

Humiliating Day

“OH PLEASE DON'T BE ME, PLEASE DON'T BE ME!!!” I was saying to myself. “Ani” she called out, “Come up to the board.” I felt my heart drop to and my cheeks turn red. “NOOO”

I was eight years old. It was 3rd grade in Berat Albania in 2008, and the 2nd day of English class. It wasn't a class where you would learn about literature and read books. It was a class where you would learn to speak the English language. Facing in front of me stood my English teacher. She was blond, skinny, tall, and in her 20's. To the right of me was a big classroom of 25 people and they were all staring at me. With an upset look on her face she asked me

“Pse je vone dhe pa uniformen” (Why are you late and without your uniform?)

“Sepse po bie shi perjashta” (Because it's raining outside.)

“Edhe cha pastaj, ata nuk jan vone.” (So what, they're not late.), she says pointing at the rest of the class. “Ata jan ne koh” (They're on time.)

“Me fal” (I'm sorry.)

As I looked down at the floor feeling sad I felt her pen smacking the top of my head.

“Kjo nuk lejohet” (This is unacceptable.), she said, “Shko mbrapa classes dhe ri tek cepi” (Go in the back and stand in the corner for the rest of class.)

As I walked embarrassed to the back I heard her tell the class “ Mendon nga qe po iken ne Americ, mund te bej cfar te doj.” (Thinks he can do whatever he wants cause he's moving to America.)

“ Nuk eshte e vertet ”(That’s not true.)

“ Qepe gojen dhe vashdo “ (Keep your mouth shut and keep moving)

Later in the class the teacher started to call out students to write draw and write the name of shapes in English. I knew some shapes but not all so I was hoping I wouldn’t get picked. I felt my heart drop and my cheeks turn red as she said “Ani... ajde visato dhe skruaj rrethin ne Anglisht tek drasa.” (Ani.. Come draw and write the circle on the board in English)

“MOS” (Oh no!), I said to myself. “Un sedih cfare eshte rrethi ne Anglisht” (I don’t know what a circle is in English.)

I went up to the board barely moving my body and grabbed the chalk and drew a circle. Not knowing what to write below it I took a guess. Lookin at what I wrote the teacher said “ Aje serioshizht? Ti shkruaj katror, Square esthe katror jo reth o budalla.” (Are you serious? You wrote square. Square is a square not a circle you idiot.) I was so uncomfortable not just by this, but by the sound of laughter coming from the class. She then said something that I remember clearly to this day “ Wow, dhe ti do ikesh ne Amerik.”(Wow, and you’re moving to America.) With a tear rolling down my eye I walked back to the back of the class.

This was one of the most humiliating moments in my life, and something I do not enjoy remembering. It still brings feelings of uncomfortableness and embarrassment when I think about it. I am a shy and awkward person. I don’t like going and saying hi to people. I don’t raise my hand to answer questions, even when I know the answer. I don’t feel comfortable to answer questions starting with “What’s your favorite....?” I

don't feel comfortable asking people questions I try to avoid people I know in public. I try my best to avoid talking to people on the phone, and I hate giving presentations. I am getting better at these things and I'm happy for it. However, looking back I can't help but feel that this scene is the reason why.