Caroline Buchegger
Period 1

“He is missing, Caroline, don’t tell mom.” At that moment, I imagine plunging myself into the deep, dark ocean and letting myself sink for eternity. I shudder as I begin to think of the possibility that my uncle is missing, or dead. “How long has he been missing,” I ask my sister. She tells me three days.

Normally I wouldn’t panic right away, but my uncle had a bad past, and he was a very intelligent person who cared deeply for his family, and never went more than a day without speaking to the family.

A large portion of my family was born in Iraq, including my mom. It was only the beginning of the destruction of Iraq, and my family knew they had to escape, being Christians in a deadly war zone. My family that I’m referring to consists of four uncles, two aunts, and my mother. They all separated; my mother was the fourth one to escape, who travelled to Austria, where she later married my father. My uncle escaped to Australia, and sadly began to befriend the wrong type of people. He fell under their influence, and did many things that he later paid the price for.

Many years later, my twin sister and I were born, and we soon met our uncle. We began to think of him as a father, and he considered us his daughters. I loved him very deeply, and I never imagined losing him. He would make me smile and laugh like no other.

He has been missing for a year and a half. No one knows what happened to him. This experience almost destroyed my whole family. Our happy world disintegrated like a frail empire in a war.

I learned a lot about myself through this experience. I learned that I am a very strong person, and that even in tough situations, I continue to try my best. I continued my hard work at school, I did all of my homework, and studied for the tests I could when I was emotionally stable. I managed to receive a 4.5 GPA that semester, and I am proud of myself for my persistent effort to be successful.

As Lailah Akita once said, “Great people faced obstacles in the pursuit of their dreams.The struggles were motivation to stretch their limits.” I promised my uncle that I would become a doctor, and that is exactly what I will do.

When people ask me what my race is, they expect me to answer white American. After all, I do have blonde hair and hazel-green eyes. However, I am half German and half Chaldean.

My mother was born in Iraq, in a time where it was very beautiful; she tells me all the time the wonderful memories she had. However, as she grew older, it became very dangerous, bombs were dropping and her family knew it was time to get out.

My mother worked as a cashier in a cafeteria in the United Nations Iraq, and that is where she met my father. My dad worked in the United Nations and when he saw my mother,

he fell in love with her. She gave him her address and although he had to leave to go back to the United Nations in Vienna, he sent her letters for two years.

Iraq was becoming worse and my mother decided to leave. My father did her papers and she went to live with him in Austria. They were soon married, and then I was born, along with my twin sister. I lived there for many years, but my mom was very lonely and unhappy. Her whole family migrated to San Diego, and they begged her to come, and she eventually did with my father's permission. He continued to work for the United Nations in Vienna but he would visit my mother, sister, and me every year. He still does.

When I first attended school in San Diego, I felt very dumb. I could barely speak English, however I was the smartest kid in my math class. My mother began to attend college because she wanted to become a nurse, and she inspired me to work hard and get straight A's. I eventually caught up in English, and I was shocked when my 8th grade middle school teachers recommended me to be in all honors in high school.

I never thought of myself as smart until high school. I became a lot more intelligent because I worked twice as hard as everyone in my classes, and I received straight A's freshman year. I began thinking of becoming a doctor, because I knew that it would make my family proud.

The world I came from made me the person I am today, and when my mother tells me everything she had to go through in Iraq, I feel that I have an obligation to make her proud of me. I hope to become a pediatrician in the future.