

## Blending in

2013 Strike writers contest

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Elaine bounded into school at the last minute, the tardy bell bellowing behind her. It was the first day of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, new experiences, new classes, and new friends. Not only that but a new school.

She slumped into the classroom, and stopped in the doorway to see many icy cold eyes staring directly at her.

“Is this room 412?” Her voice cracked as she timidly whispered.

“Yes, take a seat wherever you want.” The teacher kindly gestured to the rows of desks and chairs. “By the way I’m Mrs. Foster. I will be your Social studies teacher for this year.”

“Thank you.” Elaine responded.

Elaine walked down a row, and chose a seat next to a girl, with soft, shimmering brown hair. The girl instantly looked at her with an angered expression.

“This seat is taken.” The girl laughed pushing Elaine away.

“By who?” Elaine questioned.

“You can’t sit there, go somewhere else.”

Elaine frowned, and dragged herself to the back of the room, and chose a seat in the corner. She could barely see the white board, as she unpacked her backpack. She watched as more and more students piled in, one by one.

Suddenly, one girl walked in, her friend trailing closely behind. As they entered the room, they stared at Elaine.

“Who’s that?” One pointed.

“I don’t know, some Loser perhaps.” The other one whispered back

They both laughed as they took their seats. Suddenly the teacher stepped into the front of the room.

“Hello students. I am Mrs. Foster. I will be your Social Studies teacher for the year...” The teacher rambled on about rules and regulations until the dismiss bell rang.

Everyone ran out the door. Elaine was the last one out of the class room. She tiredly limped through the crowded hallways, getting knocked into and thrown about as if nobody ever acknowledged she was there.

The same thing happened every day, every week, and every month. She was too afraid to tell anyone, to let out, to be different, to show who she was. She only got acknowledged when she messed up. Everyone would laugh and uproar. Nobody saw, nobody cared, nobody knew. She blended into the background as if she was only air. She started to lose herself esteem, she became embarrassed in her own self. She was too afraid to just... try. She became afraid of embarrassing her own self.

For her everyday dragged on, 8 hours seemed to her like 8 years. Trapped inside the school walls, day after day with only temporary breaks. In her old school she had many friends, back then she was the one laughing at the newbie, and now it is the complete opposite. It was a life she never thought would happen.

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It was a drizzly, cold winter morning; a thin white blanket of snow covered the ground. Elaine started off the day, like every other day. She walked wearily into room 412, and trailed off to the back corner. But something happened. A sad face appeared in the door way; a sad new face, she had never seen.

“Is this room 412?” her small voice whispered, like a cry of help.

“Are you the new student?” Mrs. Foster asked.

Everyone stared with their icy cold eyes at the girl. She just tentatively nodded.

“Welcome to Social Studies. I am Mrs. Foster. Please will you take a seat next to Elaine?” Mrs. Foster pointed out to me.

The girl followed in the teachers pointing direction, as a storm of whispers erupted.

“Everyone be quiet! This is our new student, Addison Cambridge. We as a class would like to welcome you to our Social studies class.”

Elaine looked out at everyone to see, a taunting look. Everyone stared unmercifully at Addison, as if she was from another planet. Mrs. Foster must have seen it, as for she tried to turn the subject to school work.

“Hi, I’m Addison Cambridge.” The girl turned shyly around to face Elaine.

“I’m Elaine Sanders. Welcome to our school.”

Those few simple words soon bonded in a friendship. No longer was Elaine the one blending in. No longer did she feel those hidden pains. She now had... a friend.