

# All I need is a friend

*by Isabel Doades, 9th grade*

Okay. Just relax. You've done this a million times before. Okay maybe in your head not in front of thousands of people but it should be the same right? Just breathe. I can't do this. I can't. They will laugh at me. Treat me like a disease and act like they didn't see me step on stage. I should run now before I get myself too deep. Who would want to listen to me? I mean nobody at school acts like they even know me. I should have never agreed to run for student council president. I'm not even on the student council.

Besides everyone knows it's a popularity contest. I should have never even put up a single poster. They just tear them down and put *hers* up. Jacklin Mayville. She was friends with everybody. But me. I got on her bad side and she's had it out for me ever since. Beating me everything I try to do good at. She beats me. I've wanted to drop out of high school for so long now but my parents think I'm just going through a phase.

"Katlyn what happened?" Ms. Tris asked. She looked about twenty with curly blonde hair and kind green-gray eyes.

"Uh I can't talk in front of them. I'll puke or do something even more embarrassing. I know I'm going to lose to Jacklin. Just like everything else history will and shall repeat itself. You should know that better than anyone else Ms. Tris."

"True but history also has changed before. And it will change again and again. And by not going up on that stage you are giving Jacklin what she wants."

I hate teachers sometimes. They always know how to twist things around to make you want to do stuff you thought you didn't want to do.

"Fine but if it looks like a dead giveaway I am leaving." I told her. She walked me back to school. Jacklin was just finishing her speech by the time I got back stage.

"I promise you that. Thank you!" She stayed on the stage a couple minutes longer than needed. Just soaking in the fame she got from being the queen of the school. She flipped her black hair over her shoulder and just acted like she already won. She probably did.

Mr. Jakes, the principal walked on stage. "Thank you Jacklin. You can leave now." She waved to the crowd one more time before walking off stage. She gave me a look while passing by me. "Now please welcome Katlyn Howard to the stage."

I took a shaky breath and walked on the stage. It was dead silent. I saw some people take their iPods and started playing on them or listening to music or whispering to their friends. They could care less about me at that very moment. All they cared about was Jacklin winning and beating me one more time. In front of everybody.

I took another shaky breath. "Hello. I'm Katlyn Howard. And you should vote for me for Student Council because-" They were staring at me now. None of them giving a care in the world. "Sorry. You should vote for me uh because..." My reasons were stupid. None of them would get

me any votes. I should just give up now. "Alright this is stupid." I grabbed my notecards and ripped them to shreds. "To be honest I wouldn't make a good president. I choke under pressure and I can tell you're all going to vote for Jacklin. Whatever I say now would just be a waste of your time. So if you want to vote for me. Vote for me. But I can tell that you could care less. So I guess I'll see you in the halls. Bye."

With that I left. This was so stupid. As I walked off stage I heard nothing. No one was clapping. No one even reacted to me leaving. I looked over at Jacklin. Big mistake. She probably thought I was an idiot and was going to tell me.

"Well Katlyn." She said. "That was a lovely speech. Surely you'll get about two or three votes. I thought you were gonna get none."

"Jacklin what did I ever do to you that made you want to hate me so much?" I asked her. I honestly don't remember.

She rolled her eyes, turned around and left. The next day after all the voting was done I got about twenty votes. It was mostly people who didn't show up to the assembly and didn't know what Jacklin was promising. Jacklin on the other hand: 130 votes. She won by a landslide. What did I expect? For people to even care that I bothered to even talk? Some guy bumped into me and knocked all my stuff out of my hand.

"I'm so sorry. I can be such a clutz." He said. He had long black hair that barely brushed his eyes. And his eyes were a wonderful gray blue.

"Oh it's no big deal I wasn't paying attention." I said. I could feel a blush rising to my cheeks.

"Here." He handed me my math textbook. "Are you new here? I've never seen you before."

Is that what people thought when they saw me? That I was some new girl. I'm in the eleventh grade. "Ah yeah I am. I really have to get going or I'll be late bye."

"Wait what's your name?" He tried to catch up to me. "I'm Nathan Chell."

"Katlyn!" I shouted.

