



Devyn Rush
Singer/Songwriter/National Spokesperson for Hey U.G.L.Y.

Singer/songwriter and national spokesperson for Hey U.G.L.Y., Devyn Rush of American Idol, was bullied in school. She recently received a letter from a bystander who went to her school during the time she was bullied.

Here is what that bystander had to say:

Devyn, we went to the same elementary school for a period. I don't know if you remember me, but I distinctly remember you being picked on constantly. You weren't anymore awkward than any of the other kids. Like you've mentioned, you were an easy target for bullies just because of your sheer size. As one of the "bigger" kids in the grade, who wasn't picked on as often, I kept out of it. Mostly out of fear of retaliation from the bullies. As a dumb kid, I felt it wasn't my problem as long as I wasn't the one doing the bullying. In retrospect, I was a large part of the problem. In middle school, I began to realize not saying anything was just as bad as provoking the bully to pick on other kids. One day I stood up for a kid on the bus ride home and got knocked on my butt. Next day, I came in with a swollen cheek and a black eye. I walked around school with my head down, ashamed. Even when the kid I stood up for came up to me to say thanks, I didn't say much. Throughout the day I had random kids I never spoken to come up to me to say that it took guts to do what I did. And to this day, **I find it more shameful to have let so many of my peers get picked on** for being different, than to walk around with a black eye for a couple of days. I'm not advocating for the bigger kids to fight the bullies; just that **bullying can be fueled by spectators and extinguished by a strong voice**. I'm glad to see that you made it out of public school alive. With some scars, but alive. I'd like to think that the people who picked on you for being small have made you in to a bigger person, with character and tough skin.

I'm proud to say I knew you growing up. *Miguel*

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