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with hand-drawn illustrations, a decision that significantly increased the workload. Finally, I added the crowning jewel: I would start working on the stories at the unholy hour of two AM, with the presentation looming at 10:15. This meticulous orchestration was my way of concocting the perfect cocktail of stress and anxiety, all in the hope of summoning the muse Calliope to whisper inspiration in my ear.

The result of this peculiar creative process was nothing short of astounding. The screenplay chronicling my life from ages zero to fourteen moved me to tears on multiple occasions as I read it. It was riddled with symbolism- some apparent and some deeply concealed- yet most of it went unnoticed by both my therapist and my fellow patients. Remarkably, this lack of recognition didn't perturb me in the least. Their feedback resembled the critiques of modern art, filled with interpretations that often missed the mark, but it didn't bother me. I was seeking "a permanent home for feeling and image, a habitation where they can live together in harmony"

people will do anything to not confront their shame (Brown XVI). I, however, use it to look into my past to harness the powerful emotions they hold. Writing about my shame is easy, since I have had a deep history of shame being connected to the written word.

A prime example of how such humiliation/mortification/indignity has been forever tied to the written word. For me, the source of this humiliation is uncovered in my foundation of reading itself. As I didn't start reading at all until I was in first grade. It was an unusual journey into the world of words, one marked by a mixture of determination, deception, and ultimately, redemption.

My earliest memories are filled with the echo of my mother's voice, reading stories from her collection of books. Long before I even stepped foot in Pre-K, she made it her mission to introduce me to the magic of reading. She patiently sat with me, pointing at words, trying to teach me to decipher them. But there was a problem—I couldn't grasp it as quickly as I thought I should, or at least as quickly as I believed others did. Frustrated by my inability to keep up, I concocted a plan to save face. I decided to memorize every word my mother read aloud. Now you may be thinking, “That



## Bibliography

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