The bell rang and he had to go. There were tears swelling in my eyes. I was that unnoticeable. That people thought I was some new girl. I skipped my English class. I don't want people seeing me crying my eyes out. I walked out of the school. No one would care or notice. Like anyone ever has. I can't believe that I ever thought that maybe I could win. That Jacklin would lose for once. How foolish. No one cares about me. No one even knows who I am.

Does everybody just think that I'm the new girl? No they were all under Jacklin's little spell. The one that made everyone would actually care about me or even talk to me not. I walked around till I got to the bridge. I come here all the time. It was the oldest bridge in the state. No cars ever used it anymore. It looked like it could barely even handle a Smart car. But it was good for walking and bike riding. Then again very few people find this bridge and remember it. Like me. Me and the bridge have that in common.

I sat on the edge looking down at the river below. The water was churning like crazy. Anyone who jumped off it would most certainly die. Like death would help in my case. People would treat it like any other death. Better yet I am sure that Jacklin would celebrate at such an event. She would have a party for sure. I can see it now. People spilling out of her house cheering. Toasting to my death. Like it was a good thing. Let them celebrate. Let them enjoy the fact that no one cared enough about me. About what I did. About what I could do.

Why would it matter if I died? Only my parents would mourn my death. Even Nathan wouldn't feel a thing if he found out that I did die. He would just treat it like any other day. I swung my other leg the edge facing the water. I would be called a coward. But I'm not one. I am brave. I will go down as being brave enough to do this. Maybe this is what everyone thinks when they jump. I am brave. I am doing the right thing by jumping. So just do it.

I slowly pushed myself off the ledge. And then I was falling. Falling to fast. I was headed towards the water. They would find my body some where down the river. They would find the bridge and take it down. Or do something with it. Ignore it just like they did to me. I hit the water and everything went black.

I felt something pulling on me. It was a strange shape. I couldn't make out who or what it was. It's hands were strong and soft. Perhaps it was an angel. Maybe I was in heaven. This could be the angel that was taking me to the gates. I heard the angel say my name

"Katlyn! Katlyn please wake up! KATLYN!" I heard the angel shout. I felt wet and heavy. My skin was cold. Like stone. But I didn't want to wake up. I just wanted to remain asleep. To remain still for as long as I could. The color started coming back. It was slow. I could make out it's shape. It was male. Strong by the looks of it. He had long dark hair that just barely brushed his eyes. His wonderful graish bluish eyes. Just like Nathans.

"Katlyn come on." He said.

I slowly stirred. I was on the river bed not to far away from the bridge. I looked up to see Nathan standing over me dripping wet. "What are you doing here?" I asked him. I don't know if I'm angry embaressed or relived that he pulled me out of the water.

"What am I doing here? Really? What are you doing here? Why were you in the water?" He seemed mad.

"Oh why would you care? You didn't notice me until today. And for your information I am not a new girl!" I shouted at him. I tried to get up but my arm failed me. I fell down hard on the gravel.

"How god are you okay did you hurt your arm?" Nathan asked suddenly concerned. He tried to grab my arm but I pulled away.

"My arm is fine Nathan. Go away." He stood there as still as a statue. "LEAVE! Leave me alone. Just ignore me like everyone else does!" I was mad at him. At the world. At Jacklin. At everybody. And he just happened to be in the cross fires.

"What did I do to you?" He seemed mad. Like I did something wrong. I struggled but eventually got up.

"I'll see you later." I walked back to the bridge. This time I would be successful. Nathan caught up with me and stopped me in my tracks. "Move. NOW!" I told him.

He stared down at me. "No. I am getting you and me some dry cloths and then I am taking you to a hospital to get that arm looked at."

He grabbed my unbroken arm and dragged me to his truck. He was too strong to resist. "Okay you want to tell me where you live or am I going to have to take you straight to the hospital where you will get questioned far more?"

I told him where I lived. We drove there in silence. Not even the radio was on to listen to. He pulled up to my house. One of the nicest ones in town. I hated it. It loomed over everything. Making me seem like some spoiled rich girl was one of the things it loomed over. I didn't want him

to come inside but before I could he was following me inside.

“ Geez. Who’s your parents?”

“ My dad’s a doctor and my mom has her own printing buisness.” I told him. I don’t like people knowing that kind of stuff. I quickly opened the door and let him in. I ran up stairs to my room and changed into some dry cloths. I checked my arm to see that it was just really bruised. Nothing broken from what I could tell.I changed into a pair of yoga pants and a long green shirt.

