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Flower Bomb

Aja McCoy

Xavier University of Louisiana, pathways@xula.edu

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Flower Bomb

Perseverance to me is the ability to overcome an obstacle that one may have in one's life. I've been through a lot of obstacles my entire life, even as a child. Growing up in Saint Louis City is not easy. There was gun violence and fights on every corner, and in the year of 2005 I experienced it first-hand. It was the day of the Mayday Parade, a parade for the black folks, as some like to call it. My family house was right around the corner from the parade, so after the parade everyone went there. The Parade was held in the hood where we grew up. My dad used to be a drug dealer and very heavy in the streets, so every time we went down there he would have long conversations and catch up on the drama in the neighborhood, such as baby-mama drama, who got shot, and who was in jail. You know, the usual things people talk about.

Since my mom chose to do drugs she wasn't capable of taking care of us, so my dad was all we had and he knew that we needed him more than anything. He dropped all his bad habits. He said we changed his life but I say he changed ours. On the day of the parade, my big cousin Johnnie was going to the store with his best friend, a friend who is close to the family. My sister and I wanted to ride with my cousin, but we couldn't because my dad said we were leaving soon. They drove off. One minute later, we heard gunshots. Thirty seconds later, we saw the car that my cousin was in coming back. Five seconds later, I saw my dad running to the car. I was lost for words. One sec later, my dad drove off and took my cousin to the hospital. One day later, my dad was arrested for the murder of my cousin. It took a year for my father's lawyers to prove that he wasn't guilty. In that one year, I changed. My family started being mean to us. They wanted to control us. They forced us to go over to relatives' homes that my father wouldn't want us to go to, getting painful whooping from family members who didn't dare touch us when my father was

here. Certain family members were always jealous of us because of the love our father had for us, so when he was incarcerated for the murder of my cousin they did everything in their power to torture us. This was the hardest time in my life.

Through the process of the trial I began to keep myself occupied by listening to the witness statements and watching the lawyer in action. My dad's lawyer was just pitiful. It took a year for my dad to get out of jail for a crime he didn't commit. I was there when it happened, so it was even more aggravating to me to see my dad still in prison and the lawyer not doing his job. I figured I could be a better attorney than that guy. That's when I begin to have a passion for law. I began looking at law schools, law-related high schools, and watching *Law and Order*. That pretty much kept me going through high school.

Senior year, every one called me Miss Northwest, since I was so involved in our school, Northwest Academy of Law. Over four years, I had grown so much. I was captain of the debate team. I was on the Cheerleading team, Mock Trial team, President of the National Honor Society and President of the student body. I interned at two different law firms and went to nationals three times for debate! Everything was truly a blessing. As I walked across the stage tears were just flowing. I loved my high school so much. The tender love and care that they poured out into each and every one of us made me who I am today. To have the support and the love from so many teachers and staff was just amazing. At first I believed that my dad being taken away from me was the worst thing that could of ever happened to me. Now I see that it helped me become the person I was destined to be.