



KINDERGARTEN

MATT MESNARD DROPOUT

Kindergarten Dropout

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This book is for sale at <http://leanpub.com/Kindergarten>

This version was published on 2013-09-12



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1 Chapter Two.1

Whenever there was a full cleaning of Kadie's room, her mother did not have time to figure out which type of doll was which and what adventure sets or fashion packages were designed for whichever toy line. It was only the hopes of making a grown up's version of order from her daughter's chaos. It was an honest mistake and usually Kadie didn't mind, unless she was having an especially difficult time trying to find a certain shoe or tiny plastic hanger to match a particular set of clothes.

In respect to the fashion dolls, sometimes the outfits would be either way too big and baggy or else so very tiny; which meant one outfit had been put into the wrong drawer of the doll's brand. There were so many different clothing styles and added on wardrobe parts, the only way to find out if something went with the right doll (rather than keeping them where they should separately be stored) would be to put the outfit onto one of the dolls in question and then hope for the best. When things didn't work as hoped it often had comical results, but there was always a risk at tearing or ruining the clothing in the process if the smaller items were forced onto the larger.

Times before, Kadie would ask where specific things were and her mother would say she could give a general idea of where it was but, "...part of my job description is not

memorizing all of the details of all of your things. I am in charge of the household and my daughter. Not the curator of a museum.”

Aside from things being misplaced, there was a much worse downside to the room cleaning routine. The worst of all are when things just vanished with no explanation. This was the ultimate consequence for the path Kadie chose. It was often clothing that was either out of season or became too small on her. Sometimes it would be toys which were broken or not played with. Sometimes things were just outgrown or only a fad. It was rare for Kadie to ask what happened to these things. Not just because of the answer, but it had to be asked a certain way in which not to sound complaining or whiny. Sometimes tone did get her into trouble.

Most of the time these things would not be thought about until weeks after the fact. It was never a favorite or done as a true form of punishment, but at times there were things which may have unintendedly been removed that were not loved, but perhaps heavily liked, by Kadie. There were some occasions she did bring it up right away saying she was looking for whatever toy or piece of clothing, and the item was restored. Timing seemed to be the key. Remembering something not being there a day later is much different than two weeks or even two months for that matter.

Compromises did get made here and there for Kadie’s sake. That is why she knew her mother wasn’t doing these things

to be mean or awful. As Katie remembered it, the word compromise wasn't about one person having ten and one having nothing. It was sort of like sharing but instead of with actual objects it was more with idea or opinions. The compromise in the eyes of Kadie was mostly the deal with clothing. If it was something tattered or torn and then removed from Kadie's room as part of the process of getting a little older or taller, there were times the item was not gone forever.

Though she was nothing near a seamstress, Kadie's mother had a soft spot when it came to many item's of Kadie's wardrobe. Her minimal ability when it came to mending clothing was never an issue when it came to Kadie being happy. It may not get repaired well, but it becomes a little bit more whole nonetheless.

Even if her mother was not sure of her skills, Kadie was lucky to have someone to help repair whatever clothing that was used too roughly on the playground or just crumbled upon excessive uses or washes. The deal was supposed to be for Kadie to come to her mother when she needed something repaired and then it would end up in the 'to do' pile of small tasks needing to be done. There were two problems when it came to such a thing.

Firstly, Kadie was a very polite girl and considerate for most times, but she was very lazy when it came to some matters. She would let things stack up or avoid tasks because... Well, she often said just that: "Just because." She did not have a reason and she did not usually even realize it was

happening while it was. The rule was to bring the item to her mother to let her know about the impending mending. This seemed like a simple enough rule but something made it difficult for her to follow.