I walked back down stairs.” Nathan you can go you know. I’m fine by myself.”

He turned around. “ What about your arm?”

“ It’s just got a few bruises. Nothing I can’t handle. I can have my dad look at it when he gets home.”

He paused. “ Katlyn why were you in the water? Please don’t give me some lame lie.”

“ I jumped off the bridge. Plain and simple. I wanted to do something right for once and I thought I could do that right but you made me fail.”

He looked offended. “ I made you fail? By saving your frickin’ life I made you fail! Are you insane or something?”

“ Yes. You made me fail. If you had just let me die I would have been happy. I would have done something right for once. Jacklin would have finally lost at something!”

“ This is all because of her? What has she done to you?”

“ She has tried to destroy my life since second grade. I haven’t won anything. I could have won this but you made me lose again.” I shouted at him.

“ What would you have won Katlyn? What?”

I glared at him. Refuseing to respond. “ Get out Nathan.”

“What?”

“ I said GET OUT! LEAVE ME ALONE!” I yelled.

He got in my face. “ NO! Katlyn tell me now what would you have won?”

I looked him straight in the eye. “ I would have won the chance to do something right.”

I glared at him. I wasn’t going to back down. He gave up and and left. Slamming the door behind him. What had I done?I have failed at everything I do. And this time it wasn’t my fault that I did fail.It was all his. I would have done something right for once if he didn’t pull me out of the water. If he didn’t call me a new girl. If he had just left me alone I would have done this one thing right. And I could have died peacefully. I was headed up stairs when I heard the phone ring. I ignored it. I wasn’t talking to anybody right now. Now I was planning on how to do something right for once.

The bridge was too low. I know that now.I needed something that I couldn’t come back from. Something that I could do right and never come back from. The phone kept on ringing. Why couldn’t this person get a clue? Finally I picked it up.

“ What?” I said. Clearly this person was fairly stupid.

“ Hello this is Megana I am looking for a Ms. Katlyn Howard.” She said.

“ This is she.” I said.

“ Hi. I’m here to call about the bridge inceident. I work for the newspaper and someone saw you jump off it earlier today. I was wondering if you tell me about or if I could use your name in my article?” Megana asked.

“ Why would you want to write about this?”

“ Oh because of the amount of sucides that have happened in the past couple of years. I

wanted to get an idea about what was going through your head. You know news like this goes around quickly in this town. Even in the most remote corners.”

“ How dare you ask me to talk about my greatest failure. You should be ashamed!” I hung up the phone on her. It only mad me more detremined to succed this time.

I walked into the bathroom to see what we had. Nothing good. No pain killers or anything. You would think that having a doctor as a dad would mean every kind of medicine possible but I guess not. It was about one. That meant I had good two hours before Jenny got home from school. Whatever I do I'll make sure it is behind closed and locked doors. I walked back to my room but tripped over a small bump in the carpet. I looked down from the railing. I was already pretty beat up and bruised. A jump this high up would have no return. I swung my legs over the railing. Before I could jump I heard the front door open and saw the devil himself walk through. Nathan.

“ What are you doing here Nathan?” I called down. He looked up to see me sitting on the railing.

“ Get down from there Katlyn before to fall and break your neck.” He sighed.

“ Why do you think I'm up here?” I muttered. I swung my legs back over the railing with diffuculty. I walked down stairs. He was leaning against the doorframe, looking mad as ever.

“ So do I need to be around you twenty four seven just to make sure you don't do something stupid?” He asked.

“ I don't need you to watch me. I can take care of myself just fine thank you. What are you doing here? I thought you left.” I asked

“ Yeah. Almost jumping off a railing is the perfect way to take care fo yourself. I came back to make sure you were okay.”

“ Well I'm fine. Now go.”

He shook his head. “ You are not fine. I'm staying with you till your parents get home.”

“ If my parents find a boy in our house they will flip out!”

I guess he never thought about that. I have parents. And even though they don't hang around long when they get home they still don't want to see a boy in my room. After school.

“ Fine I'll leave five minutes before they get homea. But I am sticking to you like glue till I gotta leave.”

