
SOMETHING MORE

Jayden Mitchell
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In morning light that creeps like doubt,
I shoulder a bag of books and dreams,
Still half a student, half a guide,
Treading softly in between.

Each day, I juggle borrowed lines,
a mentor's glance, the ticking time,
and wonder if they see it too—
the cracks I patch with Elmer's glue.

I grade with red, but feel the gray
Of being wrong, or not knowing enough.
The clock ticks loud when minds drift far—
Learning's quiet. Teaching's tough.

I grade in coffee-splotched despair,
my planner filled with arrows, prayers,
“remember to breathe,” scrawled in black,
beside vocab words and feedback.

They say this weight will shape me well,
That steel is forged through fire and test,
But some nights I just want to stop—
To fall asleep, to hope for rest.

At night I dream in rubrics, scores,
and pacing guides that eat my floors.
My friends go out. I rewrite plans.
The weight of futures in my hands.

Yet in the mess, a moment glows—
a “thank you” note, a face that shows
they felt seen, or tried, or cared—
and in that flash, I'm unprepared.

For joy. For fire. For quiet grace.
For finding home in this loud place.
And though my bones feel made of glass,
I think—I *know*—I'll let this pass.

I'll rise again with sleepy eyes,
to greet the bell, to improvise,
to teach, to trip, to try once more—
a student still, but something more.

Author Biography

Jayden Mitchell graduated from Wichita State University in May 2025 with a major in Secondary English Education. She presented at the 2024 Kansas Association of Teachers of English (KATE) Conference and will begin her teaching career at Oakley High School in August. She can be reached at jaydenannmitchell@gmail.com.