Secondly, Kadie could be patient about some things but not all things. One of the strong weaknesses were things related to clothes. She was not obsessed with clothing all of the time, but when she did like something she owned, she didn't ever want to let go of it. If she took an item and gave it to her mother right away, that did not mean it would be returned right away: because it went into the 'to do' pile which seemed to always pile and pile itself up higher and higher. It was not the fact Kadie was used to ruining or destroying her clothing either. She was careful for the most part but it was just the way randomness; fate; and bad luck all converged.

The "pile of rags" as Kadie's mother jokingly referred to it was put on the back burner so many times because it seemed there were never enough hours in the day to get it all accomplished. Because of this, Kadie tried to keep the clothes in her closet despite the issue the longer she wore the clothes with the minor blemishes, the worse it got with each wash. Kadie did not understand the science of torn fabrics and how they deteriorate worse in the laundry machine and the heat expanding the clothing ever so slightly.

Bringing her marred clothes to notice in a timely manner would have meant there would be less of a piling up and

a quicker return time; meaning a more timely manner to play in the outfits she liked so much. This kind of concept was not really grasped by Kadie; and after all, she did have a laziness streak in her as well.

And so brings about one of those times which places Kadie's mom in her daughter's room once again: the delicate dance of nature which was the tango of the tidy room. It was a day where her mother was a slight bit fatigued and it seemed the room was a more arduous task than usual. The sequence of events brought her mother towards the closet area. This was a typical closet that most children had but not all of it was for just clothes. Since Kadie's clothing was split between a few different areas: the wardrobe cabinet for the best or most dressy clothing she has, a chest of drawers which kept all of her most dingy of clothes or the playclothes, and the closet which had a lot of dresses and skirts, or clothes in between the confines of the chest or wardrobe.

Because of all of the places to put the clothes, that meant her closet wasn't fully consumed with clothing. In addition, it held a lot of toys and various other plush toys and playthings which stayed out of the way for the most part in order to keep most of the floor clear in the bedroom.

This was a great idea to keep as much clutter as possible out of sight, but it also made the closet a more unsightly mess when opened and it was not tended to for such a long amount of time. The other issue was how precarious it was to work inside the closet or reach high up to get an item. In

this situation, the cleaning procedure was a bit out of order since something had distracted her.

Usually the safest procedure was from the bottom up to clean that particular area. Either she tidied low and then did a decent once over up higher or she would just clear the bottom area of the closet out (such as when spring cleaning or the like) and handle it by scrubbing, sorting, and then moving the other things back into the bottom of the closet. But this time it was something catching her attention which lead to an awful catastrophe.

When already picking up the bottom area of the closet and scrubbing the interior wall here and there, Kadie's mom happened to look up and something caught her eye at just the right, or wrong, angle; depending on how the situation played out. She thought she saw a piece of fabric or stitching. Possibly a seam. She had to stand up and investigate.

Polite people would not word things too bluntly, but it was safe to say Kadie's mother was not tall by any means. One of the family jokes around hollidays might be at what age Kadie will actually see eye to eye literally with her mother. Kadie was hoping she wasn't going to stay 'shrimpy' as so many people have put it by teasing. She did not want to stay a shrimp; at least not forever. For the time being, she was just a bit below average as far as tallness went and it was easy to see she was not the very shortest of all in her class. In the class picture, she did avoid the very bottom row where the girls have to sit so prim and properly

cross legged and with their hands in their laps. However, she only figured out how to avoid that row by wearing a particular pair of shoes that were a tiny bit too big for her but also had a bottom which made her a skitch taller than even a couple of the girls who liked to call her shrimpy when playing at recess here and there at times. Kadie barely missed the bottom row: ending up at the very edge of the second to bottom row; at the first set of school picture risers. The position and location was enough to obscure her shoes but also show off most of her prettiest of dresses. It was at that point the one that was the most pretty but didn't look like it belonged in a church setting at least.

This all means it's safe to say the word short isn't a joking statement concerning her mother. So when she saw this item in the closet, she had a very difficult time figuring out what she exactly saw at a glance. On top of that, the lighting inside of that closet was especially poor if a not so tall person tried crooking her or his neck in order to see something high up. Because of all of these things, that is why Kadie's mother decided not to use the upper area of the closet for anything besides storage.

