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## BASIS Peoria

### Ethical Deluge

I remember my time in third grade, when everything was sunshine and rainbows, and every classmate was a perfect angel who could do no wrong. One day, those expectations were overturned, and I was forced to make a decision which would impact me for the rest of my life.

That fateful day, I decided to use the school bathroom, despite the utter repulsiveness radiated from it all day. What I found was probably worse than the bathroom itself. Some kid was shoving toilet paper down the stalls and flushing it! The ground was covered in water, gurgling up from the toilet. As I entered, the boy heard me and turned, and I recognized him from my class. The perpetrator stopped immediately, and I began to walk out, ready to tell a teacher. He pleaded with me not to tell anyone, and the look in his eyes almost broke my resolve. I stood there while my brain attempted to comprehend the request.

Regaining my ability to move, I eventually proceeded to the classroom, not sure what exactly I was going to do. What he might have seen as a



prank, I saw as a waste of resources and a violation of ethical conduct. The boy was no friend of mine, but he was nevertheless a classmate, a peer. The hallway seemed to grow as the classroom neared, but finally I reached the door. I gripped the handle and opened the door.

When the boy strolled back to the class, the teacher's gaze was on him. He was pulled out of class for a chat. As he and the teacher returned, the downcast look on his face made me regret ever telling anyone about the incident. I knew he would never forgive me, and he had every right to deny me his forgiveness. At that moment, I was not convinced I had made the right choice. Looking back now, 6 years after it happened, I stand by my conviction, and hope my choice has helped him go down a better path.