Thank you "Friend"

"Don't use the word hate," my mom always said. "You don't hate anyone, you strongly dislike them," she repeated continuously.

I have to agree, hate is a strong word. But to the people of social media, the influencers, the people we follow and press the confirm button allowing them to see updates on our social media, hate isn't a strong word, but just a word. One that for all we know, it could mean nothing to someone, but to anyone else, it can put them down forever.

The couch stood strong and tall hugging me closer as I watched tv, with my phone in my hand shifting my undivided attention from the tv back to my phone.

"Dinner's ready!" my mom called to me from the neighboring room.

The next home-cooked meal was hot and steamy waiting for us at the dinner table. A delicious smelling waft of air traveled over to me and turned my eyes towards the table.

"Alright, Mom!" I shouted back to my family. "I'm talking to my friends!"

But no, I wasn't really talking to my friends. I was doing anything but talking to them; I was snapchatting, direct messaging, texting. Just like that, another word completely misused and turned into something else. Talking-- hate--two words already where their value is demolished and made into something new.

I looked back down to my phone. "*Screenshot from 'School Groupchat'*".

Except what did I do? What did I type? I know I couldn't have said anything bad.

Frantically, I typed in the digits of my phone password. The phone that held all my memories, and my important information. What was my life turning into, revolving around a piece of glass. No not the piece of glass that the window makes up-- the window you look out of to see your friends hanging out without you. In fact, you didn't even have to look out of the

window to see them, you already saw it all on social media anyways. A phone-- a phone made from little microchips. Not the chips you eat either. Or does anyone eat the chips anymore, I mean we all want to look like the Instagram models that we carelessly scroll by and like their picture even if we don't actually "like" it.

My phone unlocked, transferring me right to snapchat. I didn't even have to press the app myself. The phone knows how much I'm on snapchat, so I guess they just knew where to bring me. The sad thing is, they were right.

I began to scroll up through the chats looking for "Me" written in magenta font above everything I said. Nothing… there was no reason to screenshot. So why had she?

I can just ask her why she did that myself. I thought to myself hoping that this would be the answer.

"Heyyyy," I typed. How fake of me, at least be realistic. Not anymore though, I can't even delete the chat. "I was wondering why you screenshotted the chat lol. Sorry if I did something wrong haha," of course, I added the usual "haha", and "lol", to show that I'm not mad- -yet.

"Addison! You've been on your phone too long! Dinner has been ready for 5 minutes; hurry!" my dad now shouted informing me that now, I should really get going.

I let my phone away from the aggressive grasp I had on it. "No phones at the dinner table," my family always said. This would be the only time my eyes and hands would not be permanently locked to the device.

Ding.

The ignorance I showed to my phone as it rang in the other room was incredible. Never seen before.

"Thank you Mom," I said finishing my dinner. "The food was great, may I be excused, please?"

"Yes you may," my mom replied, granting me the permission I requested.

1 missed call. 2 snapchat pictures. 6 Snapchat Messages. 28 text messages.

I read my phone notifications. *Insane*. I thought to myself. *I was only gone for 30 minutes minimum, did I miss something that big*. No I didn't. This is just how technology had taken over my life. These thoughts flooded my mind.

Once again, my fingers repeated the passcode for my phone from memory. I looked to see if she, who was guilty for screenshotting, had answered.

Opened.

Just like what I had done to my phone each and every time I entered the stress creating app, Snapchat. I swiped out to see the other chats. Another chat from the boy at school.

"Hey, I just wanted to let you know that I am on this girl's private story and it was a picture of you and something you said. What you said was nothing bad, but over the screenshot was text saying how much she hated you."

Hated... the word bounced throughout my head.

Hated...the word was not misused this time.

*Hated...*My bucket was automatically empty.

*Hated...*My week was ruined.

"Hey! Thanks for letting me know, I really appreciate it," I typed back. "Do you mind telling me who!?" I continued.

However, I didn't have to continue because the only answer, and who he answered with was none other than the screenshotting suspect.

I began to feel worthless. More worthless than the apps on your phone that are automatically downloaded. More worthless than the accidental pictures you took on your phone. Social media had once again, brought me down. Or was it my friend? Oh right, "friend". Just another misused word. Because she wasn't my friend.

The power of three. Something to discuss in Language Arts. Hate, talk, and friend :a great example. Except that only they aren't an example of the power of three anymore, they are an example of three without power. Or too much. You showed me that, you showed me that these words can be misused and meaningful. Only you can hate people instead of strongly disliking them. A terrific role model. Thanks, "friend".