

## **“ A Different Perspective ” .... Sienna Lakin, St Teresa’s School, Dorking**

***(The winning entry to Rotary’s National annual ‘Young Writer’ Competition, 2018, Senior level, age group 14-17)***

Perspectives. They encompass us. Human nature. Each and every one of us has our own perspective on an element of our world. Opinions, whether oppressed or expressed, they are our perspectives.

One thing we all differ in is perspective on is what is perfect. What we view as being most desired. Yet what is perfection? When did an individual ever grasp their own clear vision of what perfection was to them? Was it that seemingly perfect girl, that gorgeous, flawless model on that front page of the magazine that provided a view on what was perfect. Or the way the sun splinters into thousands of delicate shards of light, a stain of orange, gold and scarlet red when it sets? Or when someone whom you adore with all your heart laughs, and the little lines crease beside their smile and their eyes sparkle, twinkling stars in midnight, fluttering fireflies. There could be thousands of perspectives on what is considered perfect, a perfect feeling, a perfect moment. Moments where simply, quite simply, everything just fits. Comfort, is that a perfect feeling? What all humans seem to crave is security and comfort. We all seem to know what a perfect life would be, we see a glimpse into another's life and gain some invalid, unreliable & foolish understanding that their life is so much more ‘perfect’ than our own.

We need to stop defining perfect.

We don't need to feel ‘perfect’ to feel worth, self-value, self-appreciation. We need to love ourselves, our peers, our neighbours. Whether typically perfect or not. A rose, a scarlet hue of furred petal, soft and delicate, has thorns- sharp and cruel. A fire, trails of coloured flame, beautiful flickers, powerful ripples of warmth- has the potential to burn, to scar and to kill. The ocean, turquoise waves, laced with wondrous creatures- has the ability to engulf a ship, to sink a body of thousands. Not everything is as it seems. Perfection is imperfection’s very own parallel.

My sister was born on the 17th August 2008. The first moment, the seemingly perfect moment was when she first curled her little fingers around my thumb as I held her on the hospital bed, and her eyelids fluttered and her mouth stirred. Then the doctors told my mother, “We are so sorry, she has Down Syndrome” and went on to describe how it was a “genetic disorder”, an *imperfection* of her genes, for she has an extra chromosome”. She is one of those judged in the world- pitied and apologised for. She needs no apology. She to me, is perfect. She is a beautiful being. This is my perspective, but I wish, more than anything, that the world saw her perfection, in the way she sings along to the radio, out of tune, but joyous nevertheless, the way she wakes up, her hair a strewn corn field, yet a messy sort of perfect. Or the way she doesn't always get things right, but she always tries.

All people, all the flaws we have, mental or physical, they mark our journey; our battles, our successes. We need to acknowledge the power of acceptance, and accept all, whether deemed ‘perfect’ or not. Society ought to grow. Grow in mind, in understanding, eradicating bitter judgements.

Let’s stop ourselves from making comments that leave anyone feeling imperfect.

Let's learn to find a new and different perspective.

Let's redefine ‘perfect’.