

Gabriel Rivera

Professor Horgan

English 120

May 8, 2014

### **My Coming of Age**

I always *joke* that I don't want to grow up. I emphasize the word joke because I know that it is a natural progression in life to grow up and become responsible. Many events in my life have contributed to my "growing up" journey. Each and every event in my life has been significant in its own right. Each event made me stronger and helped to define me. One recent event however, was my "growing up" epiphany. While many might view my epiphany as a mere situational problem that once resolved is over, for me this event snapped me into the reality that I am no longer a child, that I have entered into the world of young adulthood and with that comes a sense of responsibility. From that day on something inside of me changed, marking the end of my childhood and clearing the way for my voyage to adulthood.

It was December 4, 2013, 11:30 in the morning and I headed out to work at Footlocker as I had been doing for several weeks now wondering what kind of day I would have. I looked forward to work because at 18 I felt lucky to have landed my first job at Footlocker, mostly because I consider myself a bit of a sneaker connoisseur so this was a perfect job match for me. I remember my mother saying to me as I walked out the house, "Don't forget to give your manager the direct deposit paperwork." Something she had reminded me to

do every day as I left for work and of course I failed to do. I promised I would remember to give in the paperwork because I knew it contained personal information that if lost and landed in the wrong hands could have devastating effects. That day I felt so proud of myself as I reached into my jacket pocket to pull out the paperwork. I thought to myself, “see Mom I remembered.” But, I could not find the paperwork, but I didn’t stress as I just knew I must have just folded the paperwork up and stuffed it into my jacket pocket. A quick search into my pockets yielded nothing!! Now, I began to worry but not too much as I just knew I might have dropped it on the floor in the stock room. Piece of cake, a quick walk retracing my footsteps and I would have the paperwork ready to hand over to my manager. This is when I felt my chest tighten, because yes you guessed it the paperwork was not there! I raced out to the rest of the mall, all the while staring down at the floor in hopes I had somehow dropped the papers. I back tracked my every move, and I even went through some garbage cans. I go through Sears to get to Footlocker so I went to Sears’ lost and found to no avail. I asked a Sears’ employee were I could find lost items and she directed me to human resources were the lost and found was. I went in and asked the director if they found an envelope with paperwork in it and she said no. It was then that my body went numb and I was full of fear. That was not the worst of the situation. The hardest part would be to call home and tell my mother what had happened. Well, that turned out exactly as I expected!! A few curse filled screams later I was directed to go to Chase Bank explain the situation and fix it. With trepidation I headed to the bank, nervous and totally in the dark. I’m not going to lie; I did tear up a little bit. I am happy to report that all went well, Chase staff was great, and I made it right with their help.

Just a few months before this incident my parents' bank accounts had been hacked into and the drama they experienced in closing and reopening accounts, calling companies to make changes to account information was hard to witness. I felt horrible for them. When I was tasked with submitting my direct deposit paperwork to my manager I was also told about the sensitive information contained within the papers. In other words I was well advised of the multitude of problems that could arise from some shady individual getting a hold of that information. I knew that should someone get access to the information listed on the direct deposit paperwork; account number, address, phone number and work related details that my account could possibly be at risk of being hacked and since my account is linked to all the household accounts they too could be hacked again. If the accounts were hacked monies could be removed, identity could be stolen and then dummy accounts could be opened up in either my name or my parent's names. This kind of activity could potentially damage all of our credit ratings. So when I dropped the ball and was faced with confessing my mistake to my mom I realized that I was no longer a child and that much responsibility is expected of me. I felt I had let her down. I knew at that moment that I needed to grow up and be responsible.

And, so now I find myself more attentive to detail, and being more responsible in many facets of my life. By the way I later found out that my mother had reached out to the staff at Chase Bank before my arrival, explained the situation, and asked them to help me learn a lesson or so I thought. Once again my mother hooked me. She knows I get annoyed when she babies me and of course I became agitated in being told that she had set things up for me instead of allowing me stand on my own and resolve my problems. Well, it turns out that she was so mad at me that she only told me that she had called the bank before I arrived because she knew

it would be upsetting for me. Who needs to grow up now? It is true that one of the women who helped me called my mother as I was on my way home from the bank to tell her to please stop yelling at me because I told her how angry my mother was at me and how she had yelled at me over the phone. We talked about that incident and she has apologized for basically lying to me and I have apologized for being irresponsible.

I needed for my parents to see me as responsible because it makes me feel more mature. However, I have to act responsibly so that others will see that trait in me. That incident showed me how an irresponsible action can create problems for me and my family that could have devastating effects. Although, I longer work at Footlocker that incident allowed me to parlay the situation into a learning experience that has taught me to be responsible in different aspects of my life such as school assignments, finances, and driving. I took a bad circumstance that could have had a really bad outcome and used it to start my journey to grow up and come of age.