Picture a small rectangular prism. This item can be held in one hand, is yellow in color, opaque, has a low melting point, and is very valuable. It's not gold: it's something even better. Butter. Butter is in everything that you love. Your grandma's Thanksgiving mashed potatoes with approximately two pounds of butter and half a Costco container of heavy cream, the cookies you stole off the piping hot baking sheet seconds before you were yelled at by your mom, the butter dispenser at the movies that single-handedly adds 2 days worth of calories to your potentially healthy snack, and let's just say the french really knew what they were doing when they put half a pound of butter into a croissant. Not to mention all the foods that have the word butter in them: butter chicken, butter pie, butterbeer, butterscotch. Where would the world be without butter?

Now let's add to the picture: a small six year old version of me. I am dressed from head to toe in mismatched polka dots; blue polka dot bow, pink polka dot shirt, and a red polka dot skort because it's 2009 and I have an impeccable fashion sense. It is early in the morning, and my Mom is in the living room watching Dr. Phil put some obnoxious teenager in their place. Her fuzzy blue bathrobe is stained with the casualties of battling a newborn, toddler, and – in the near future – a 6 year old that is eating a full stick of butter under the dining room table. You're welcome, Mom.

Under the dark shadows of the table, I could feel the golden fluid ooze through the cracks of my fingers and drip down to my elbows. My eyes flicker between my prize and my Mother’s

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face as she registers the silence. I watch as her head slowly pivots to scan the room around her. We lock eyes and in my sheer panic, I turn around. Ya know, because of six year old logic, if I can't see it, it can't see me. Problem solved. Only, sadly, that's not how real life logic works.

“Tori…” my sweet, sweet mothers voice contradicts the swift sounds of friction between her slippers and the floor. My little heart is beating out of my chest. I realize that I have seconds before my treat is ripped from my literal butter fingers. I see a shadow cross the floor in front of me. “What are you doing?” Her patient voice asks. My fat covered, glistening face responded

with, “I didn't do it,” and a very, very shocked expression. Mom’s face shows her disappointment and her hands extend towards me, wanting my most prized possession. I surrender, remembering lost battles from the past. She scoops the remainder of the butter from my hands and plops it into the trash can. Honestly, what a waste.

Now, before you all start thinking about how disgusting eating a stick of butter is, remember that I was six, and very impulsive. I justify this whole experience as little me needing more fat and salt in my diet. Whether or not this is true, we may never know. I do not currently eat sticks of butter in my free time. In fact, I am a recovering butter addict that has been clean for almost… nevermind. Back to the story.

I was not happy with this decision of my Mom taking the butter. I was a ball of hot red fury, covered in butter, being scrubbed down like a literal dish over the kitchen sink. Though only my three year old brother was watching – it was the ultimate humiliation.

I was sent to my room once my Mom had finished degreasing me. My mind was furiously racing. I grabbed my diary and began scribbling down thoughts in broken English. From what I can make out, between the backwards letters and horrifically spelled words, I hated my mother and I still stand by the statement that she took the butter away from me because she

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doesn’t love me. At the bottom of the page, was a scribble of yellow marker, and a rectangle cut out of the page I had written on.

I had come up with a very mischievous plan. It all began with this yellow 2D rectangle. First, I would hide this paper in a very special place (so Mom couldn't find it). Second, wake up early in the morning. Third, take a stool and push it to the fridge. Fourth, access the butter in the fridge. And fifth, replace the butter that I take with the piece of paper that looks exactly like a stick of butter. Bulletproof, I know.

This is where my love of planning began. The adrenaline rush caused by the unknown and the satisfaction of a job well done. Maybe it's the perfectionist in me or the love of meeting high standards. Either way, it is what pushed me to where I am today. I pride myself on my uniqueness. Especially when it's causing me to forge my own path. This pride has driven me to do unconventional things: a 5K on crutches, never going to a school dance (to spite the highschool custom), and going to a university five hours away (to get some space from my family) just to be followed by my parents. It is only now, years later, that I have realized how much this early version of me shaped who I am now. Through the years I have found moments of myself where I take the initiative and run with it – even if it's just to the refrigerator.

Now as the rest of the day continued and ended in my six year old world, the suspense began to build. The next day I was woken up by the sound of my Dad turning on the shower. I had already screwed up, someone was awake. Not wanting anything else to go awry, I decided to take the butter replica from under my mattress (practically like a criminal with a shank) and begin the third step to my plan. Very carefully and quietly, I walk down the stairs. On my way to the fridge, I push a stool along the floor and hear a sharp squeak from the wood beams pushing on each other. I flinch, thinking that, once again, I am screwed. After controlling the sudden

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spike in my heart rate, I look around. I see that, thankfully, nobody is there to stop me and I continue to push the squeaking stool across the floor, around the island, and to the shiny fridge. Using all of my body weight, I pull open the door and wedge the stool between the door, and the fridge. Then, carefully, I climb on top of the stool, open the butter box and find what I haven't been able to stop thinking about. The cold butter hits my hand, and I replace it with my skillful drawing. I climb down, push the stool out of my way, and start tearing into my most important meal of the day.

Unexpectedly, I hear my Dad’s voice. “ What are you doing, Tori?” Now he is not as patient as my Mom. I knew I wasn’t going to be able to slip through as easily – a serious punishment was in the near future. Instead of being able to work under the pressure of fear, I cracked and crumbled. I knew he saw everything I just did and yet, the only thing that will leave my mouth is, “I didn’t do it.”