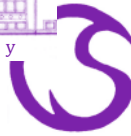




The Community
School

Passages Program



Passages Press

A Word of Warning

by Jesse Smith

I haven't had many jobs in my life, but I have found a job that I like. I have been a waitress at a retirement home for over a year and a half. I am working with older folks and it is great. I am not just an employee to them, I am their friend. They treat me as if I am their own daughter or grandchild. They have amazing stories to tell about their lives; things have changed so much since they were my age. They can be quite picky and rude at times but, when a person has lived as long as they have, they deserve the best.

I feel that the best skill that I have is how well I work with others. I have a high tolerance for things. If something goes wrong, or someone is rude to me, I handle it kindly instead of making a horrible ordeal out of it.

Until recently, everything had been going well at my job. I became friends with my boss's wife, who is a recent immigrant to this country and hadn't made other friends, yet. She adores children so I allowed her to watch my son Aiden on Fridays while I went to work. I began to hang out at their house and my boyfriend David helped my boss "George" do some outside work. When I received my computer from the school and had access to the Internet, I downloaded a chat site and began to talk to George on the program. We would talk about work and his wife and Aiden and so on. Then he began to talk dirty. "I want to lay you down."

"Would you ever sleep with me?" Crazy questions like that. I never replied, knowing that this was wrong. Then he began to have an attitude with me whenever I was at work. He called me at home all hours of the day and night. He got mad at me when I went to visit a friend in the hospital claiming that I was having intercourse with my friend. He accused me of having oral sex with my boyfriend's sixteen-year-old brother and even told me that I couldn't have a drink once in awhile. He was trying to control my life. He even stooped so low as to tell me that I should leave my boyfriend and go live with him. He was stalking me; things had definitely gotten out of line.

One day I went into work and George leaned over and tried to kiss me. I yelled at him to get out of my face. The smell of his breath, the sight of his rotting teeth haunted me. I should have told someone but I was so scared of losing my job that I kept it on the low. Then he began to rub my buttocks and tried to peek down my pants. I pushed him away and that made him even madder. All my coworkers noticed it and began to ask questions. I deleted MSN; when he asked me why I told him that I didn't want to talk to him outside of work.

One day at work George ripped a spatula across my butt and that is where the gate closed. This couldn't go on anymore; I told the big boss and she said she would take care of it.

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The following night I went into work and nothing had changed. I was training a new girl, showing her what to do and George yelled at me for not doing my work. I ignored him as best I could. After taking my new co-worker outside for a cigarette break, he started in, "I am not paying you to hang out with your men, I am paying you to work."

We all went up to the big boss again and told her for the second time. She didn't say anything. She wanted us to arrange a meeting with him and talk. No meeting was going to solve this problem. She just didn't want to hear it; she was stalling.

I went back into the kitchen and did my work. As we were serving he looked at me and said, "It's ok if you want to lie, but I have told my wife that we are messing around." Messing around!!! I never did anything with him except reject him. We exchanged some more words and then he looked at the new girl and said, "You need to be careful of her because she sleeps around." I felt small. I was intimidated. I was hurt. I was pissed. What did I do to deserve this? I ignored him for the rest of the night. I was walking around the dining room, hands shaking, lip quivering, and swallowing my tears. I had a lump in the back of my throat the size of a baseball. When the night was almost over, I walked into the kitchen; George looked at me and said, "You need to realize who your true friends are and who your enemies are."

When we were cleaning up for the night he came into the dining room and began to yell at the top of his lungs, "I am the fucking boss here, if you girls have a problem you come to me. You ran upstairs and ran your mouths off, I am the fucking boss here!"

I tried my hardest to control myself, but I let loose, "You are an asshole and no one likes you. I am going to give you my notice now and I am done." He said ok and walked away. I dropped my face in my hands and cried. I can't leave my job, I thought, it is my second home.

I came home that night and cried for three or four hours. My boyfriend's face went completely pale; he said he would handle it in the morning. Then the phone rang and it was my boss's wife.

George had told her that we were messing around; she called saying that she didn't want to be my friend any more, that she hates me and doesn't care if I die. I began to cry even more, knowing that she is married to this sick man and believes his bullshit lies. I cried for her teenage daughter who will be arriving in America in a few short months. What will he do to that poor girl?

The next morning George called trying to apologize. I talked to him for a while before I hung up. Then my boyfriend called and told me he had talked to the big boss and she had given George a written warning He had to call and apologize to me. It wasn't his choice. They made him.

Eventually, the head supervisor investigated the situation and made the decision to fire George.

