

“Khari, focus...” She gripes in a mildly annoying, yet, loving fashion. She is Loleena. I might consider her my better half, and she presumably considers me hers. Without her inside jokes, undying love of my quirky independence, and her devotion to finding good in mankind, I am certain I would have turned into a more cynical eighteen-year-old. No doubt, I wouldn’t have passed English class, either.

“Lo, I am focusing, on the road!”

“You nut, I meant on the vocab.” It’s 5:15 and traffic is at a California stand still. Not to mention it’s almost 95 degrees, and we are both nauseous from the foul smelling smog that chokes our throats.

“What was the word again? You know I’m Dyslexic.”

Our windows are rolled down and we sing to the lyrics of *Amazed*, our favorite, familiar country song. “Kar, people are going to start feeling sorry for you, don’t say that stuff in public.” She is always trying to stop me from making a fool of myself, I’m known to speak my mind all too often. Normally, her elbow shoves into my ribs if she thinks I’m making a social faux paux by blurting out. Fortunately, for my sake, I’m driving and her arms can’t reach me.

“P-A-R-S-A-N-O-M...E-O-U-S” I raise the tone of my voice at the end of the word, which indicates to Loleena that I haven’t a clue how it is spelled. Since that unsatiated thirty minutes before third grade lunch, when kids took their Friday afternoon spelling tests, I have only aced about five percent of my vocabulary exams.

“What are you trying to spell! That didn’t even make sense.”

“P-A-R-S-A-M-O-N-E-O-U-S...having to do with a golf swing?” I developed this habit of making pictures in my head that sound like vocabulary words. Then I try to relate them to far reaching definitions. Some times it works, and I stick to anything that works.

A snicker and a sigh eke from the right side of “Smokey.” My own creativity came up with that name, when the car exhausted a thick haze, one night on the way for pizza. I’m a free spirit when it comes to creativity; give me a hot glue gun and a box of junk, and I’ll make you a birthday present. “Khari your mind wonders so much, I’m surprised you even know where you are going.”

I immediately reply, “What do you mean where are we going? To the prom dress place.” Instead of being normal and getting a dress at any one of our local malls, I decide to rent a black designer in Santa Monica and my appointment is in fifteen minutes. Being on time isn’t relative to my time. It’s a fallacy, along with my poor grasp of the English language.

“Kar, it’s hot, you are useless, and parsimonious isn’t even a hard one on this list.” Loleena is the English queen. I envy her for her great capabilities, but most of all, I appreciate the way she encourages my talents and accepts my literary imperfections.

“Ok, hold the wheel. I’ll write it out.” I scribble the letters on the back of a crumpled Arron Brothers’ receipt. B-a-r-s-i-m-o-n-i-o-u-s. Honk, Honk! “And it’s a...golf...small golf...cheap golf...oh, oh,...frugal!”

“P not B, oh geez! Only 29 left to go,” and the saga continues. I manage to miss only five on this test after an hour and fifteen minutes in traffic and rewriting the words numerous times. Dealing with Dyslexia growing up makes life wildly “entertaining.” Vocabulary hasn’t been my only struggle. As many times as I rewrite an essay, the

subject still comes after the verb. Overcoming these learning disabilities has shaped the person I am, humble and hardworking and humored by my faultily wired brain.

In retrospect, I have amazed myself with my coping techniques. I am by no means a literary genius. But, because of these hardships, I found my talents at an early age. The little kid, who always put her shoe on the wrong left foot while stumbling to learn to read and spell, has turned into a creator who displays originality. I can see the world through portraiture and beautifying dilapidated junk. Best of all, I am willing to stand up and speak my mind, for these require no writing of p's, d's and b's.