

## WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS

T. MIR MONROY

As we grow up, some of our fondest memories begin to fade. But, it is undeniable that there are memories we vividly remember, especially if these made a huge impact and contributed to what we are today. It's nice if we can only recall every detail of an unforgettable joyous moment of our life. But sadly, that is not the case... the ones that broke us seem to be embedded in our thoughts as well, like a shadow that keeps showing up only in the presence of darkness.

It's been more than fifteen years now when I faced what I can say was a terrible thing for a high schooler to face alone.

My grandma and her siblings owned the school where I studied as a high school freshman. I was very nervous and excited on the first day of classes, like a normal high school girl would probably feel. I looked forward to meeting new friends, especially as most of my classmates from elementary school had already transferred to another school. Everything seemed well at first. I met new people, started to hang out, and spent time with them.

But as months went by, without any reason at all, almost all the girls from my class started saying nasty things behind my back. Upon hearing it, I did

not believe it at first since I considered them my friends. Sadly, upon confrontation, they admitted that they were spreading false rumors just because I am the grandchild of one of the school's owners. I felt betrayed and hurt.

I remember how hard it was for me to face group projects, and group performance since I always ended up together with one of the classmates who seemed to dislike me immensely. During breaks, I felt like I was the odd one out.

The following school year came, and though I did not associate myself with them anymore, they deliberately continued spreading rumors about me. It even happened till the following school year!

In one of the Parent-Teacher Conferences, one of my teachers informed my mom how she noticed that I always hang out with my male classmates instead. That night, my mom asked me if there was something wrong. I opened up to her about my struggles that I had been keeping for years and she seemed very surprised since I excelled academically, and seemed happy most of the time, which should not have been the case since I was dealing with immense challenges emotionally.

I remember telling her that I

held on to what she and my dad told me before, "You do not need a lot of friends. You only need to have a few great and true ones". That gave me great comfort and encouragement. Indeed, I had few genuine and true friends at that time.

I also told her that there was an unexplainable peace in my heart and my mind amidst what was happening. Of course, I felt sad, lonely, and lost at times, but I knew that I needed to move forward.

Philippians 4:7, "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus". I believe that that is the peace that guards my heart and my mind during challenging times. Since the peace that I had came from the Lord, it could never be taken away by the things of this world.

We will surely face challenges in our various seasons of life. For sure, these struggles may be in our own different contexts but it is my prayer that as we face these great struggles, we will choose to hold on to God, believing His word and His heart amidst any situation resulting for the peace of Christ to abound in our lives, reflecting who Christ is in our lives - a God whom we can trust and depend on! ✨