

It was another regular weekend. Well, let me rephrase that, it was another regular weekend until Saturday at 8:30 p.m. It was spring, so it was cold enough to wear a jacket, but just warm enough to make the little flower buds ready to bloom. It was a Friday. I, Zoey, was at my favorite place in New York City. It is a little coffee shop right square on the corner of 5th Avenue. I loved how small and cute it was, and I went there so much that all the workers knew my name. It was the only place where I didn't feel like a baby; it was ten blocks away from my mom's little apartment. There, I met with my best friends, Audrey and Emily; the only friends that made me feel safe they comfort me in every way and when I'm upset they make me laugh and smile. What I loved about them was that they each had a different personality. They were complete opposites of each other Audrey is shy and Emily not at all but they are still friends.

"Have you heard there is a huge spring festival tonight? Audrey and I are going, so you should see if you could come," Emily asked.

"I'll try," I said with a sigh.

"Good luck with that," said Audrey with some sadness.

I made my way up to the little counter to get a free refill because my little cup of hot chocolate was gone. Amy, one of the people working there, took my cup and filled it.

"Here you go, Zoey," my friend at the counter said. I thanked her and went back to the table.

"I just wish I could go with you. I mean I don't stand a chance against my mom," I explained.

"Yah, it isn't fair that you can't go with us," Emily said.

Emily and Audrey had left the shop, but I stayed and thought about how to explain to Mom about the Springfest. It wasn't Mom's fault that she was so protective. She just wanted me to be safe; it had been so hard for her since Dad died in the car crash. I thought of the great memories when Dad would come home after work and give me a big hug, and Mom would let me stay up late at sleepovers. This had all changed after we got the phone call about Dad and how he did not survived the car crash. It had also been hard to sell our house and move to New York because that was the only place where Mom was

offered a job. But at least at my new private school I met Emily and Audrey. They were my only friends.

I walked down the street and got to my apartment building where Jeff, the doorman, greeted me. I got on the elevator and pressed the same button, floor 12. I stared out the window of the elevator that overlooked the city and watched the waves of people crashing on the crowded sidewalks. Then I walked to my apartment, dug into my bag, pulled out my key, slid the key into the door, and opened it. Mom was on the couch watching TV.

"Hi Zoey, where have you been?" she asked.

I sat next to Mom and told her about meeting up with Emily and Audrey. Mom was wearing her regular clothes. She had on sweat pants and a graphic t-shirt; her dirty blond hair spilled down over her shoulders. She had a tired look on her face. When it was time for dinner, Mom ordered pizza. We sat on the couch and watched TV; every time it was a commercial break, I debated whether to tell her.

"Um Mom," I said finally, "I was wondering well, there is a huge Springfest, and it would be awesome if I could go tomorrow."

"Zoey, do you know how many people are going to be there? The answer is no!

I got off the couch and ran into my room, slamming the door behind me. I threw myself down on my bed. Hot tears streamed down my face, and before I knew it, I was fast asleep.

The next day went by quickly. I did my regular chores until 7:30 p.m., but I was really sad that I hadn't talked to Mom all day. Mom went shopping for food around 7:45 p.m. and I didn't want to stay home alone. I wanted to go the festival. I quickly finished the dishes, and then I picked out a cute t-shirt that Audrey had given to me for my birthday, some jeans, and a pink sweater. I grabbed my bag and texted my friends to say that I would be at the Springfest.

I needed to avoid Jeff at the front desk. He would tell my mom for sure, so I got down on the floor and crawled out the front door of the building. When I walked down the streets, I felt scared because the streets were dark and the buildings towered over me, but I kept on walking to the subway.

The crowd was huge when the subway arrived at the station near the festival. I had no idea how to find my friends. I called Emily and she answered her phone.

"Hi, where are you?" Emily exclaimed.

"I just got off the subway. Where are you?" I asked.

"Well, I'm surrounded by people, so I don't really know," said Emily.

"Well, I will try to find you," I said.

I walked to find them and with every step I became more lost and more scared. I kept walking. I had never been to a big outdoor party. I wished that I had never left home. I knew that I would be in big trouble and that Mom would freak when she figured out that I wasn't home. I did not want to turn back because I was afraid that I would get even more lost. I sat down on a street curb and thought about everything. I wished that I was at home with Mom, sitting on the couch, playing games, and watching our favorite shows.

I loved Mom a lot, and often wished she would let me be a normal teenager and do things that normal teenagers do. But now I was frightened and I wished that I had her with me. I tried to call her, but the battery to my phone was dead.

In the distance I saw a food cart. I walked over to the stand, got some money from my backpack and bought a soft pretzel. I sat against the side of the food stand and ate. I sat here still feeling hopeless, thinking about how Mom would find me. I wanted my mom to find me right away, so I walked to find the subway. I walked through the wild crowd and finally found the subway after 30 minutes. I wanted to start crying, but I kept it in. After waiting a long time, the train came. The train doors opened and a woman got out. I thought it was just another stranger, but when I looked at her face I realized it was my mom! I excitedly hugged her.

"I was so scared. I thought that it would be hard to find you!" my mom exclaimed.

"I'm so sorry, Mom. I didn't think it would be this crowded," I replied.

"It's okay, Zoey. This is part of learning and you deserve opportunities. Sometimes you have to face obstacles, and I was not giving you that chance. I'm sorry," Mom said with a sigh.

Mom and I walked around and had fun. We even found the other girls, and Mom let us hang out for a little bit. Mom let me invite Audrey and Emily over for a sleepover. We took the subway home and Emily and Audrey got their sleeping bags. We all walked to my apartment building.

After this experience, Mom let me try new things. We loved Dad and we would always remember him, but we knew we had to go on with our lives. I figured out the with this new freedom came responsibility.