

What Do you Carry Assignment

I'm not really sure how to start this. Usually my writing is forced upon me by some teacher as I'm made to write about some topic that I truly don't care about, but this is different. I'm writing about me. This is something I've never done before and it honestly kind of scares me, but here it goes.

The Things I Carry, by [redacted]. I carry many things; I carry my backpack, my clothes, my phone, my wallet, my shoes and even my lucky keychain I've had since the fourth grade. I'm guessing you aren't reading this to learn about the odd looking keychain [redacted] to my car keys though. You want some deep emotional stuff, so here it is: Fear. I carry so much fear that sometimes I can't handle it and give up and lay on the floor quietly, trying to calm myself down.

What can scare a teenage boy so bad you ask? Expectations. The most evil thing you can do to someone is to place expectations upon them. Expectations slowly eat away at you until they are fulfilled, which often is impossible. I am expected to do so many things that I can't handle it all. I am expected to get straight A's and to play a varsity sport and to have above a 4.0 GPA and to have a social life and to go to a four year college and to become an engineer and to take over the family business when I grow up and to exercise daily and to learn another language and to turn in every assignment on time and to somehow do it all without voicing any dissent at the insurmountable mountain of trials that I must pass. I know what it sounds like. It sounds like the generic complaint of every teenager: "my parents want too much from me, school is too hard, they don't understand" But I promise that this isn't the same. Unlike other kids, I am not allowed to fall even an inch short of these expectations. Get a B on a test? Grounded. Don't start in my [redacted] game? Grounded. Turn in a project late? Grounded. Grade drops 2%? Grounded. Forget to do

my chores? Grounded. Even now, as I sit here writing this, I worry about whether this is a good enough letter and whether I would be grounded if it isn't. I remember when all these expectations started. It was Sixth grade. It was my second year playing football and my dad wasn't going to let me ride the bench like I did my first year. He wanted me to hit harder, so he did what any loving father would do. He bought a set of football pads from Sports Authority so he could "demonstrate" how to hit people like a freight train. It was rough. He made me practice against him every night after I got home from my regular two hour practices for an additional hour. He hit hard. At first the plan didn't work so he stepped it up further by grounding me until I had shown "Enough Improvement". My performance on the field skyrocketed. By the second game of the season I was easily the [REDACTED] on the team, and by the end of the season I had gained a reputation among other teams as one of the best [REDACTED] in the league. Despite all of this my dad continued to say that I hadn't shown "Enough Improvement" and I continued the daily extra "practices" with my dad and being grounded until the season was over. I wish that his plan hadn't worked. Maybe if his plan hadn't worked he would have given up and allowed me to be a normal person. Maybe if it hadn't worked I would have been able to enjoy playing football. Maybe if it hadn't worked I wouldn't be held to the same laughably high standards I am held to today. But it worked and there's nothing I can do. Now, after I have complained about my parents for the vast majority of this assignment, I would just like to make it clear that even though they are tough on me I know that they are doing it to help me and that I love them. And yes, that includes even now as I sit here grounded, unable to touch my phone because of the B+ I got on my last Precalculus test.