Storing the things at the top of the closet was done in a very neat and efficient manner. It was for this reason why the seeming loose item at the top of the closet caught the mother's attention. She stood up and crooked her head, but got blinded by the light in the closet; from accidentally staring directly into it while looking up. It was certainly one drawback to being small in stature in that room.

Her curiosity increasing, Kadie's mother took a step back, then another. It took more than a few steps back and she finally saw what the item was. An item of clothing must have been put up there by the daughter. It must have been something Kadie was either trying to hide.

When looking around to see exactly what this offending item was, she twisted her neck to one side and leaned back; only to see there was more than one item up there. The look on her face was not pleasant since not only did she wonder what was going on up there, but she was also trying to figure out how she going to manage getting up there at the moment. Usually it was an all day process when it came to packing and placing things upstairs in the closet: especially since it was planned out to be more than one closet and she had a stepladder buried in a tiny shed type of structure outside.

One seeming rule about Kadie's mother was everything could be very nice and neat inside but that did not always apply to anything outside; such as that storage room where she had all of the tools or anything else that seemed too awkward to put away inside their place. Maybe the easy answer would be the temperature most of the year keeping most anyone from wanting to do too extensive of sorting outside. It was Arizona after all. A place known for being hot throughout the year more often than most places. It makes sense that just because a person likes neatness and order may not want to melt into a puddle outside while doing so.

Making an attempt to brave the store room that day in that heat would have been an unwise decision to make. There also may not have been enough time to do such a thing also. cleaning Kadie's room had already been going on for a while at this point and spending all of the time to get one measly stepladder might have caused too much time to be lost. The time was also getting close for Kadie to have returned home; or at least to call for a ride.

Part of the unwritten law of a parent cleaning the bedroom of the young one was to be done and gone before the before she or he came back. That way, it would be clean but no trace of who did it. All of the kids know who did such a thing but generally don't ask. It just seems to be the 'law of the land' so to speak. The exception can be the parent getting caught in the act while doing the cleaning, or leaving the room only partially clean: since a thing of that sort would do nothing but arouse suspicion. This mother did not want something happening even remotely to that particular rule, so she knew she had to be quick in getting to the bottom of this puzzle... Even if it meant she had to be just a bit reckless.

Quickly feeling like she was running out of precious time, Kadie's mother looked around in the room to see what might work best. She might be small, but her daughter was even smaller. This meant anything a normal adult could use was not in the area. only smaller versions of it, or even in some cases, items which altogether wouldn't be found anywhere else: like a house style playset; doll house; or

even a rocking chair. The rocking chair was not only a bit too miniature but it was also very unstable to stand on. Swinging back and fro while trying to climb an extra foot seemed like a sure way to break her neck, and that would be too awful of a thing for Kadie to encounter upon returning home. No less: it would just seem like a very irresponsible example to set.

Her eyes darted around as if an inmate trying to figure out a way to break out of jail and then cross a moat while trying to outswim a pack of angry dogs. Maybe it was out of desperation or because it was the seemingly brightest thing in the room. Or it could have been chosen because it was the absolute perfect thing to use in a position such as this.

The mother saw a leg. It was not a person's leg, but rather from a table sort of thing. A table sort of thing that just happened to be bright pink: almost in a glowing way even though this happened to be daytime. It was holding court of sorts because it was being used as a giant table for small plush toys all positioned around. There was a meal sort of scene which actually Kadie's mom decided to set up as a whimsical sort of surprise. This was the last thing her mother did before realizing there was a closet in an enormous state of disarray. Had she remembered how incredibly disheveled it was inside that area, there was no way she would have attempted doing something so cute as to set up a tea type of service to a pack of stuffed animals. The idea of using the closet to keep clutter at bay

worked extremely well if it caused the bedroom owner's own mother to forget about one of the messiest areas of the apartment.

