

## *Torn*

My mother and step-father fight all the time. My little brother and I have to listen to them through the walls, calling each other names that no husband and wife should call each other. Especially where their children could hear them, even when the two don't think the children can hear. The fights were getting worse every time.

My five year-old brother has come into the habit of entering my room when our parents fight, which has been every night for the last month so my little brother coming to my bed after our mother has put him to bed has become our routine. I find comfort in his staying with me, and he with me, in a place where I can protect him from the fighting and take him to a place where a brave little boy joins a band of pirates to help steal from people, but gives his half to people who need the items more than the little boy did; it was my brother's favorite.

This one night my brother was already asleep, wrapped in my arms, our parents fighting hardly escalating to the peak when he fell asleep. Looking at his face, a blast of happiness washed over me. I was thankful he fell asleep before the fighting, unlike me, who was listening to every word my mother yelled at the only father I knew and he back at her.

"God dammit Sharon, you need to listen to me! Those children need a mom who will be there for them, who will love them. Not a mom drugged out on this shit!" I hear something hit the wall, like glass breaking. Silence breaks the air. I hold my breath, waiting for my mom to scream something, her usual retaliation. The silence was replaced with the beats of drums, filling my ears, no other sound breaking through. Until I heard the discharge of a pistol.