

# A stark story

*... a story that will touch your heart.*

A young child who was once nurtured by two loving parents and wonderful elder sister, has now turned to sadness and depression, as she has watched her family crumble away before her very own eyes.

This sad story started some twelve months ago, she says, when her sister began talking about leaving. "At first it was just talk," she recalls, "but then it became her obsession." "She desperately wanted to leave the house, she wanted to go as far away as possible." "Finally, she chose a place. It was so remote, nobody had ever heard of it before. So we tried to find it on the map. We eventually found it, but it was so small we could scarcely believe our eyes!" So there she went, insisting that she would not return for at least a year. I felt so lonely!" Little did she know that it was only the beginning of much worse to come.

Then a few months later, just out of the blue, her mother ran out of the house saying that she was off to find a better life with her eldest daughter.

"I felt completely betrayed. It was as if my mother was telling me that she loved my other sister more than me." "Those weeks, when it was just my Dad and me, seemed like years, and everyday I kept on wondering if she would return."

As if in answer to her prayers, as quickly as she had left, her mother returned. But alas, the journey had come at a cost. At great cost. She had contracted a rare tropical disease which would render her with a soaring temperature, throbbing headaches and shaking hands for the term of her natural life. "It was as if overnight she had grown twenty years older. She looked like my grandmother." she vividly describes to us, as a tear rolls down her eye.

Then, as if more could not go worse to such an innocent girl, her father slips whilst in the bathroom causing multiple fractures in his pelvic bone. "He was so brave..." she proudly tells us, "he kept on working for two weeks before he went to the doctor." Eventually time won out, and he went to the surgeon to be told that his hip would need to be internally pinned by multiple steel pins. Narrowly avoiding being in traction for the next month, he, as fate would have it, was to be imprisoned in his own house, like her mother, unable to do anything without his daughter's help.

Such was the plight of this young girl, that she did not have a single cooked meal for over a week, as both her parents lay helpless in pain or depression. "I lived off chocolate, pizza and coke," she tells us.

Not even her pet cat 501 was to protect her from the sea of tribulation. Upon realising that it lived in household of anxiety, the cat began to have bouts of anorexia nervosa followed by bulimic episodes. Sadly, this serious eating disorder - rare in humans, and even rarer in cats, could only be treated by doping her up on steroids everyday. The daily ritual of giving her dearest pet cat a drug that is banned by the International Olympic Committee brought such anguish to her heart, that she would weep for the rest of the morning.

This young girl's faith was being tested to its extreme, when it was dealt another severe blow. She would be told by her father himself, that he too was going to leave the house in search for her favourite daughter. "I could not believe it. I just could not believe it..." she kept on repeating to us.

"As soon as I can walk, I'm going to walk right out of here!"

These were the last words she can remember from her once such beloved father. Now she just sits in her room all day typing away at msn and hoping that one day it will be *her* turn to leave the house.