Without thinking twice, she hurried to the object in a few huge jumps. It really did look so nice. A dollie sized tablecloth was placed over the top, but as delicate as it was; the coloring of the furniture item was so glaringly bright, the color shined through this table setting. The plates were all spaced so perfectly and the teapot even had a nice tray on which it sat. There was faux food on the table while looked like each participant at the table each had their own preference in eating which was fulfilled. They were placed as sitting down in a variety of makeshift chairs; mostly from boxes covered with a bedsheets to form some sort of fancy type of bench rather than a plain looking box of cereal or breakfast oats. There was one chair more a doll size and also a rocking chair pulled up to this table. The idea was most likely Kadie could seat herself at the table also; unless she preferred to serve the others or just admire the setting from afar.

Maybe it was due to the lack of time or maybe it was a swelling version of anger- or stress in general for the lack of time to do more. Whatever the reason, Kadie's mother forgot for a brief moment just how nice the setting was and also how much of a delight it would probably be for Kadie to see how far her mother went out of her way to redecorate part of her room with this scene. It was such a beautiful display, perhaps Kadie would have even asked her

mom to make a small meal or snack that she could enjoy at this table with these plushie companions. Perhaps she would have even asked her mother to attend also by sitting on the floor or even kneeling in a tired but pretty much graceful way.

No- all of this was dashed in such a scant amount of time. It could have been from the anger about the clutter on the high reaches of the closet or the very pressing matter of time ticking down. She threw her hand out towards the table and grabbed at the linen cover. Taking opposite corners in each hand, she pulled them together and then did the same very quickly for the opposite sides. It soon became just as a hobo's trundle; or the proper way of describing a handkerchief or piece of material tied and balanced onto the end of a stick.

This bundle was far from a stick. Kadie's mother twisted her waist and took a step while dropping the bundled set onto the nearby bed; causing a clattering and smattering of plastic and metal sounds while the items knocked into one another while falling onto the bed and settling.

Glowingly, the small plastic table glared at the mother: almost in a throbbing way. She grabbed the solidly formed piece and yanked upwards; causing a couple of the plush friends of Kadie to tumble backwards onto the floor and roly poly side to side on their backs. She briskly and slightly awkwardly made her way to the closet and set the diminutive table down inside: just off from where the shelf in question was.

She noticed a bit of a problem the moment she tried plopping the table down just inside the closet. Not only was the floor the slightest bit uneven due to the carpet's wear lighter inside the closet than the rest of the room, but the one piece was sturdier in the surface department than it was for its legs. They seemed a little bit dinky in the structure for support when Kadie's mother was pressing and setting it down to make sure it was stable.

If she made sure to stay centered and keep her weight even and at the middle, it seemed the table would be able to hold up. As she pressed a bit harder on one corner, she realized putting too much effort on either of those corners would make it bend and force downward. She resolved not to spend much time up there no matter what she found.

Knowing the risks, she decided it was now or never. She kicked her footwear off and let each shoe tumble backwards while the other foot's heel helped the dressy but flat heeled accessories off; while she very gently used the hot pink table's face to balance with one hand on top.

First one foot and then the other while keeping at least one hand on the table; she bent and climbed her way up. Trying to come to a full stand, she made motions with her arms while both hands were outstretched with fingers stretched. The look of it was like surfing but standing all in one place. She finally steadied herself enough to go.

Moving on, she crooked herself upwards and started to see over the high up shelf. The table was made for a girl of Kadie's age and size. This meant it was not so far off the

ground since a small girl had difficulty with anything at the level of a grown up. Because Kadie's mother was shorter, that meant she had to make herself rise her barefooted self a bit more to see as tall as an average adult might. Knowing the table was flimsy in its design, she used a hand on the shelf to not only prop herself up but to make her weight less of a strain on the little table.

