

# Celebrating Writers and Writing in our Communities

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# The Downfall

**By: Skye Mars**

I always knew I wasn't my parents' idea of "normal". I was born Paige Nelson on November 20, 2000 at 12am in Portland Oregon. On my 12<sup>th</sup> birthday my mom finally let me cut my hair short; she always told me that if I cut my hair I would look like a boy. She was right, but what she didn't know is that's what I wanted. We walked into the salon and my mom told the lady what I wanted. The lady took me to a sink rinsed my hair, at me down in a chair then started cutting. An hour later she was finally done. I got up and looked in the mirror and all of a sudden I felt all the weight lifted off my shoulders, and I felt like I could finally breathe. We went home and I couldn't stop smiling. I felt so happy. For the first time I felt like me. I started wearing boys clothes and my mom started noticing. She sat me down one day and she looked into my eyes and started off by saying:

"It's not normal for a girl to wear boys clothes...I'm worried about you."

"I feel comfortable when I wear boy clothes," I replied.

"Are you okay?" she said.

"I don't know," I said.

I got up and left. I didn't go home that night. I just wanted to be alone...The next morning my back hurt from sleeping on the park bench. I got up slowly and started to walk home. I finally got there after an hour of walking. I walked into my mom's room and looked at her.

“I’m sorry for leaving.”

She said nothing, so I went to my room and fell asleep right away. When I got up my mom was sitting in my room waiting for me to wake up to talk to me. I sat up in my bed and looked at her.

“Mom...”

“You shouldn’t have left like that,” she replied.

“I know I’m sorry, but I have to tell you something...”

“What is it?”

“I think that I was born in the wrong body...” I told her

“What do you mean?” she replied

“I was meant to be a boy not a girl...”

“You can’t just say you’re a boy and that’s that; you were born a girl and you have to stay a girl. It’s wrong to change your gender. You should love yourself the way you are.”

“That’s the problem, Mom, how am I supposed to love myself when I feel like I’m trapped in my own body?”

“Fine, do what you want, but you’re not doing it in this house. If you’re gonna be an idiot and pretend to be something you’re not I will not support you and you may not live under my roof.”

“Fine then I guess I’m leaving”

I got up and went to my room and started packing my clothes and the things I cared about. I couldn’t believe that my own mother would kick me out of the house just because I wanted to be myself. I felt betrayed and hurt, and I just

wanted to curl up in a ball and forget this ever happened but I couldn't just forget how she treated me. She is supposed to take care of me and make sure I'm okay, but she did the opposite. She threw me out and forgot about me just because I wanted to be myself. I had nowhere to go and no one to turn to.

I left the house as soon as I finished packing my clothes. I walked for what felt like hours. I didn't know where to go or what to do, I couldn't stop crying. It started to get dark and I knew I had to find somewhere to rest. My back hurt so much from carrying my stuff that I could feel it in my feet. I sat down on the ground, looked up at the sky and I could feel myself letting go of the little bit of my sanity that I was hanging on to, all I could think about was my mom and how much I missed her and wished she would accept me but I knew it would never happen, all I could do is hope. I got up and started walking to my best friend Jordan's house. I planned on telling her that I was a boy but I didn't know how she would react so I was scared. As I got closer I couldn't stop thinking about all of the things she would or could say. I got there after a long time of walking and thinking, as I walked up to the door I felt sick to my stomach. I walked up to the door and banged on the door, I heard small footsteps walking up to the door. The door flung open and I looked down to see her 6-year-old little sister Maya. She looked up at me with her big blue eyes and invited me in. I walked in the house and sat in the living room and waiting for Maya to get Jordan from upstairs. As I waited I felt my stomach churn. I heard footsteps walk down the stairs and I got up, ran to the bathroom and threw up. Jordan walked up behind me and asked if I was okay. I got up from the ground looked at her in the eyes and said:

“I’m a boy”

“I know, I always have.”

She gave me a big hug and I felt so much relief and for once in my life I really felt safe. I didn’t want to ask her if I could stay with her but I had nowhere else to go.

“I told my mom and she told me that I was being an idiot and kicked me out”

“I’m so sorry. Do you have anywhere to go?” she replied

“That’s what I wanted to ask you....” I told her

“You can stay here for a while as long as it’s okay with my mom” she said.

She walked into her mom’s room and talked for what seemed like hours. Finally I heard her walk into the room. She looked at me and said:

“You can’t stay here”

“Why?” I said

“My mom says that she agrees with your mom and that you are a girl and will always be one. She won’t let you stay here. I’m sorry.” She said.

I looked at her and started crying. I felt like I couldn’t breathe. I didn’t feel safe anymore. I got up off the couch and ran out the door. I walked around town feeling hopeless. I walked by a gas station and on one of the posters on the window was talking about bus tickets and I got an idea. I ran to the nearest bus station and bought a ticket to Santa Cruz. I slept at the bus station and the next morning I woke up and got on the bus. I felt horrible from sleeping on the ground

and I hadn't eaten anything for 2 days. I sat down in the very back of the bus and fell asleep. When I woke up the bus had stopped. I sat up in my seat and looked out the window to see a beach and people everywhere. I got off the bus and started walking, I didn't know where I was going but I just kept walking. I didn't know what to do with my life. I couldn't stop thinking about my mom and Jordan, but I had to put them out of my mind, I had to start a new life. I was 13 and living on the streets of Santa Cruz. I didn't know what to do. I had no one. Nothing but my clothes. I was alone.

*This story is based on the reality that a lot of transgender youths go through. I personally identify as non-binary but I am lucky enough to have a family that supports me.*