"A Cycle That Yearns to be Broken”

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*700 Words*

## All my life, I’ve been told that crying does not solve your problems. Well, part of it is a lie. We shed tears to calm down, we cry to expel the pain. It’s normal to cry. You should cry if you feel like it. If there’s burden roaming in your chest, it’s okay to talk. If nobody listens, then who’s stopping you from speaking? Nobody, as well. Expressing your sorrow is normal; you shouldn’t hold it in. Through words, you can talk. Through tears, you can cry. Nobody will stop you. But what if someone does?

## My mother told me that I shouldn’t cry. It’s for the weak to do. She asked, “Does crying solve your problems?” I answered, “No.” Because that’s what she wanted to hear. Though by that time, I was already sinking in a pool of tears. For her own reasons, she taught me not to cry, at least not in front of her. I’ve read through her preferences, her actions, and wants. I’ve adapted into living the daughter I ought to be in her eyes. In front of her, I am strong, a good example for my younger siblings. The perfect daughter. Though something felt clearly wrong… It was unfair, and unfair to my disadvantage.

## I don’t talk about it since it makes me sound like a child in need of attention. A greedy daughter, and a jealous sister. But she treats me unequally. She loves her children, including me. But there’s this feeling that’s weighing my heart. She whispered tenderly, “I’m sorry…” her voice trailed off, to enter my younger brother’s ears as he bawled and yelled at her. She was superior to him; she was superior to all of us. Yet she lowered her head that I’d once looked up to.

## Sure, I get it, he’s a toddler. But it didn’t stop me from scolding him when he’d made a mistake. Because that’s what I’ve learned, from the mother ‘I knew’. That’s what I’ve observed from all the years I grew with her. She yells when she’s displeased. And when she asks me why I’m not speaking, it’s because she once told me, “Oh, so you’re talking back to me now?” that sentence was added to the list of what I’ve learned from her. So, I hope she knows that when I grow silent, it’s because my opinions are not worth sharing, especially to her. Her ears are too noble for my pathetic words. I could only steal glances when she spoke softly with my siblings, “Am I not enough? Did I not deserve her gentle touch to brush against the tears that trickled down my face?” My mind goes blank when I can’t process the information being the visible difference of her treatment between me, who is her only daughter, and my younger brothers.

## Can they really blame me? For not being used to these things? When I went up and asked her, “Why now? Making me go through all that, for you to change ‘now’?!” She told me ‘She changed’. She was not the person, the ‘mother’ she was before, and that she would slowly make up for the lies and the ache she fed me with. But there’s this question that my heart craved to be answered, “Was I not worth changing for?”

## Her desires were nothing close to longing. Deep inside, I knew that it was not only yearning, but it was also fear. Tears were her weakness. When we cried, her heart is torn into shreds leading her into questioning herself, “I’ve failed as a mother, haven’t I?” Often, I’d see her face turning red, holding back her tears. In fact, she was in no place to tell me not to cry. This fear that she has is normal for a mother. Normal for a woman, who once a child. I grew to be silent and observant, and I know that everything is a cycle. Though this is when I’d step in. I will overcome this conflict, by breaking this repeating cycle. Through tears, through talking, and listening, and not stopping my toddler from throwing these tantrums without also making my older children feel like they’re being treated unequally.