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The Task at Hand

I'm given the task of the summer that I've approached a million times before, this time with the most necessary resource. I'm given this color pallet as a guide to take my room through a colorful rebirth. It's time for my room to shed it's pink skin, representing my growth through two new colors. I've had this book for a week and searched every inch of the color spectrum, trying to frantically grasp the pigment I can call "mine". Now with only fifty creased post-its poking out the sides, down on their knees and begging for attention, I spread open the fan seeing all my options available to me. Completely overwhelmed, I add twenty more markings; these matte pages feel too familiar and I establish that it's time to give up. Frustrated, I rip out every mocking sticky note and decide to start fresh like all those times in the past. But there will always be too many options that I can't avoid. These choices blind me, but I know that there is a hidden yet simple answer. Overthinking limits my capability, fogging my mind when I am left to decisions.

Joining Los Altos High's field hockey team was one of the easiest choices I've had to make. Like most teenagers, many of my choices are influenced by those I am surrounded with the most, usually my friends, except the twist is that I knew maybe three people in the incoming class of freshmen. So with the push of my parents, I dove into the sport. It took many strenuous practices to get to a level I would personally call decent, but decent at the time seemed good enough, because nearing the end of the season, my coach had invited me to try out for a winter-spring club field hockey team. By now, I had created a separate group of school friends and a tight knit bond with my fellow JV teammates. The majority of us were put up to the idea of joining this club team, and of course another push from my parents allowed me

to want to give it a try. I thought about how much I could improve, how fun it would be to meet more girls who probably were just starting out like me and wanted to get better, just like me. However, I found that my only school friend who joined field hockey didn't sign up for the club try outs. Fortunately, a handful of girls that I was friendly towards were coming out.

On the morning of the first session of tryouts I packed my bag with extra sweatshirts and shoes, just the start of my morning field hockey outings. I realized right away I was an outsider, my skill level was deficient compared to others', my gear wasn't as fancy, my stick was not even comparable to the shiny ones that private schoolers were modeling. This was definitely a mistake, however I tried my hardest in showing off my skills while hiding my embarrassed smirk. Gradually, I made it through tryouts and wasn't anxious to hear back -I knew my fate- I belonged on the non-competitive team.

Imagine the girl who has only played six months of this sport felt when she was placed in the higher level team, and a hint is definitely not excited. My stomach grew butterflies, but not the eager type. I wanted to reach out to the coach about how there had to have been a mistake and I needed to be brought down a level… to where all my friends were. Instead of doing homework, I would sit at home listing all the excuses I could make. When I would show up at practice, instead of socializing and improving my skills, I wallowed in my loneliness and thought about how much I hated the black turf pellets that would find their way into all of my belongings. When it was my turn to do a simple trick, I completely flopped, my mind occupied on how much longer it would be until my thirty minute ride back home. And then one night I was pulled aside by my coach. She said she knew the position I was in, but she also knew that whatever was bugging me needed to be put aside, because she knew within a year I'd be in love with this sport.

In my life, I've overthought multiple assignments, decisions, and results. I found that things with due dates, I would eventually settle for things I didn't necessarily want. Like the color wheel, my brain functions as an organized mess. I found that in field hockey, I set my mind free, and get so much more

accomplished, so I now try to use this idea for activities in my everyday life. Instead of counting every possible negative outcome, I am more trustworthy of my choices. Being able to make quick and determined decisions, I can move on from the task at hand. This realization is what finally allowed me to keep a clear mind when approaching situations, and I was able to accomplish my summer project.