

## “DEFYING GRAVITY” Essay Contest Finalist

### “A Chance to Fly”

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Cooley Ranch Elementary - Colton, CA**

I stepped out of my mom’s Chevy, my hands shaking nervously. I grasped my shoulder bag and hung it on my shoulder. I also grabbed my lunch pail before that. “Bye!” my mom cried. I watched as she drove away.

This was my first day at a new school. I’ll never forget all the hugging I received when my family and I left Miami, Florida. Yep, I used to live in Florida. That is until my Dad wanted to live in one of San Francisco’s nice, decorative houses. Our house back in Miami was old and falling apart.

Anyways, I walked slowly and meekly to the school entrance. As I set foot in the cafeteria a young girl my age jumped in front of me. She had piercing emerald eyes and dark brown hair.

“Hi! My name is Chloe Rodriguez. Welcome to San Francisco Bay Elementary. You’re the new kid aren’t you?” she greeted.

“I’m Elizabeth Alexandra Carter, but everybody calls me Liz. Yes, I’m new,” I replied.

“Wow, big name,” Chloe said, impressed.

“Yeah. Do you think you can-“ I began. At that a tall blonde-haired girl walked up to us.

“Oh, a newbie. Wow, your puny. You’re Liz, aren’t you?” Say Liz, when will you be going to your Kindergarten class?” she sneered.

Then she knocked my lunch pail and shoulder bag off my shoulder, kicked me, and walked away dramatically.

“That’s Amelia, the school bully. You’ll have to watch out for her,” Chloe explained.

“Yeah, I will,” I answered. But inside I desperately wanted to follow in Amelia’s footsteps, for a bully was usually popular around the cool kids.

As if reading my mind, Chloe said, “You better not get any ideas.”

The last bell rang and I grabbed my lunch pail and shoulder bag. Chloe walked up to me as I made my way outside. “See you tomorrow,” she said. Then she skipped to a blonde woman with icy blue eyes.

I waved and as I stepped forward, I bumped into Amelia.

“Watch out!” I snapped.

She put her hand on her chin saying, “I know you want to be popular. Why don’t you join me?” We’ll bully helpless kids. You’ll become popular around the cool kids.”

I only listened to the popular sections. “Okay,” I agreed.

“Then c’mon!” There’s this little girl in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, which looks fun to bully. She’s over there, let’s jump her!” Amelia cried.

I gasped. My blood turned to ice. But if it was to become popular, then I’ll do it.

I nodded and we followed the girl quietly as she walked home. When she was alone, tying her shoe, we slipped into a nearby bush. When the girl got up we jumped out. Amelia tripped and kicked her.

Laughing, I grabbed her backpack and dumped everything out. Then I slapped her face.

This went on for a minute when she began to cry.

“Baby,” scoffed Amelia. She walked away. “C’mon Liz.”

*I stared at the girl on the floor, sympathy in my eyes. But then I followed Amelia.*

The bullying went on for the rest of the week. But on Friday, it happened.

I hadn’t seen Chloe since I joined Amelia, but when I was making fun of that girl with Amelia, Chloe appeared.

“Liz!” Is this how desperate you are for popularity? I thought you were better than that!” she gasped. Chloe stomped away.

“Aah, don’t listen to her. You have me,” Amelia assured.

*“No, I don’t have you! You just want me to scare that innocent girl. Well, guess what? I’m leaving!” I spat. I stomped to the girl. “I’m sorry. I never knew that bullying someone would hurt you so much,” I said. “Please forgive me.”* Amelia groaned and then walked away.

“Of course I do. I know how desperate you are because I did that at my old school. But that’s the past. Oh! I’m Camille, you’re Liz?” she said.

“Yes,” I told my new friend. Just as I said that, Chloe walked up to me.

“I saw the whole thing. I’m proud of you,” she praised.

“Thank you,” I beamed.

I spent the rest of the day with my new friends. When I got home, my mom asked me, “Did you make any friends?”

“I sure did, Mom. I sure did.” I said.

I’ve learned a lesson that week. *Everyone deserves a chance to fly. Not only did I, but Camille did too. Bullying only leads to, well, nothing!*

