sharpened pencils, and what seems like a thousand notecards. He does jumping jacks as he recites complicated equations, and finally enters the hall.

Scene Two

Four hours later. Eli emerges from the hall, looking exhausted and heads to his family’s house. When he arrives, he walks in and hears his father.

Richard: And I told him, if you’re not in this family as much as everyone else is, you have no place here. Because that’s what my company is, a family. It’s true.

Richard notices Eli
Richard: Ah, Eli my son, come join us. *(He continues).* This is my son, Eli. He, in fact, just took his last exam of his whole college career.

*Eli walks up to a table full of men in business suits. He spots his sister Rachel and mother, Joanne. He notices their apologetic eyes and turns to his father, who is sitting at the head of the table.*

Eli: What is all of this, dad? Rach? Mom?

Richard: Oh son. We’re simply celebrating the success of the St. Claire men. Just sit down, son, you look drained.

Eli: That’s because I just spent four hours taking an exam that decides how well I did the last four years of my life.

Richard: Well that’s exactly what we are going to talk about. Eli, as you know, you come from years of hard work that has amounted to all we’re surrounded by today. So I’ve asked my colleagues to join me as I open up a brand new statistic branch for you to run, Eli.

Rachel: Oh, lord. Here we go.

*Awkward silence fills the room*

Eli: Well dad, as much as I am honored for the opportunity, I am going to have to reject your kind offer.

Richard: Well son, to be blunt with you, I’m not technically offering. I already have the blueprints drawn up. You start in September, aren’t you happy?

Eli: No dad, I’m not. I am not happy that I’m sitting here, on the cusp of graduating college, starting my life and accomplishing all that I have worked so far and your still trying to shove your dreams down my throat. I don’t want to be given a path to follow, I want to pave my own. So I don’t care if you’re offering or telling or giving me a choice or a contract or whatever. I’m not gonna follow your footsteps. Not right now. Not when I’m supposed to be making my own mistakes and learning how to deal with them. I’m sorry that I’m not sorry dad, but this is my life.

*Richard uncomfortably tries to deal with this news, knowing that he is surrounded by friends and family. After a few moments of silence, he continues.*

Richard: Joanne, look at what a man our son has become. Eli, I could not be more proud of you at this very moment. The hardest job as a parent is wondering if you did a good job preparing your kid for all that life can throw at them. You, son, just proved to me that you got what it takes. I was gonna save
this until after dinner but, you know what? Come with me. (to colleagues) Gentlemen, please excuse my family and I, we need to show our boy a little something.

**Scene Three**
*The St. Claire Family gets up and follows Richard to the garage. Upon opening it, Eli sees a brand new Lexus.*

Eli: Holy shhhh. Eh, I mean, Dad!? What? What is this for?

Richard: Well, I guess just for doing things right, Eli. It’s just for doing things right.

Richard wipes a tear out of his eye and wraps his family in one big hug. After a minute or so, the family hears a faint roar of voices. It gets louder as the family tries to find the source. Finally, a loud roar of paparazzi show up and swarm Richard, asking endless questions.

Rachel: Sorry, bro, your moment has been stolen.

Eli: It’s okay, I have an idea.

*Eli hops into his new car and backs up to break up the mob of flashing cameras.*

Eli: Dad! Get in!

*Richard gets in the car and the boys drive off, heading towards the bright lights of the city*

**The End.**