

Towards the end of eighth grade, I fell into a slump. My mood dropped into a bottomless pit, almost taking me with it. My two best friends had most of their classes with each other, and I was beginning to feel like they were replacing me. The ledge that kept me from falling into the abyss of hopelessness were these two girls, but I could feel both friendships deteriorating like the ledge crumbling beneath me, my back pressed flush against the cliff, arms splayed out like a starfish, clawing at the air, trying to find something to hold on to. Perhaps I was reaching out for my best friends, but I didn't realize that they were already gone, and soon I would be too, finally seized by the chasm of anguish and desperation I had tried so hard not to fall into.

One day at recess, my two best friends walked off without me, not noticing I was not with them. I sat on a bench, sulking and betrayed. I watched as they walked to the far end of the field, becoming little specks in the distance, yet I could still see them in my mind's eye, laughing and talking as if I had never existed. Jealousy and indignation unfurled in my stomach, twisting and entwining with each other like weeds competing for sunlight. They crawled their way up my throat, squeezing my vocal chords and cutting off my ability to speak, so I sat there, silently fighting with the feelings I tried so hard to suppress.

When the traitorous pair came back, I was standoffish when they tried to talk to me. Both knew that I was angry, and both had the same tactics to approach me, ones that they had been using since our first arguments back in elementary school.

They were overenthusiastic, acting like nothing was wrong and probing me about inane things like what I had for lunch or if I 'was ready' for chorus next period, trying desperately to grasp at the part of me that was no longer there. They had broken my trust, and it was as wonderous but horrifying as watching a flame swallow a house whole. Mistrust is like that. It starts out as a tiny spark, so miniscule that you don't even see it until it burns a fiery path through your mind. A wall of doubt and wariness builds, crawling up the front of the brain like fire licking at the side of an ill-fated building.

Every time I got mad at them, they didn't know what the reason was. It was clear obliviousness, no care for how I felt until it affected them, until they had no one to look to for answers in history or science. When confronted, both would be diligent about not making the mistake again for about all of two days, until they figured I wasn't mad anymore and went back to being ignorant and exploitative. My friends' newfound efforts during those two days were the

water hoses to my fire engulfed mind, and niceties and benevolence tore down my barrier of mistrust. They are both alike in that way, and I guess it was that day where I realized that.

Today, I am still close friends with both of them, but things have changed. I promised myself to never let them in as far as I had again, because they would storm into my life, ruining everything I had built, a human whacking down a spider's newly made cobweb with a broom, its bristles already covered in thin layers of other destroyed webs.

I learned to make my own hand and footholds on the edge of the cliff I had been stranded on less than a year before, no longer relying on anyone to help anymore. I clawed my way out; it wasn't pretty or fun, but I did it, and now I am laying on the ground, not able to move just yet but not desperately trying to survive anymore.

I was so attached to the idea of BFFs. That day, sitting on the bench, feeling like a bucket of ice-cold water had been poured on me despite the sun beating down on my slouched back in blinding rays, watching my two best friends become best friends to each other, I realized there is no such thing as best friends forever. Everything must come to an end, including friendships, even the best of them. I suppose I don't have a most memorable day, and that day was probably not the most memorable or significant of my life, but I believe the epiphany I had in that moment will last forever.