

**Lily Miller**

Age: 17, Grade: 12

School Name: Saginaw Arts & Sciences Academy, Saginaw, MI

Educator: Karen Horwath

Category: Flash Fiction

---

## **Baby Blue**

### **Baby Blue**

“Hudson, I want your hair cut now.”

Like I care. “Sure mom, anything for you.

“You know very well how I expect you to look.”

She has just picked me up from overpriced tutoring at an overpriced private school and hasn't even thought to ask how my day went. As far as I'm concerned, my only purpose in life is to please my parents, so I get what I want. It's easier that way, unfortunately.

“Hop out and open the gate would, you? For your mother? The code's not working,” Mother says in her most chipper voice, both hands still gripping the wheel of the car.

My mother was raised to believe that in a house full of men, like ours, she could not and would not be expected to raise a finger if there was a chance it would get dirty. In simpler terms, she's a housewife. She married my dad, the businessman, and she has no real passion or motivation in life other than to entertain him and do his chores, with the occasional and exciting grocery runs and dinner parties mixed in. She married rich and that is how she intends to live.

Our whole house is surrounded by gates--just for looks, so the desperately poor people down the road that mom and dad despise think we are everything they are not. We have the neighborhood corner lot and just over the fence of that corner lot, there is a neighborhood with small grey houses and no yard, with kids and animals that run everywhere. Yet the stray cats and cigarette smoke always seem to comfort me. My parents have neverending complaints about it, yet they chose this lot on purpose because, you should know, this patch of land rises higher than everything around it and is more expensive than the people next-door could imagine. And the house is such an obnoxious blue, like a baby blue on enhancement pills-- another way to make it stand out even more. At 6:54 A.M. and P.M. the house turns purple. I love it then. So when the sun rises, that is the only time each day I can appreciate “what my parents gifted me with.”

I get up early every morning because I hate my tie the most in the morning and have to spend the majority of my time wrestling with that and still be out of the house on time to see the siding on the house shift to purple. Of course, I sleep in my other clothes, just not the tie because it definitely has the possibility to strangle me and I do *not* have time for that.

On my way down the stairs, I procrastinate to look over the fence, draping my tired body so I can see as far as possible out the window. Once again I notice that Dad's car is not parked in the driveway and he never came home. Mom must have assumed he worked through the night . . . yet again. Dad being late seemed to have become a trend lately that neither I or mom want to bring up. Nothing bad happens to housewives.

These tight dress shoes are so impractical for biking, but it's a couple of miles to my private school downtown. I leave every morning as soon as the house turns back to blue. As I pedal down the driveway I already feel the sweat start to furrow above my brow. Two more miles to go and I am only down the driveway. I hope the beads of sweat adds to the messy tie and “too long hair.”

When I smell the smoke from the neighborhoods, it's so much different from wine and carpet cleaner. I don't understand mom for putting a white carpet in the dining room. I pause, slam my foot down, and my palms grind into the handlebars as I break. My dad's car turns the corner and continues to the house. I whip around, twisting my body around my bike to see behind me.

"Hudson. I see you. Get up here," he scolds out the window,

He knows that I'm on my way to school, so he chooses a better question.

"Are you gonna get a haircut?" he demands

"No." I retort. "Where were you?"

"Stayed late. They threw a lot of work on my desk."

"So that's why your tie is missing?"

"Watch it, Hudson."

This blue is so damn ugly. I bike back up the driveway and throw my bike into the grass with one hand. I slam the front door on him and lie in bed until mom comes home, she is the only one who cares if I skip school, anyway.

"I'm getting you a haircut." Mom greets me...welcome home.

It's 6:40 P.M. before I realize I slept through the afternoon. I run downstairs to beat mom to the kitchen for dinner. I do, but dad is there instead, standing in front of the door.

....

"I'm headed in. Meet me there, I left my tie in your office. Meet me anytime before Seven," Dad whispers into the phone.

I convinced myself I was joking about his tie last night and just being cynical, but this morning, I'm not even surprised.

"What was that, dad?" I question.

He straightens his posture and fixes his face.

"Did you hear that?" he questions me right back.

"I heard enough."

6:50: He grabs a beer off the counter and walks outside. I slam the door after him. Who drinks beer anymore anyway?

"I asked you a question," I yell.

The sun is setting and mom will be out here soon.

"Hudson, this is anything but your business," he says, matching my tone.

"It is too. This is my life, too."

He whips around, and the bottle releases from his hand, hitting the siding.

6:54...My purple house is ruined, it doesn't look good with his beer on it.

