

28th January, 2009

MARK STOLE MY RIBBON

DEAR DIARY, an unusual event has stayed with me since I was about five. It was when Mark stole my ribbon. He stole my white and blue ribbon; snatched it from my hair! I was running in the school playground when this weird transgression happened and it just didn't make sense to me. One pull and it was gone. In a split second I thought what does a boy want with my ribbon? Why would a strange boy who I don't know from Adam come so close to me and put his grubby hands in the hair my mum plaited this morning? This was my first encounter with blatant theft – yes I was robbed and I was only five!



To this day, I remember the incident like it happened yesterday. Mark's behaviour affected me back then because I felt violated but wasn't familiar with the term or feeling of VIOLATION.

I remember giving chase and I had no doubt that I would have been able to out-run him but Mark ran into the boys toilets. I stopped at the entrance when I reached the sign and stench of boys' toilets.

I hung around for a little while. There was only one way for him to get out and I was standing at it, but I started to feel self-conscious, waiting all alone outside the boys' toilets so I walked away.

But there was no doubt in my mind that I would get my ribbon back. I was certain, if a teacher didn't retrieve it, the boy would find he had no use for it and return it. But I never saw it again.

Nobody came to my rescue; after all, it was just a ribbon. A piece of material but I didn't see it that way. That ribbon meant far more to me than a piece of material. I felt an emotional attachment to it; it was mine, my mum put it there, it was something from home.

My mum told me not to worry about it. It was just a ribbon and we had loads of ribbons. But my child's mind wouldn't rest and couldn't understand the event and I was unable to find a way to make myself feel better or forget about it. At five, I wasn't quite equipped

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with the “let it go” theory. I didn’t know how to put the event away and move on – as you can see.

If I ever had to go for counselling sessions, the event of the ribbon would definitely come up because even now I want to track Mark down and ask him why?

To this day, I always feel a heightened sense of rage when something’s taken away from me. Regardless of how small or its significance or insignificance to my life; when something is taken away from me, I’m beside myself with pure, undiluted – and nearly always misplaced – **rage!**

Chances are Mark has no recollection of the event whatsoever. I doubt he would be able to remember my name, the incident, the colour of the ribbon or anything to do with it.

August Mayfield