Lauren VS the crazy, batty, 1000-year-old Witch

I was in Middle School (7th grade to be exact) when **it** happened. I never paid much attention to anyone's looks and functions, let alone my own. It was a somewhat average day: dreary, rainy, typical Vancouver weather. I arrived at school ten minutes early only to find that I had a substitute teacher for the day. At first glance, she reminded me of a sack of snaggle toothed potatoes wearing smeared on lipstick and blue eyeshadow. Not a nice sight to witness before 9 AM.

It made complete sense: my regular teacher was complaining about how he wasn't feeling well. *He must be out sick. Yay me! Guess I'm not doing any work today.* (I wasn't always as dedicated to my academics as I am now.)

Not 10 seconds after stepping into the classroom, I was immediately asked by the Witch why I wasn't in the special Ed class. I proceeded to tell her that I wasn't in special Ed, I was in a regular class. Her response was to chuckle at me in the most sickeningly sweet voice, "Haha, good one!" I don't know where she had gotten the idea that I was completely deaf and needed an EA, but I did not like it one bit. She was informed that I wore hearing aids before the school day began-- there was no valid reason for her to be treating me this way.

*Who the hell does she think she's talking to? Dear god I hope this is a warped seriously effed up joke.* I had dealt with rude comments before, but none from an adult who I would normally trust. *Oh great. This one thinks my head is screwed on backwards. This day will be great! (Note the heavy, heavy sarcasm)*

My goodness, I hated that tone. Still do. It looked like this: if another student answered a question, the response would sound like "good one," or "nice catch." But if I (along with any other student like me at the time) answered a question correctly, the response would sound like "great job! Wow, you're so smart! That was wonderful!" The difference in respect and smarminess in both responses is astronomical. *It was a simple answer to a simple question. I didn't find the cure for cancer so stop acting like it, Substitute Teacher!*

Class time proceeded as normal; except for her blatantly ignoring every attempt I made to answer a question, badly using ASL, and speaking really slow with too much lip movement going on. The real ticket was when she handed me her business card with resources for the deaf written all over them. All of my manners went out the window at the moment. *Rude comments I can handle, but this!?* Unsolicited advice was and forever will be a huge no-no. I didn't say anything to her face, but I made a point of throwing it away in her view.

All of this was directed only towards me, no other students were involved. By the time lunch rolled around, I was livid. I was ready to sucker punch this crazy, batty, 1000-year-old Witch right in the mouth. I didn't actually do it, but that was how I felt. Of course, I completely understood the consequences that would ensue if I did get physically violent. I would have more than likely been expelled, possibly sued, and schools would be reluctant to accept me because of my "violent tendencies." My name would have had a bad reputation for the remaining 5 years I was in the school system.

If it isn't obvious, I didn't know how to cope with rude comments and questions regarding my hearing when I was young. I had a tendency to take them in stride and remain quiet about my feelings, when I should have tried to educate whomever was giving me grief. I know that now at age 16, but I wish I knew it when I was 13. I think it would have saved me a lot of emotional turmoil and energy.

It annoyed me whenever people asked such rude questions, and it still does. The way a person phrases and uses their voice when inquiring on a sensitive topic is crucial to whether or not the other person will be offended. I was-- very much so. Sure, there are those who are genuinely curious and don't mean any harm. The line separating the two can be blurry at times, especially if one is feeling confused.

By the end of the day I had managed to cool off, but I still felt disrespected and embarrassed. I didn't talk to anyone about how I was feeling, because I couldn't figure it out myself. I was drowning in relief at being done with her class; I packed up my things and hightailed it out of there. *Thank the high heavens! I never have to see this Witch again!*

Much to my happiness, I never did-- and never have since.