“ Fine. But at least give me some personal space. Like having to use the bathroom? I highly doubt you want to be in there while I do my *personal* buisness.”

“ Alright but besides that I am not leaving your side.” He said.

“ Okay.” I signed. I walked back upstairs to my bedroom. Nathan folloing close behind.

I heard the phone ring again. I checked the number to see it was th newspaper again. Most likely trying to get my word on the her stupid paper.

“ Are you gonna get that?” Nathan asked after the tenth time they called.

“ No it's the newspaper. I guess someone saw me jump at the bridge and now the newspaper wants me to explain what happened even though I made it clear I don't want to talk about it.”

The phone wouldn't stop ringing. “ Here let me tell them off.” Nathan said. He grabbed the phone and started talking into it.

“ Katlyn is my friend and she has made it fairly clear that she does not want to talk about it. Alright who is this?..... Megana? What are you doing?” Does he know Megana? “ Megs please

just leave her alone. She really doesn't want to talk about it."

He gave me a look and left the room. How did he know the news reporter? Was she her girlfriend or something? He closed the door behind him. I pressed my ear to the door to see if I could hear any parts of the conversation.

"Are you really going to go that far just for some stupid story?..... No Megs it's not about why she doesn't want to give you the story it's the fact that you keep calling her over and over again. She won't even tell me why she did it..... OH that is a new low Megs especially for you!..... You wouldn't dare!..... Fine Megana. I'll see what I can do..... Yeah yeah yeah. I'll see you later.... Yeah you too. Bye."

I quickly jumped on my bed to make it look like I wasn't eavesdropping." Well? I asked as he walked back into the room.

"Oh nothing. The person, Megana I think was just getting mad at me for not giving the phone over to you. She got mad, I got mad and lets just say the rest is history."

"Do you know Megana? When you first picked up the phone you seemed surprised to hear the name"

"Oh my Mother had her over for dinner the other day so I guess I was kinda surprised to hear her name again."

I nodded my head. After awhile I put some music on just to break some tension. Soon my favorite song came on. At first it was just a little foot tap. Then a head nod. Soon I was dancing to the song and replaying it over and over again. Not caring at all that Nathan was sitting next to me laughing his butt off at my wonderful (Not!) dancing. I grabbed his hand and tried to get him to dance with me.

My cell phone rang. If it was the newspaper lady I swear I will go crazy. I check the number to see it was my mother's.

"Hello?"

"Hi Katlyn. How was school.?" My mother asked.

"Fine. Nothing happened. What's up?"

"Jenny just found out that her play was tonight and not next week. You don't have to come but I just thought I'd let you know so you could maybe get some of your friends to have you over for dinner or something." She said. My mother was so sweet but she can be a but endearing at times.

"Yeah sure no problem. I gotta go. Love you."

"You too." She hung up the phone.

"What's up?" Nathan asked.

"My mom just told she and my dad won't be home till really late tonight. So I'll be alone till maybe eleven tonight at the earliest." I told him. Maybe he would finally leave me alone for a bit.

"You can come over to my place for dinner if you want? It's normally just me, my mom and my sister. My dad goes on a lot of business trips."

I shook my head. "No I'll be fine alone."

He shook his head. "I thought you knew that I wasn't leaving your side till your parents got home. Come on lets head back to my truck."

I tried to protest but he pulled my arm till I gave in. Once I was in his truck he smirked at me.

"Oh shut up. "

We drove the rest of the way in silence. He pulled up to a small sky blue house. In the front lawn was two pink flamingos. The porch had a metal bench on it the swung.

“ Oh god. I thought I told her to get rid of the flamingos!” He moaned.

I laughed. “ I like them. There so cute.” I got out of the car. He lead my to the front He unlocked the door and lead me inside.

“ Nathan is that you?” I heard a voice call.

Th living room was small with one wall painted read. There was a huge sofa and coffetable taking up the whole space. A woman walked out of the kitchen. She had black hair with a few gray streaks in it. her eyes were a warm brown. She had very fancy work cloths on but looked at ease in the kitchen.

“ Who’s your friend?” She asked.

“ Mom this is Katlyn. Katlyn this is my mother.” Nathan said.

She held out her and. It toke gently in my hand. “ Nice to meet you Katlyn. It’s been quite some time since Nathan introucdused me to one of his girlfriends.”

