

Essay: The big decision by Sonja M.

In a geometry lesson in school, Junior's teacher, Mr. P, hands out books to the eager students. When Junior opens his, apparently new book, he finds out that it has belonged to his mother, making it very old. The boy is outraged that only a small amount of money is invested in his school supplies and throws the book into Mr. P's face. He breaks his teacher's nose and gets suspended from school.

A week into his suspension, Junior is sitting miserably on his porch and is bewildered when he sees Mr. P coming towards him. Nervously, the boy thinks that his teacher is about to lecture and punish him for the incident in school. But, surprisingly, Mr. P confides in the student. He reveals that he had to treat many Indian students bad and apologizes for what he has done. The teacher chooses to forgive Junior and makes a daring suggestion: He thinks the boy should transfer to a white school. At first, Junior is flabbergasted and concerned. Eventually, Mr. P manages to get him to think about it. He assures him that he deserves something much better than the reservation can give him and tells him that he has the strength to take this step because he has survived many things and resisted the temptation of alcohol and drugs, which appear frequently in his life. The teacher also tells him about his sister's dreams of writing romance novels, something he hasn't known of before. Mr. P mentions that after she stopped writing, she lost her hope and the dream began to fade. After Junior breaks down, crying, overwhelmed with the difficult decision he so suddenly has to face and the bone-crushing reality of the environment he lives in, Mr. P continuously urges him to leave Wellpinit, the reservation school, because he wants him to keep his remaining hope. This touches Junior a lot and he begins to consider the option.

After Mr. P leaves, Junior feels ambivalent. A part of him is very anxious and frightened to transfer schools. He knows very well how the fellow tribal members will react to his "betrayal". The boy also doesn't want to lose his best friend, Rowdy. On the other hand, he is thrilled to know that there will be more hope in a different place. He realizes it is up to him to change something.

When his parents come back home that evening, he plucks up his courage and tells them all about his plans. Although they are a bit sceptical of the idea at first, they agree with him. The parents want him to achieve something and not end up as they have. The family can not move to Reardan because it is too expensive but Junior is allowed to take his shot at the prospect of more hope and a greater, more promising future.

Junior's best friend Rowdy takes the news very differently in contrast to the teen's parents. He is outraged and devastated. Junior desperately tries to comfort him and asks the other boy if he wants to join him in the new school, but Rowdy shakes him off and insults him, breaking Junior's heart. Both begin to weep, Rowdy is screaming with pure agony and rage, which have been bottled up inside of him and let loose when he punches Junior and calls him a traitor. The whole ordeal is heart-wrenching and the violent Rowdy ends up walking away, just leaving his former best friend on the ground.

As a conclusion, one can say that it was a difficult decision to make, but Junior realizes that he has to transfer schools to secure a better future and not lose hope. But, above all, Junior knows he has lost something tremendously important to him: Rowdy's friendship. To put it all in a nutshell: This step leads to the loss of Rowdy's company, who loathes Junior now.