

‘Get me out of here!’

Based on a true story
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**Secretly, I'm dying inside
Wearing my mask to hide
The torture, the pain
My head is going insane
I feel nothing no more
Except for grief and sorrow
I don't want to live
Don't want to wake up tomorrow
Nobody noticed the fight
Against these demons inside
All because of my beautiful mask to hide
Don't tell me everything is going to be okay
Just hug me and understand
Don't leave me, and please stay
Nobody knows nobody shall see
How my childhood is secretly killing me**

- Elisa Singh-Teulings

Intuition

I can directly see if there has been abuse of a child.

As soon as I'm meeting everyone who immerses the room and makes contact with the child, I first win their trust, and not much later, the secret gently soaks. In the knowledge that there are still children in fear and uncertainty, life gives me sleepless nights.

My passionate desire to reach out for these children and to offer a helping hand is growing stronger by the day.

Now that I have become a mother of three beautiful children, I understand even less of people who do violence to children. How can you damage or humiliate an innocent child? What kind of sick minds feel capable of doing that to a child?

No one who sees it, notice, or hear. Everyone is busy with their life. We also don't want to interfere with someone's life. We have a fear of getting blamed for interference.

The beast carries a mask, disguised as the friendly neighbor, a loving mother, a concerned coach, or an overprotective relative.

No one notices how bad they are. Those persons use the weakness and the loyalty of a child. It leaves deep traces, and they are not all visible to the outside world.

The self-loathing and disgust reflect in the eyes. Confidence in man is ruined, which causes many problems later in life.

The fear to completely open up to the people around you hampers you to enjoy the moment because the fear of getting hurt prevails.

The wall around your heart is getting higher, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for your loved ones to come through it.

Lifelong damage, because of what they have done to you. Monsters you trusted that you thought you loved, they have destroyed you. Will this hell pass?

There sounds a deathly silence.

Internal scream: Get me out of here!

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That conscious morning, it had been snowing in the night. The house felt cold, and her mother was still asleep on the leather sofa in the living room. On her bare feet, she came gently closer.

'Mommy?' She tried to rouse her gently. She had about ten minutes to reach school on time and still had to eat breakfast.

'Go to sleep,' muttered her mother irritated and turned around.

Mum had poorly slept again last night, she thought, and she decided to look for something to eat by herself.

Her rumbling stomach went on a rampage as an autumn-like thunderstorm.

The breakfast played through her mind when she heard Robbie waking up. She ran into their bedroom. He cast a friendly smile on her.

'Have you slept well?' she asked her little brother.

He paused and pulled on to the bars of his crib.

Elisa gently lifted her little brother out of his cot, ran to the kitchen, and put Robbie in his high chair. Robbie was not so big, but it took her a lot of trouble. Between the high piles of dishes on the kitchen counter, she found his drinking bottle. The milk from the day before was still in it. She looked at it and pulled her nose up.

'Blegh, so dirty.'

With arms outstretched, she changed the cover losses.

As soon as she opens the bottle, she smells sour air. She quickly flushed the retching bottle with hot water, but it was not helping very much. The smell was unbearable and also with dish soap she didn't get the stench off.

'You need to drink from a normal cup, like a big boy.'
She moved a kitchen chair against the sink block and climbed up. When she stood on her toes, she could just reach the cups that were behind in the upper kitchen cabinet.

Robbie followed every movement of his big sister. From the living room, they heard soft moans. It was their mother who had turned around again. There was not much food available, on an old slice of bread and the remaining leftovers jam in a glass jar that stood lonely in the empty fridge. She sighed; this was never enough for both of them.

She looked at Robbie.

'Come on. We're going to eat, brother.'

She cut the sandwich carefully with a sharp knife into small pieces and gave it one by one to the little Robbie.

When she looked at the clock, she saw that the school had already started. She let out a deep sigh. Now the teacher will be mad at her again.

Her mother had woken up by the sounds that came out of the kitchen and came to take a look.

'Did you still not leave for school?' she asked, surprised when she saw her children.

'No, Mommy, I was hungry and wanted to eat something first. But there is not enough, and Robbie has to eat too, so I gave him a sandwich. But now I'm late at school, the teacher will be angry at me,' she sighed.

'Hm, yes, that will do. Shoot but quickly, and then I'll give your little brother something to eat.'