“ MOM!” I heard Nathan say

She waved her hand at him.

“ Nathan? Is that you?” I heard some on call down stairs.

The person pounded down the stairs. She had dark blonde hair and hazel eyes. She looked kinda short but still very pretty.

“ Hi.” She said.

“ Hi I’m Katlyn.” I told her.

She had a glem in her eye. “ Katlyn? Megana. I was the person that talked to you on the phone about my story.”

I gave Nathan a look. He never told me she was his sister.

“ What story?” His mother asked.

“ Nothing mom.” Nathan said a bit to quickly.

“ It’s not nothing Nathan. Katlyn here jumped off the bridge just down the street.” Megana smirked at me.

“ Nathan. You didn’t tell me that Megana was your sister.” I said.

He scratched his neck. “It never came up.”

“ Well I would really like to talk about it if you don’t mind.” Megana asked.

“ Yeah I do kinda mind.” I told her.

“ Well this is fairly important to me. People are saying you tried to jump because you got tired of losing to Jacklin Mayville.”

“ Please stop.” I asked her. But she was on a roll.

“ Why would you do something like that? Just because you lost to her again? I mean I have heard far better reasons to commit suicide than because of losing. I would think thaat you and losing would be a normal thing by now.”

“ I think that’s enough for now.” Her mother cut in. “ Katlyn would you like to stay for dinner?” She smiled warmly at me.

“ Sure I would love too.” I smiled back.

“ Great. It should be ready in about ten minutes. Meg help me into the kitchen please.”

“ Can you have Nathan help you please--”

“ MEGANA!” Her mother shouted. “ Follow me into the kitchen now.” She said strenly.

Megana followed her into the kitchen.

“ When were you planning on telling me that Megana was your sister?” I asked bluntly.

“ Um I wasn’t planning on it.”

I was about to tell him off when his mother walked back in the room.

“ I’m sorry about Megana, Katlyn. She been working on this story for about a month now and I guess she really wants you to finish for you. Supper is ready.” She said.

We walked into the dinning room. There was a hot tray of lasanga on the table with garlic bread and salad next to it. I toke a seat and everyone started dishing up.

“ So Katlyn tell me about your family.” Ms. Chell asked.

“ I have a younger sister, she’s in elementary school. My dad is a sugeon at the hospital and my mother owns her own printing company.” I said.

“ So do your parents spend most of there time on your younger sister?” Megan blurted out.

“ No. They spend equal time with me *and* my sister.” I replayed.

“ But than why are you here tonight? I mean you would think that attempting sucide would be enough for them to be highly concerned.” She said.

“ Megana that is enough.” Ms. Chell said.

“ I didn’t tell them yet.”

“ Why?” Megana asked ignoring her mother. “ I mean this is quite big. Most people don’t survive a sucide attempet. And those who do would gladly tell people why and how come they tried to.”

“ Well I have my reasons and I don’t have to tell anyone.” I countered.

“ Silly reasons. So tell me did you try to do this because you got tired of losing to Jacklin? Because you wanted to do something right for once?”

“ Megana Louise.” Her mother warned. But she kept on going.

“ Maybe you didn’t like the fact that you were inable to do anything about the life you had? Or was it to get attenion. Did you just want that one last push to make you feel loved?”

“ MEGANA LOUISE CHELL!” Her mother shouted.

“ So I could get do something right! So I could feel like I was good at something! And you know what? I kinda wish that I had been successful! ” I shouted at her.

I got up and ran out the door. I heard voices calling me. I just kept running. I was lost in my thoughts. I was so lost in my thoughts that I didn’t hear the car. I didn’t see it coming after me. But I felt it. I felt like my back broke in half. Sending pieces of it into me. Piercing heart and stomach. It was getting harder see. I could barely make out the faces above me. One looked like my mother. She had her light brown hair, tears swelling into her light brown eyes. I could smelling the printing ink on her.

Pain was all I felt. I couldn’t speak. My sight came back to focus for one second. I saw Nathan standing over me. I saw my life slowly pass me by. When I found out I was going to be a big sister. One last memory came into focus. Nathan trying to keep me alive. Trying to be my friend before it was too late. I was happy. I died with a reason to live. And I hope he knows he was the last person I saw.

# The End