We all hear of these things happening, but never do we imagine that it could happen to us. It happened to me and it is a scary and heart wrenching thing to go through. This will be a life experience that will be etched in my mind forever. Be careful, but if something happens, please tell someone as soon as possible. Don't be afraid to tell, be afraid of the person that is hurting you.

Every work place has a sexual harassment policy, which states that sexual harassment is a crime, and won't be tolerated. The work place should have this posted where employees can see it. If sexual harassment really happens at work, then the harasser should automatically be dismissed from the job.

Upcoming Workshops & Events

First Aid & Infant CPR

Wednesday • November 17th • 10-12 am
Community School

Holiday Party

Wednesday • December 8th • 1-3 pm
Community School

Graduation

Saturday • January 22nd • Time TBA
John Street Methodist Church
Camden

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Life's Passages



Keshia Young passed
her driver's test!

Erika Leigh gave birth to a
sweet brown-haired baby
boy named Gage Robert
on September 5, 2004.

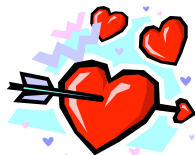


Ashli Fowler gave birth to an adorable baby
girl named Hannah Faith on September 15,
2004.

I Ask Myself

by Amanda Cates

Jody
Is his name
I love him
He asked me to marry him
So I think
Do I want to spend my life with him?
Do I want to make a family with him?
Do we make each other happy enough?
Are we going to be able to work through anything?
Do we compromise?
Do we communicate?
So after thinking
I don't think I would want to
Spend my life with anyone but you
Yes is my answer
I love you
Jody



I Love You

by Lacey Thompson

It's been a year since you left.
The joy, the pain, and
a hurtful love never to forget.

Our love was done before you were gone.
Nobody understands why I'm not
still holding on.

I did really love you. Oh yes, it's true.
But the pain was unbelievable,
You weren't there. I needed you.

I listen to the rumors and lies
SO. I'm finally happy now.
Why is that such a big surprise?

The cheating, the hurting, and calling names,
I understand it all now.
It was part of your "playa game".

I will not carry on a lie.
I love you. I miss you.
I should be asking myself why?

My heart aches for your family and friends.
But I saw the true you.
My hurting has come to an end.

I do miss good times, although there were few.
You left me with a beautiful daughter,
For that, I really love you.

Clothing Exchange

Ashley Fowler had an excellent idea recently
that students bring their children's outgrown
clothing, equipment, and toys to workshops to
exchange with each other. A good time to do so, in
keeping with the season, would be at the Holiday
Party on December 8th. We have no storage space
so just bring those items you really think someone
may want.

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Make Lemonade

A book review by Katie Stimpson

Make Lemonade by Virginia C. Wolff is the amazing tale of a seventeen-year-old mother of two and her fourteen-year-old babysitter, the main character, Lavaughn. Lavaughn is trying to earn money to save so that she can get out of the Bronx and go to college. She sees this ad on the school bulletin board that says "NEED A BABY SITTER BAD." Seeing that no one has taken any of the numbers, she takes one in hopes of getting the job. When she calls she can hear the baby crying in the background, but she doesn't back down and in the end gets the job.

Lavaughn falls in love with the two children and ends up helping their mother get into a reach-out program for teen mothers that is much like Passages. I really loved the book because it's honest and the way it is written is amazing. It's like you know these people and you can feel what they are going through.

I would recommend this book to anyone, but especially to teen mothers who are having a rough time and think they can't make it. After reading this story I didn't think about how rough it was going to be or how rough I had it. I thought of how rough it **could** be and how lucky I was that I had a loving family and people that will help me.



Katie Stimpson

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Watchful Eyes of Heaven

by Jesse Smith

The Heavens above
Looking down upon us
We
Struggle
To become
What GOD himself
Has wanted us to become
We hold another's hand
Struggling
To live another day
Hate
Greed
Surrounds us
They silently watch
Guiding us
To a day so much brighter
The Heavens above
Look down upon us



Student Voices

As you can see, the Passages Press is an open forum for our students to write about their passions and concerns in any form they'd like. Look through the work you've done, or write something new to share with all of us.

We accept original poems, essays, stories, interviews, book and movie reviews, recipes, announcements, and parenting tips. Your voices deserve to be heard.

The Passages Press comes out every other month. Send your submissions by email to andrea@2bisbee.net either as an attachment in a Microsoft Word document or cut and pasted into the email. If you don't have Internet access, give a hard copy to your teacher to pass on. The deadline for the next issue is December 27th.