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Scholarship Red

### High School Highlighter

I am blindingly bright, not only because my defining component is physically synonymous with a traffic cone, but also because I am a ginger in a predominantly Middle-Eastern community, making it fairly easy to label me as an outcast.

I used to be uncomfortable with strangers prodding their way through my sunscreen-infused personal space bubble to stroke my fiery mane. In sixth grade, I transcended into my phase of black, Crayola marker “hair dye”—the raw definition of punk.

I questioned why the goldfish cracker meets cheap spray tan shade was so desirable.

“You’re special,” mom would *obviously* say.  
“You’re rare.”

The ginger gene comes from a recessive trait that each genetic disposer must have embedded in their coding, and *voila*, me.

It was the subtle appreciation and jealousy that began drawing people in. I was the closest to one-of-a-kind than they might ever see. I couldn't let them down; their dreams suddenly became mine.

Overtime I’ve learned to be resilient through constant change and overcoming challenges. I’ve learned that class is not about materialism or money, but rather class is about self-respect, dignity, and authenticity.

I’m not a blonde Barbie or a brunette beauty, but I manipulated my ability to be impressionable by illuminating my golden traits of being a leader, not by the misconceptions surrounding society’s outlook on judgement. Simple as that.