Both hands on the shelf, she pulled her way up and saw what first caught her eye when she was sitting at the bottom of the closet. It was a shirt which most obviously belonged to Kadie. She took one hand off the shelf and checked her balance as impulsive as she felt to grab the article of clothing.

It was one of the 'play dresses' as the mother referred to them. This one was grey. It was made of a softer material such as a tshirt, or sleeper pants even, but was a full dress from top to bottom: stopping around the knee level depending on the height of the wearer; and the material was stitched together to make an informal pleat to accent the lower area as a dress. They were a favorite when Kadie was playing around the house or wanted a dress but to feel comfortable.

One of the traits of Kadie was how she liked to play around at times in the rough and tumble fashion, similar to how many boys might, when she is outdoors around her apartment complex or even on one of the many playgrounds in the surrounding area.

Despite these characteristics, Kadie was very set against

being called a tomboy: which seems to be the thing so many grown ups would say when they see a little girl not acting as they imagined a little girl could or should be acting. Kadie didn't see what was so wrong about wanting to run and play or jump about. Just because a female wanted to tumble bumble while not fearing scrapes or skids didn't make her any less of a girl who liked to sometimes be girly or quieter at other times. She was often sensitive about her hair as well, so she took offense at times; thinking it was remarking her hair was not as flowing or energetic as it seemed on other females whether young or adult. On top of all that, Kadie simply detested the name Tom. She even took extra pity on the pumpkiny oragney striped white kittycats that roamed around, since she was one told the name of their kind are tomcats. This sort of thing was not always from adults but also some girls at or around Kadie's age. They thought it was something not so nice or so ladylike to act in that manner. They would most often seem to be trying way too much to look like a girl, as Kadie saw it. They would try to look so much so as not to cause confusion. When she saw a type like that, sometimes Kadie would secretly scowl on the inside, trying to put on a brave front in case that girl felt like being cruel with her words. Kadie did like to wear shorts and shirts of the normal and even girlish variety, but so often it seemed to end up being the play dresses; which is why they would end up with such excessive wear.

The play dresses weren't very expensive, which may have been a bit of the problem. Even though they were searched

out at a variety of stores whenever Kadie's mother had a little extra time to spend in a store or when clothes shopping, it seemed this style of clothing was always in short supply or just in not quite the right size. Perhaps it was due to the so very affordable price, or maybe it was because so many other little girls out there felt or were treated the same way as Kadie had. When they could be found, Kadie's mother made sure to buy whatever she could because she was well aware of her daughter's pell mell playing style.

Needless to say, this particular clothing item was not destroyed, but might have been hidden away up there due to Kadie's mother thinking it looked worse for wear. One or two of the stitched pleats had popped in part or entirely, making unsightly rolling lumpy spots like small baked potatoes get when the tops split open. There were also numerous holes. One looked like a tear from the twisty tops of a chain link fence; of which Kadie had been warned not to climb over.

Most of the other holes looked like tiny little pencil pokes, but one was enough for a person's finger to fit through. And that's just what Kadie's mother did. Like a pale little caterpillar, she took her other hand off of the shelf and clenched to make a fist with all but her pinkie finger. Slipping in beneath the materiel between the top and the skirted area, she saw the tip of the pinkie wiggle itself free in a peek a boo kind of way. She sighed to herself and pulled the article of clothing fully from the shelf; dropping it to the

floor below.

After she let go of the play dress, more seemed to be revealed. In a space between two boxes, there seemed to be even more clothes. Her mother was not sure how many were tucked into the space, but she knew they had no place being there. Stretching out with her most used hand, she shimmied towards the box and pulled a piece of clothing out. Then another. And another. The first couple she looked over, but then she got to the point of not caring enough due to how such a thing made her feel. She dropped them one after another in the general direction; landing on or near the play dress she first discovered.

