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My Factory Reset

by Ellie Kim

“Thump!” The pain stung my face as I was thrown into the donation box. My soles were torn up, and I was missing my laces. The kind human who had worn me before had outgrown me. That was bittersweet, my adventures with him had been great and I’m happy the little boy is growing bigger each day.

“Move out of the way, you rag!” My thoughts were interrupted by another lost sole, a quite cranky one if I were to say. I sat in the box for daaaaaays, slowly rotting away. As the popular shoes were picked up one by one, I was left alone. That is, until CLANK CLANK CLANK! The box was moving!

“AAAAAAAH,” I screamed. I was once again dumped into another big box full of different shoes. The air was musty, and I was going into full panic mode. My questions about what happened after death were about to find their answers. Terrified, I looked around. No one was scared at all; they looked quite... happy!

Nearby I heard, “I’m finally here, I’ve been waiting my whole life to be in this box. Aren’t you excited to get your makeover?” Excited? Makeover? What did they mean by that? WE’RE LITERALLY ABOUT TO DIE! BZZ BZZ CLANK CLANK. The box was moving, again!

A bright beaming bar of light shined above. It was time. I said my goodbyes and accepted my fate. That is, until we were all lined up in perfect neat rows. These big blue globs were grabbing shoe by shoe and lining them up one by one. Soon, memories came flooding back. I could recall when I was a toddler sneaker getting cleaned up then being put in a comfortable shoe box. I now understood what the other shoes were talking about. More blue globs reached out and started disassembling my parts. Soon I was given a fresh bath, new color, sparkly white laces, and perfect soles.

The blue globs that my friend insists are gloves picked me up and inspected my ripped-up sides and irregular shape. They started staring at me and ripped all the imperfections away. Although in the end I looked amazing, I didn’t feel very beautiful. All the memories I held were being ripped off. For once, I wanted to go back.

The cleaned up shoes now met their new long-life partners. I felt like a million bucks. It was amazing. I never wanted to leave. Unfortunately, I didn't have a choice. I was still very confused, so I asked around.

My wise friend looked at me funny like I was an alien and said, "Have you never heard of the clearance rack? It's where used shoes like us get repaired and cleaned to be sold again." I was shocked. I've never heard of such a place, but it sounded like heaven. I had been dreaming of all the adventures I had as a young shoe, and I was ready to have more.

After what felt like an eternity, the transferring truck rolled in to send us over to the Nike store where we would find our new owners. The truck rolled across the road bringing all of us to new beginnings. Although I got everything I wanted and was ready to start a new chapter, I held my old memories close to my heart, as I will for my new ones. My new chapter will soon begin. I was ready to be loved and worn out by one kid at a time, making them laugh and taking them places to explore. I wanted to be part of their childhood and be the friend that is always by their side.