



# All Alone

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Published on Stories Space on 30 Sep 2012

Heartbreak and healing

<https://www.storiesspace.com/stories/drama/all-alone.aspx>

I notice you standing on the corner, looking lost. As I make my way over to you, I notice your sparkling blue eyes on the verge of tears. "Are you okay?" You look at me, and the tears escape. "I'm all alone." I stop fully and whisper back, "No, you're not." I can see the fear and uncertainty on your face and in your eyes. I take your hand and say, "Come, walk with me, tell me what's wrong." You say nothing at first. We just keep walking. After a few minutes I realize you have no idea who I am. "I'm Julie, and if I'm not mistaken, you're Emily?" You look up at me and nod your head. The walking seems to help you focus, and you begin to tell me what's wrong. "I'm just alone, no friends, and no family now that my mom passed away. Not that Mom and I were close, mind you. It's so final, not

really knowing her, and now I need to go through all her stuff." "Maybe you will find a way to get to know her now." "I don't know, I think it's a bit late." "It's never too late to get to know some one, and it just might be what you need." "I don't know if I'm up to the task, but I need to be done with it by the end of the month. I have a crap job to get back to. Not to mention the boyfriend that treats me like a doormat. Oh, wait who cares about the boyfriend? I dumped his cheating ass..." As Emily is telling me all of this, we have come full circle. She grabs a bag from her car, and we enter the house. The house is immaculate; it even has the hint of cookies baking. Emily stands in the doorway, taking in the scene. When she is ready, she enters the living room. Stopping briefly in each room, she makes her way up the stairs. Each room opens up a flood of fresh tears. Her mother's room is pristine, her brother's room left untouched. It was left the way it was when he was when he was 6. There are still plastic bins in the corner, and toys and crayons left on the floor. Emily finally enters her own room, finding it pretty much the way she left it when she stormed out. The fight had been epic, and she never took the time to make up with her mom. That was 6 years ago, and now she will never get to. She sinks to the floor with gut-wrenching sobs. I can do nothing but hold her close until she goes quiet. I help her into bed, telling her that I will stop by tomorrow to check on her. Early the next morning, I make my way back to Emily's and knock on the front door. It is opened by an older woman I have seen before, but don't know her. "Hi, I'm Julie. I stopped by to check on Emily." "I'm Diane, a friend of her mom's. Come in, please." "Something smells good," I tell her, sniffing the air. "It's just some scones and coffee. Please, sit and eat. Emily won't eat anything, and she's still in bed." "Let me go wake her, and see if I can get her to come eat. She was quite distraught yesterday, and I highly doubt she ate anything for a while." I climb the stairs, knock on Emily's door, and slowly open it. She is sitting in the middle of the floor, plastic bins all around her. She looks up and tells me what they are. "Each bin is a year of my life. I had no idea my mom even knew what I was doing all these years, but it's all here, in these bins." "You should come downstairs and eat." "I'm not really hungry." "Well, at least come say hello to Diane. This will be here when you come back up. And I will be here to help you, so it should be a bit easier for you." After a bit more coaxing, we make our way downstairs. The scones are as delicious as they smelled, and Emily can't resist. She doesn't say much, but she asks Diane why she is there. Diane tells her that her mom asked her to come over and help if she could. Emily looks like she is about to say something but changes her mind. Thanking Diane for breakfast, we head back upstairs. Emily quickly goes through the remaining bins, until she reaches the very last one. As she opens it, she notices that there is nothing but an envelope with her name on it. She sits there with shaking hands, holding that envelope. The realization that this was the last thing her mother wanted her to find seems to soak through her. She sits there, fighting the fear of the unknown, and the worry about what the letter might say. Eventually, Emily finds the strength to open the letter. The writing is crisp, clean, and elegant, and the paper is stained by tears. As Emily reads, she starts to cry. "Emily, My beautiful child, I love you and am so very proud of the wonderful young woman you have become. But now I have to ask you to forgive me. I have kept this secret hidden from you for just about your whole life. Please try to understand I only wanted to protect you and let you live your life. Your twin brother did not die in the accident when he was 6. He did, however, suffer major head

