

Kade Plattner
College Prep English
Autobiographical Essay
September 21, 2016

Wink

Many times I wanted to quit. I wanted to just give up and never have to deal with them again. They said it would be fun. That I would want to pass this down to my kids. My question was, "Who in their right mind would want to make their kid go through all of this pain, all of this suffering, all of the crying?" I wanted to know what parent thought that it would be fun when a eight-year-old boy would have to tell his best friend good-bye. The only thing that made him get up at five thirty in the morning and stay up till nine at night, that he was never going to see him again. I had to say goodbye to my favorite steer, my favorite mistake; I still will always miss my buddy Wink. Looking back now, I can see that showing a steer is one of the best experiences I have ever had even with the heartbreak of letting him go.

I have been showing ever since the age of three. I remember looking up at all the big kids and their cattle and seeing them get all the awards that I never got because I was too young. Man how I wanted to get just one of those plaques with my name on it. This avid desire is what sparked the flame that would push me to become the person I am today. When I was finally old enough to show an animal. I set out to get the best steer I could get. Naturally as a young kid I went straight to my grandpa, who I thought was the king of farming and cattle, and said, "I want the best steer you can give me." My grandpa gave me one of his feeder calves. I got a red maintainer steer, who was blind in one eye from birth. Therefore he got stuck with the name Wink. Everyday I washed him, I blowed him out, then Wink and I would go on walks to practice leading. Day after day we did this until the county fair came.

We woke up bright and early that Friday morning and loaded Wink in the trailer. Upon arrival I may have tried to show off a little. I brought Wink off the trailer and pulled on his lead

once then let it drop and he walked behind me the whole way to our spot. I thought that I was cool and that Wink was the best steer in the whole place. The show started at noon therefore I needed to get ready. Time went by and then I heard the first call for my class. I took Wink and got in line. They opened the gates and we started moving. This was it, the moment I had been working for all summer long! It was show time! We made our way around the ring and the judged placed us. I ended up getting second in my class. I was a little disappointed but still pleased.

I went to a few more shows that summer and then the day came that I was hoping never would. We loaded Wink onto the trailer and started the trip to Sedalia. When we pulled into the meat locker I started getting emotional but didn't break down till I had to unload Wink and lead him to his death. We left him in a pin and I said my final goodbye to my best friend. I cried all the way home and then some. I told my parents I never wanted to show again and that they were awful people for making me do that. It was the worst week of my life and I missed him more than I could even imagine.

To this day I still miss Wink and think of him when I see a red steer or cow. I have a picture of him in my room and the ribbons we won together that first year. As I see now what my parents were teaching me that having showed market animals and falling in love with each and everyone of them; showed me that even though I wanted to hold on to him forever they have a purpose in this world just like everything else does. I understand that it is hard to let them go and saying goodbye, but it's the memories and experiences I gain that will be with me forever.