Her mother searched her bag and pulled out a crumbled cookie, which was still in the packaging.

'Here, eat this and now quickly go to school.'

She felt her mother's warm lips on her crown when she put on her coat.

'Until this afternoon, mom.'

'See you soon, sweetie, I love you.'

Farewell

I was a studious child and went to school with a lot of fun. I felt terrible when I arrived late. My teacher's name was called Sophie, a beautiful woman of thirty-two years old. With her long red locks and thousands of freckles on her face, I thought she was good looking.

I think she loved flowers a lot because she was wearing a beautiful dress with a floral design in all colors of the Rainbow. I think she was lovely and funny. But if anyone was late in her classroom, her cheerful face changed in a dark stormy cloud. She did not like latecomers and not when you entered in the middle of a lesson.

The face of Miss Sophie spoke volumes when I entered the classroom. I tried not to disturb the class and as unobtrusive as possible to reach my table that stood behind in the school.

'Why are you so late, young lady?' She asked sternly.

'I am sorry, Miss. But I couldn't do anything about it. My mom was still sleeping when I woke up, and I needed to eat something first.'

A deep frown emerged on her forehead.

'Grab your work quickly from yesterday afternoon and finish this.'

She takes a banana from her desk drawer.

'Here, eat this.' With a wink, she handed over the banana.

'Thank you,' I whispered gratefully.

After I finished the banana, I started working. I had to draw lines between the images and the corresponding words.

I had no problem and finished my work on time. After that, it was time for the math lesson. Math was not my favorite subject in school, but I tried my best. My class consisted of fifteen children.

I didn't have any real friends. I didn't live so long at my mother's place. From my second to my fourth life year, I had temporarily lived with my aunt and uncle.

After the math lesson, we held a break. The children grabbed their bag off the coat rack in the hallway and brought them back into the classroom.

I was the only one who always remained seated. I had nothing in my bag that I could eat.

Miss Sophie distributed packs of school milk.

When she arrived at my desk, she stopped and gave me a sandwich of her own.

I think she smeared every day one extra, especially for me.

While I looked skittish around me, I felt so grateful. I ate the whole cheese sandwich. None of the children seemed to have noticed what was going on between the Miss and me. After we all finished our food and drinks, it was time to play outside. At the schoolyard, the children got divided into two groups. The girls started to build a

snowman, while the boys ran behind each other and threw snowballs. The screams and shouts of the children playing bounced between the outer walls of the school building.

I didn't care much for outdoor playing, and besides that, I didn't like the snow at all.

I preferred to stay inside and to draw something.

No blank sheet of paper was safe for me. I was pretty good at it too.

The day was mostly quiet and without problems. Once the school bell went, all the kids ran outside. There, their parents were waiting for them to take them home.

I felt invisible as I ran along with the crowd towards our apartment. It was not so far away. Our building was about seven hundred meters from my school.

We lived in an apartment, my mother, step-father, Robbie, and I. My step-father was the biological father of my little brother.

Not mine, my father lived with his wife somewhere else. I am living proof of an extramarital affair between my father and mother.

Even though there was an elevator, I preferred the stairs. When I had reached our floor, I was out of breath. I had asthma for which I had to take daily Ventolin. Because I had a fear of heights, I ran as close as possible along with the houses straight to ours.

I never dared to look down and took out a sigh every time I reached our threshold.

That was strange. The front door was open. Usually, I called my mother, and she would open the door. I pushed with my hand against the door and looked inside.

In the Hall were boxes and bags piled up against the wall. I saw my teddy bear and Robbie's sleeping bag.

What's going on here, I asked myself.

Are we going on a vacation?

'Mom, I'm home.'

I heard coughing from the living room.

My mother lay sprawled on the couch. Her face looked grizzled.

Robbie sat on the ground and was playing with his blocks. She was not alone.

In the window seat sat a lady who I had not seen before.

'Hi, sweetie. How was school?' asked mom with a trembling voice.

'Nice,' I muttered quietly. 'Have you been sick again?'

She sighed deeply. She looked so sad that particular day.

I had never seen her down like that before.

My mother was twenty-five years old at that time—a beautiful young woman who drives men's minds crazy.

Long blonde hair. Mom had an open glance, beautiful long eyelashes, and a slim figure. She had a beautiful voice which I could listen to for hours. She sang throughout the day, except at times when she lay down sick on the couch.