

DAY 12 | Motif: Weight Scale

TITLE | “Distorted Valuation”

MEDIA | Canson Cold Press, Watercolor, Micro Pen

SIZE | 8 x 10

By Kim Anderson

#FEBCHALLENGE19

From 1st through to 8th grade I was taken out of science classes for speech classes. For eight years, educators made me do this? For eight years I missed science, where I could have learned about photosynthesis, plants, the air we breathe, the food we eat, atmosphere, astronomy, weather phenomenon and everything in between. Instead, I was sent to speech classes to learn how to pronounce “sh”, “ch”, “z” over and over, year after year. What knowledge did I gain from these repetitive speech lessons? You know what I gained from these lessons? Truly? I learned to hate pronouncing “church” and “school” because those words had “ch” and “sh”. Such irony – but realistically, what I gained was accolades from everyone “OH, WOW, you speak so well! Wonderful!” “You speak so well that I forget you are Deaf! Amazing!”, “You pass so well as a hearing person!” Such accolades instilled and emphasized to me that my speech was more valuable than what I learned, than the knowledge I gained about how the world works around us. It was more valuable that I assimilate to be as hearing as possible to fit in. I was being trained to do the impossible. That’s like training a black person to do the impossible – to become white. A Deaf person will always be Deaf – they will never be hearing. Speech served no purpose for me, other than to use it as a hearing privilege. I was being valued, awarded, praised or patted affectionately like a monkey/or a dog for learning the trick to speak so clearly so can pass through as a hearing person and use hearing privileges. The truth was, I did not want to be valued for passing as a hearing person. I wanted to be valued and accepted as a proud Deaf intelligent human being.