

The Dead Sisterhood

My reflection in the mirror disgusts me. All I see is a fat girl in her underwear, pink and frilly, standing in her outdated bedroom. She is holding a cigarette in her clammy hand chubby and soft with sausage like fingers. It's releasing a toxic smoke; the smell clings to all the fabric in the room, like a child not wanting to go to school for the very first time. Her greasy, short brown hair sticks to my pimply forehead, a whiteboard covered in pussy red bombe drenched in sweat. The room isn't hot, but it is chilly, from an overused and abused A/C. I am pensive and maybe even a little anxious over what I'm planning to do. In the mirror I can see the worn and beat up black case lying on my bed, containing my little sister's violin. While I am home contemplating over what to do with myself and this violin, Lily, a prodigy by all definitions, is currently watching the school production of Peter Pan with our parents and one of her generic friends—unaware of the act of hate I was about to inflict on her.

Throughout middle school I wondered why I hated my little sister so much. This hate was not of the normal stereotypical type that is common among most American families. I have made successful and unsuccessful attempts of harming her physically and emotionally. At one point in 3rd grade opportunity presented itself and allowed me to push Lily over the edge of our grandmother's apartment balcony. It was two stories and she broke her arm, but didn't blame me. She never blames me. A key point in my hate and envy for her is her beauty. Her flawless skin with beach blonde hair makes her seem like a smaller replica of our mother. Like the Barbie dolls I idolized as a little round girl. Her green eyes sparkle, existing like the stars nebulae away from earth. When she smiles, which she does often, it makes people want to take out their camera and take a picture at such a monumental moment in their day. I suffer from masculine features that were inherited from our father. I share a similar wide and tall shape with him. A female Paul Bunyan, some might say. A big nose like an albino baby pickle, with pale skin reminding those of the dead, accompanied freckles scattered in unattractive ways. At the age of fourteen, Lily figure skated through puberty. Her petite body slowly started molding itself into womanly curves. I watched with resentment as my growing process slowed and settled into my

bones. Once seventeen, I towered over boys, looking down on them from the clouds of solitude, straining my eyes to see their handsome faces below me because I refuse to wear my thick magnifying glasses that distorted my muddy brown eyes. This wasn't new for I have been this tall and awkward since the 8th grade. Boys called the house in shy attempts to reach her, her friends were true at heart, and our parents believe that she can't do any wrong. She probably couldn't to be honest.

A Disney princess at heart kindness and tooth rotting sweetness comes naturally to her. There wasn't a bum in this overcrowded city that she hasn't given money to. Old people who think that everyone has forgotten them know that she never will, and the Humane Society commend her regularly for her services. I, on the other hand, cannot afford to be so kind, cigarettes are expensive and my time is devoted to the library where I would reside for hours reading crime thrillers then steal another book for home.

When we were younger and life was more brutal to get through, hate was implanted in my heart toward my little sister by people who are irrelevant today. Words of comparison between her and I were endless and some point I could feel the pity and embarrassment for me radiating from her. My existence made hers harder so over time we drifted away. Hours of braiding each other's hair with flowers and trying on mommy's lipstick, faded into closed doors and surprised and unexpected hellos from one another. Those were afternoons forced at the park, she on the swings with her friends and me under a tree by myself, and recesses where she would play tag, and I spent time hiding behind the portables picking at weedy flowers that stuck to my socks and made my ankles itch.

I turn away from the mirror and put out the cigarette, only half-smoked, for the desire to continue vanished. After dressing in my oversized black hoodie and unflattering skinny jeans I shuffled across my wood floors toward my bed to grab the violin and carry it outside to the backyard. The cold air blowing in my face lets me know that winter is approaching soon. I place the case on the ground and fish out the lighter I used earlier for my unfinished cigarette. Hesitation stopped me for a moment, should I do this? This would ruin Lily's future and burn off the wisps of love that she has for me. This quick delay didn't change my mind. Taking the violin out its case and, though it was taking me a few tries, I finally light the strings that have brought

tears to listener's eyes and attracted fans from all over. It's beautiful wooden mouth let the fire sit in it the flames spurting out. Quickly the whole violin is ablaze.

As I stand there watching it burn, My mind started to play tricks with visions embedded in the fire of distant memories of childhood when Lily and I were closest. Two little girls skipped in the fire playing with dolls and digging holes in their grandmother's back yard. The fire felt nice and warm so I lay myself next to it hands tucked in my jacket pocket. The clouds in the dark blue sky blocked the stars and the outline of the moon illuminated. For hours or what felt like it, I lay here thinking about why I hate Lily. This helped fight off the guilt. Tomorrow Lily is going to fly to Julliard and audition for the music program. So young and talented she would probably get in. A smile inched its way on my face of the thought of her not getting into her college of choice and being stuck here with me. By burning her violin the night before this important day I probably ruined all chances. A terrified scream traveled to me coming from the porch. "LUCY!" Lily runs over to the fire face surprised and horrified at what was before her, reaching out for her violin. She obviously doesn't care about the flames searing her skin eating at her arms toasting her delicate hands. All she wants was to save her instrument. It's dead, though.

She turns to me with tears of pain and confusion in her eyes. "Why Lucy? Why?" she questions. Why are you so beautiful Lily? Why did children taunt me for not being you? Why I am not loved like you? Why do I not excel at life the way you do? I stare back blankly with no real answer to her question, just a feeling of satisfaction and pleasure flowing through my body. The more I watch her cry and struggle to save her violin, the more the feeling spreads through me.

Our parents came to aid her and drag her away from the fire. They don't even glance my way. That's normal behavior. Support her, because I am irrelevant. I slowly walk inside knowing that Lily was watching. My steps echoed as I trudged up the stairs and struggle to pry open my window. The smell of burning wood and dreams float into my room like the leaves of autumn dancing on our lawn. The cries of "why?" coming from my little sister fill my ears, making the need of music unnecessary. I spared a look out the window and saw that the fire was out but the violin ruined. My parents ventured inside probably to go in the kitchen make tea for Lily and discuss how to deal with me. But Lily sat in the backyard with her destroyed violin crying like it is her deceased child. Maybe she sensed me watching this scene and looked up at me eyes pure

reflections of what mine are. Hateful and lost. This was it, I finally broke her. The sunny disposition has been rained on. Cheer has been killed and replaced with remorse. I sit on my bed, smiling, content. She is now on my level, or maybe the start of it.