

The Slap

By: Jordanna Matlock

The slap didn't have a sound in my memory. I do however, remember the tingling sensation that shot through my body as part of the after-shock. The tingling that followed me, nay haunted me, into my older years. A tingling that told me this is what I deserved, a father who hit me, a mother in severe pain, a slowly dying brother. The truth? He slapped me across my face. It seems simple enough, he is a monster, a horrible father, a sinner. Unfortunately, nothing in life is as elementary as that.

I wish he would have hit me more. This sounds absurd I know, but at least that made more sense in a six year old's brain. Instead what I got was a one off, a fluctuation in logic, a moment of pure emotion that landed on my face. Take it from me, it is much harder to understand someone who emotionally and mentally abused me for years; a slap across the face was manageable. This kind of emotion I understood; anger. My brother was in a losing battle with addiction at the time, and my mom was too sad and frightened to function and then there was me, happy. I could understand why he was upset at me. I was everything he was not, the most important thing being, I was happy.

I would assume people would think I am horribly scarred from my father hitting me once, but I am not. The thing that scares me is the tingling. I am forever in a battle with that sensation, with numerous outside forces telling me he was correct. The government relaying to me that I do not have control over my own body, the men that stare at me with x-ray eyes when I am just trying to walk across the street. This is the battle I fight every day; am I worthy?

The way I look at it is this. My body may bruise and my brain may lose its sanity, but in the face of *that* monster, not my father, but of the outside forces that tell me I am deserving of these evils, I fight back. You must fight back. And although I am a pacifist at heart, in that moment I hit him back. That little girl shook off that tingling and hit him back, because no one tells me I am worthless.