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Futile Attempts

Melissa Graveson

I don't know why I remember waking up one morning, and getting ready to go to the mall when I was five years old. The morning started just as so many others had. I crawled out of my bed, reluctant to leave the warmth, and comfort, it provided. Soon after I made it over to the dresser, where I found an outfit to wear. The shirt and pants I put on were indicative of a child's wardrobe. These items were not unique, or original, by any means. Having put on traditional children's clothes I then moved onto adorning myself with an item much more appealing to my young self. It was not another article of clothing, such as a sweater, or bracelet, but rather a costume, a lion one, to be specific. I wore my coveted lion costume above, cheap, and made of low quality fabric, this costume, complete with tail, and mane head piece, was by far my most prized possession, and thus what I wore most often.

Having finished getting dressed I walked with my twin sister downstairs to the kitchen, where we would have breakfast prior to our outing. Once breakfast was ended our mother walked us out to the car and handed us our little blue coin purses, the ones that had the little circle clasps I fumbled, and struggled, to open on this day. I tried once to open the purse on the ride to the mall, and stopped after having failed on my first attempt. This first, attempt marked the beginning of the war I was to wage against the purse, while in the mall. This failure, although one that deterred me from trying to open the purse again during the car ride, made me determined to open that purse, without help, on this trip. I made up my mind to succeed on this outing knowing full well that I had met success on previous occasions.

Having completed the drive to the mall, the car was parked, and we walked towards the entrance. At this moment I clutched my coin purse in my little hands, and I was ready to enter round two of my battle, with this inanimate enemy. The battle plan was clear, I would grasp the clasps, and push them against one another, thus achieving success, and accessing my riches. My second attempt was completed at the entrance of the mall. It was unfocused, for I had kept up with my mother, and sister, only devoting a fraction of my attention to the purse. This endeavor ended in failure, and made me realize that this task would require all of my focus. Round two had been completed and my confidence in the mission was beginning to dwindle. I was losing faith, and beginning to question if I would meet success on this day.

The score was 2-0 in favor of the purse at this point, and I needed a break from the fight. I strode through the mall, keeping pace with my mom, and sister, holding the little-blue-coin purse, but not attempting to open it. I was not ready to try again and risk failure just yet, I

needed to rest first. I continued through the mall like this for quite a while, or so it seemed at my young age. I was still intent on completing my mission, and decided I would try one last time. For the last battle I decided to give the purse my full attention. I was going to focus as I had not done for the previous attempts. I went into the final round hoping that this would be different, and that the results would be those of success.

When we began to approach the escalator in the mall I had already begun to slow my pace, having gathered the strength to enter the last, and final round in this war. I was entering with a score of 2-0, which reflects my previous failed attempts, but I was not deterred. Once at the base of the escalator I had stopped completely, and begun endeavoring to open the purse for the last, and final time this outing. I ceased walking onto the escalator, deciding that I could not afford to lose any focus by continuing. Stationary, I held the circle clasps in my hands, and tried as hard as I could, to apply my battle plans to this moment, and slide the clasps against each other, thus opening the purse. I struggled against the purse for what seemed an eternity, eventually realizing that the war had been lost, and the final tally was 3-0 in favor of the coin purse.

I had realized that this was not the day I would find success, but one that I would require assistance from my mom. Right as I was readying myself to accept defeat, and ask for some, much needed, assistance a thought came rushing through my head, in the form of a question. Why is it that on some days I have accessed my coins with ease, having been able to win my fight with the purse, but on others I struggled fruitlessly, and was left with no hope of success? By the time I completed thinking of this question I had already begun to ask for help, feeling frustrated that this was not the day I was going to succeed. I had also begun to hope that the next time I wanted, to sneak a peak, into my coin purse I would accomplish the task with ease.