Finally it seemed she pulled everything loose that was sandwiched between those two boxes on the shelf- for whatever reason or motivation it was done, Kadie's mother had no explanation or excuse for it: and the way she reacted to it all, it looked as if she didn't want to know the reasons behind it. Stretching further and peering deeper into the shadow between the two boxes, she saw one more item nestled away. It was at least one more item. She got her arm extended as far as it can go. Twisting her fingers around alternately, she finally catches the piece of material by hooking it with little more than her fingertip. Pulling quickly with a flick of his wrist, Kadie's mother yanks the article of clothing free.

Unfortunately for her, there was more than just what she tugged ever so hardly on. With an uncanny moment of reckless abandon, she jolts the item loose. Along with it

was an entire herd of what Kadie's mom partially joked around calling dust bunnies. This area was much higher of course and took so long to back. Aside from any places outside their apartment, this was by far the dustiest of all the warrens [where bunnies traditionally call home]. Because of this, and the mother's lack of caution, dozens if not hundreds of dusty bucks and does [boy and girl bunnies, respectively] did a do si do off of the shelf and tumbled down onto the mother's head and face: coloring her hair and part of her nose - the little bits clinging onto the light amount of makeup she wore like some kind of magnet.

Just as anyone who inhales a partial lung of lint; dust; and dirt, however fluffy, the mother had a severe and instant reaction. A giant sneeze! She forgot where she was and what was happening. All she could do was let it loose - and let go she did.

While whipping her head back, she realized just shortly afterwards what a bad idea that was... Even if to her own credit it was merely instinct. This brought on a series of events which, though may literally be a wind fall, was a windfall by no means. As she thrust her head back and then forth once more to sneeze and then counter it's action, her center of balance shifted; and then she lost all balance she previously tried so hard to keep.

She could feel the shifting beneath her feet. The brightly colored plastic table bent down hard and she quickly bent her knees to move the opposite direction. Maybe it would

have worked to correct things had it happened on a table which was just a tad more sturdy, but the legs of this one piece of barely defined furniture would have no happy ending.

Kadie's mother could feel two of the legs of the front of the table give way and bend hard. She knew it would be oh so painful if she did fall forward this way and smack herself on either the shelf with all of the storage boxes or even the interior wall of the closet. Even worse if she fell completely forward, she could land on something at the bottom of the closet which could possibly injure her severely. There were some plush animals at the bottom and inside of the closet, but Kadie's mother knew it would probably not be the good kind of luck if she fell in that fashion.

Out of desperation, she reacted just as quickly and impulsively as when she first sneezed. She hope to catch herself by bending her knees and twisting in the other direction to hopefully keep herself from tumbling downwards in such an undignified way. Her feet could feel the legs of the table. The force of Kadie's mother shifting seemed to be correcting the table. But now the legs were partially upright on one side but now the other two were bending. Either the table was simply entirely too unsturdy for this sort of thing or Kadie's mother did what was known as compensating; moving too far the other way in a quick reaction from moving in one direction.

One part of Kadie's mother felt like this was it and it was all over. The last thing she will see would be the unkempt

and untidy room of which she begged her daughter oh so many times to clean or pick up. She reacted again without any thought; which is often known as instinct. She reached out to the sides with both hands and her left hand had what seemed to be a small bit of luck: which just happened to be the hand which wasn't still clutching the article of clothing which set off this hilter kilter falling motion.

Without looking, she caught one thing. It was the only thing, or at least the first thing. Kadie had a lot of things in her closet and a storage device stacked to the left side which let her keep an assortment of items. The idea was for Kadie to be able to keep all of these items but also to keep them out of the way since many of them were seldom used. And example of these are her board games. They were placed higher up since they could not be played by Kadie alone as the single person. Usually these games were played with Kadie and her mother, so it was only logical to have these up higher. At the same time, the higher up for these board games meant the less of a chance of them getting lost pieces or the games strewn about for whatever random or unexplainable reason.

