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Hope and Justice Assignment

## What does hope mean to me?

Now, when you think about hope, what comes to mind? Someone, you trust? A feeling or expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen? Or is it because you want something to happen, or be the case? Now, when I think of hope, I think of putting your mind to something and telling yourself that as long as you hope for it to happen, it'll come true. But sometimes, that may not always be the case.

So, backstory, when I was about 5 years old, my biological father and mother were doing some very bad things. They were addicted to toxic substances, which made them completely different people. We never really lived in a house, and it would seem as though every night, we would end up in a different motel somewhere. You see, I had a very special bond with my father, same with most fathers and daughters. So, when my father had to get taken away from me, I watched him be put in handcuffs, same with my mother, as we said our final goodbyes. The one I can remember crystal clear, is I held on to my dad as tightly as I could, thinking that if I were to let go, it would be my fault that he left. I carried that last shred of hope that he would finally stop trying to make me get off of him and he would hug me back. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case. Since I couldn't stay with my parents, I went to live with my aunt and uncle instead.

I've seen them and loved to hang out with them when they came over to my grandmother's, and I would sit on my uncle's lap and ask him a trillion questions. But when my aunt picked me up to go live with her, at first I could help but hope that it was temporary. So after a few months of living with them, I was told that I got to go live with my dad again. But that didn't last very long, and before I knew it, I was back living with my aunt and uncle. At a certain point, I finally came to the realization that I wasn't going to see my dad for a very long time, so all the hope I had left for him was gone, and that my aunt and uncle were going to be my mom and dad. At first, when I started attending school, I would see little girls run up to their moms and dads and hug them. All I wanted was to be able to do that. I thought it was weird that I didn't live with my real parents like most kids. But over time, I started to come around.

At first, it was hard to adjust because the uncle you would sometimes see, would give you five bucks or play a game once in a while. He never really showed authority over you. But when he starts to become your father, he tells you what to do, and is the high authority figure of the house. Same with my aunt. All of a sudden she would teach me how to shower, how to properly eat, how to dress. I wasn't used to that. But then I realized, that this is what it's like to have parents! I started to have hope again, knowing that I could have someone to depend on when I really needed it, when I needed help with a math problem, they would be there, when I was upset, they would be there.

Before I knew it, I never really thought about my biological parents, because they never showed me what it was like to be a kid. But you know what my aunt and uncle showed me? They showed me what it was like to have loving parents. They taught me things that made me a smarter person. They know my likes and dislikes, and they taught me what it's like to be loyal, and caring. They taught me what it's like to have hope, and you know what? They are the hope in my life. They are what hope means to me.