trauma that left him mentally challenged. He is living in a group home not far from here. Your brother, Robbie, has grown into a fine young man who will need your help now that I'm no longer alive. He needs a new home by his birthday next month. Please let Diane come and go as she pleases. This is just as much her home as it was yours. She has been a friend, lover and confidante for the last 7 years. I have included her in my will. When you are ready, there is a package in the hall closet that I want you to open. Emily, I know this is a lot to take in, but I also know that you can handle this. I can only hope that one day, you can find it in your heart to forgive me. I Love You, Mom." I can see the look in Emily's eyes. She's lost in that long ago day, the pain, hurt, and anguish rolling over her in waves. She sees the car, and the man who gets out; her brother lying in the street not moving; her mother wailing and beating on the man's chest; the paramedics working on her brother; the police taking the man away; the realization that the man behind the wheel was her father, coming home drunk again. "I remember that horrible day too," I tell her. "I was 15, and lived down the street. I was heading back home from my babysitting job when it happened." Emily looks up at me, almost as if seeing me for the first time. "I remember you, you were at the accident scene." "Yes, I was, Emily. Just about the whole neighborhood was." "Why did she wait to tell me?" "Emily, she loved you, and wanted you to have everything you ever wanted. Keeping your brother at home would mean a lifetime caring for him." "But she didn't ask me what I wanted." "What did you want, Emily?" "I wanted my brother back! I hated coming home and not finding him here! And all the sad looks from the kids at school, fighting with my mom, I hated it all!" I take her hand and look into her eyes, telling her she can have all of that now, if she really wants it. "But how? I don't even know what to do." "Well, first you need to go through your mom's stuff, and then take a day to visit your brother. After that, you can make a final decision as to what you're going to do." As I left, Emily came to wave me off. We found Diane sitting there on the porch in the chilly air. She's shivering and crying, and Emily steps out, taking Diane's hand, and leads her into the house. As I leave, I hear her telling Diane it's alright, and that she knew and understood. Later, after my shift, I drive to Emily's house to see how she is. She greets me at the door with tears in her eyes, and blood dripping down her hands. As I walk through the door, I can see the targeted vases and furniture that her anger scattered all over the floor. She obviously cut herself on some of it in her rage. I lead her to the kitchen, and then clean her up. Sitting at the table, she starts to talk. She tells me about her anger and hurt, the feeling of overwhelming loneliness. She explains how she thought her mom would live forever, and how she wishes she had come around more, or picked up the phone and called. I don't say anything, I just let her talk. When she has said all there is to say, I send her off to bed. I stay and clean up the mess, falling asleep on the couch. As I awake in the morning, Diane arrives, and asks what has happened. I tell her everything, and she nods in a knowing way. Emily comes down the stairs just then. "Oh good you're both here," she exclaims. We both stop and look at her, then at each other, eyebrows raised. She pauses a moment, and then she rushes full steam ahead into a little speech. "Diane, you can stop leaving at night. I know that you were staying with my mom. I found a note while going through her clothes. At first, I was hurt and disappointed that she didn't tell me. But then, I realized that I never really gave her a chance to. I also found a note about you, Julie. My mom said that you were a big

help with Robbie at the group home, and that you could help me if I wanted you to. She takes a deep breath and continues. "I'm ready to meet my brother and open the box my mom left for me." The box is sitting next to me on the table. I pick it up, handing it to her. As she opens the box, her face runs through a gamut of emotions. In the box is a photo history of Robbie and her, photos of birthdays and holidays shared, but spent apart. It's like looking into a mirror. The memories are not hers, but they are hers all the same. She smiles for the first time since arriving back home. It is a smile of hope and understanding, with thoughts of a new beginning and brighter future.