Because these games were placed so much higher on the organizational structure, that meant the stack of them would be the most obvious place for her mother's hand to find while avoiding a fall. The top game in this stack was out a small amount more than the rest of them; forming a kind of outcropping. This made it an even more obvious place for her hand to find.

This board game was actually one which Kadie's never seemed to approve of. It was not objectionable for any reason, but it just seemed a little too ridiculous or whimsical in the concept. Kadie's mother wished she could forget the image of the box but it seemed almost impossible. It had a monkey making some sort of cringing face while wearing suspenders and holding a lightly colored flower which didn't seem immediately recognizable. On the other side of the game's box was some standard superhero looking person only more generic. He had a broad smile which seemed like he didn't know how cheesy he looked in doing so.

Eternal Champions, as the mother thought the title was, happened to be a 'tournament' (which was kind of a code phrase for meaning battling) sort of game that most times Kadie's mother did not approve of- but in this game there no actual mention of violence or other rough subjects. It was only a roll of the dice or a spinner and the consequences were up to the whoever it was who were playing the game. It was beyond safe to say the few times at best Kadie and her mother played this game, the ousted opponent(s) were able to live to challenge one another on a future day. The reasons for never donating the game to thrift or altogether plopping it into a garbage bin was because it was given as a gift by a relative relatively close to the family and it might have unintended consequences or hurt feelings if it was discovered the game was missing by means of the girl's mother. All at the same time, it was also a game which a girl could play just as well as a boy.

Games like that are always good all around. As her mother would joke or lecture; depending the mood; “A young lady cannot live on pink alone.”

At this moment Kadie’s mother was not looking. Her hand clamped down and she tried to steady herself. It was only a split moment when she realized whatever she took hold of was not sturdy by any means. And now it was too late...

Her body lost all traction and she felt all of herself in a freefall. Since all of her was in the air all at the same time, she suddenly knew there was nothing else she could do but try to make herself limp and face the consequences of whatever lay for her at the bottom of Kadie’s bedroom floor.

The impact was violent but not as harsh as she assumed. Fabric burns from the impact and a possible split of the skin; but not much other trauma aside from spots which would make sure bruises in a matter of a day or less. However...

When she hit the board game with her hand and kept falling, this copy of Eternal Champions did not stay in place. Due to gravity and science, it kept moving and twirling. Actually; since it was hit at the edge, that meant the game actually upended on itself and twirled over and over a slight bit of height above Kadie’s mother’s head. This meant that by the time Kadie’s mother did actually land on the bedroom floor, the Eternal Champions game was still hovering a mere inches above. Not only was it open, but naturally it had to have flipped open due to the force it was grabbed at and the natural tendency for something to

fly open and clutter the room even further; especially since Kadie's mother had spent so much of her precious time cleaning up this room. But right now she was not thinking about this room or even what was about to happen.

A board game cascading and about to land on the mother's head could have been a major issue. There was more than the game itself. Soon to be bruising, she could have been a lot worse. As some say about only their pride being hurt, something similar was soon to happen. Soon as in only a few nanomoments. This is because there was more than just the contents of a board game inside of the box. It just happened to be a secret hiding place of Kadie's; and the contents were much to the dismay of Kadie's mother.

Ketchup! It had to be- It was not something Kadie's mother discovered right away. She was out of it in what some have called the 'deer in the headlights' look and feel: bewildered and shocked. When the game and all of the contents of the box rained down upon her, Kadie's mother thought from the feel of it all that she was being pelted with rocks and garbage.

Pit pit split split splat. It all came down upon her. She looked down and found DOZENS of ketchup packages littered around her. Most of them seemed to be sealed and in not too terrible of shape. She also wasn't looking that closely. She could only feel what some say is the blood boiling from within. If any part of her had looked to actually be bubbling blood, most likely it was only errant ketchup.

All of this must have stemmed back to a particular lark

that Kadie had; but also seemed to have been so quickly squashed and quashed by her mother. The idea was for Kadie to have a condiment collection... Which was obviously an idea she hatched for herself. It seemed like a completely silly and frivolous idea according to Kadie's mother. She did not see a good place to put them even if she would allow such a thing and did not think any collection of that sort could be sanitary by any means.

From the point of view of her mother, there was no logical place to store foil packets of ketchup. There was no idea what would happen when left unrefrigerated and there was absolutely no way she would allow a section of her ice box to be occupied by something she didn't approve of and on top of it something that was not planned to be eaten. She was also afraid of what could happen if one burst open like a defective can or bottle of soda pop which happens every so often. Her fears did come true. Some of these containers were not holding up well.

Maybe it was just because of the heat that can gather in the back of closets which are outside walls; just as it so happened Kadie's was. Fact of the matter was the few which had darkened colors and split edges; oozing what did not pass as ketchup. Her mother was surprised there wasn't an infection of ants or any such other bugs which seem to appear out of nowhere for the smallest drops of foodstuffs.

Needless to say, there were loud words and sad apologies at Kadie's place that day. And the tea service stayed in the

same clumped up disarray atop the bedspread until Kadie had to go to sleep. It was an early bedtime and a long weekend. Kadie had a room to clean top to bottom and side to side until it all looked as good as the flowery cleanser smelled on the walls. There were stains inside the box of the board game, so *Eternal Champions* was tossed out along with its game pieces; spinner; dice; and all other sundries. It was also safe to say Kadie's ketchup packet allotment was heavily restricted for a while as well.

Funny as it may seem... The reality of it all probably had nothing to do with ketchup [or catsup] at all; or at least in the first place. It could have all started as a seed and then sprouted to all of the trouble the processed tomatoes have gotten her into; though also so much happiness as well. At least when it was times she was having the condiment on her terms.

That probably was the problem all along in the first place. Kadie was heavily restricted in so many ways. She had to do whatever told and it seemed all was managed or told to her rather than asked for an opinion. Kadie was also a young girl. Whether a girl or a boy, she was young and so many things really did have to be done for her or explained since that was the whole point of teaching right from wrong. Kadie's mother did not want a girl of hers to have to get into all sorts of trouble or fall into problems unsupervised. Many parents did let their children 'learn' as they went along- getting into trouble or succeeding. Kadie's mother thought it was a foolish thing to do and did not go

along with that idea whatsoever. She did not put her nose into the affairs of others or try to tell others what was right fro what was incorrect in her opinion. She reserved that sort of thing only for Kadie.

There were piles upon piles of times in which Kadie was allowed to do as she asked, or to 'get her way' as the term is often phrased. The problem with so many girls and boys her age was not remembering all the times things actually did go into their way of favor. What clung on in the minds of babes were when they were told no or not allowed to do certain things. It was supposed to be a product of age: as to if it's a good or bad product in unanimously out of the question.

For the sake of Kadie, her mother did not mother just the proper amount. Sometimes she forgot what was too much. Sometimes that meant it was beyond the big things or the small mistakes. This is something most grown ups do by accident; whether they are mothers, fathers, teachers, aunts, or even neighbors who don't encounter children all too often. Whether Kadie knew it or not, her mother meant for the best no matter how many times she lost her temper or yelled; or yelled and then lost her temper. Or got frustrated and upset Kadie one way or another in the process. Maybe her mother was not being the best or trying to do the best thing at the time, but she did mean well overall. That is more than what so many other little boys or girls can say about their parents.

Yes, her mother did what she could and tried more often

than not. But the other problem was the dreaded word of no. Two letters that make more young children sad than any other fall or broken bone. Sometimes that word can feel as if it actually was crushing the person for which it was said towards.

So many times had Kadie heard a negative reply. She would even ask less things for a long time; such as maybe even a week; when she was saving her words for something she really wanted to hear a yes to.