

Beyond Repair?

Items were scattered all over the floor. Clothes on the ground, desk flipped over, mirror smashed, holes in the wall and wallpaper ripped. The curtains were closed tight enclosing the disaster of the room in the darkness. In the midst of disorder, Katie laid on her bed staring up at the ceiling. In her right hand-the hand without a cast-was a picture frame that she clutched to her chest, but could not stare at any longer. She flinched when she heard a knock on her bedroom door.

“Honey, can I come in?” her mother asked softly. Katie said nothing, but she heard the door open and felt the weight change on the side of her bed. She made no attempt to look at her mother and sat in silence.

“Heather dropped off your homework for the week again and said she would come back later,” her mother said quietly as she glanced at the piles of paper stacked on the ground by the bed.

“Could you put it in the pile?” Her mother hesitated, but added it to the pile.

“Have you started any of your work yet?”

“No.”

“Katie, have you thought about when you are going back to school?”

Katie finally turned her head towards her mother to look her in the face and replied,
“When are you going to make me go back?” Her mother looked away and sighed.

“You should come downstairs and eat dinner with us at the table.” Katie turned her head back towards the ceiling.

“I’m not hungry,” she said monotonically and her mother expected that. She looked around the destroyed room and shook her head.

“I haven’t mentioned it until now, but you should really clean your room. Heather is coming over later.”

“And?” she questioned while she rolled her eyes.

“You should clean up for your friend,” her mother reasoned. Katie laughed bitterly.

“Is she really my friend? Are any of them my friends?”

“Of course they are and you shouldn’t shut them out, especially now,” her mother said and then added, “You shouldn’t shut any of us out.”

“I want to be alone now, can you leave?” said Katie as she dismissed her mother. Her mom knew she had said too much and left the room without another word. Katie tried to settle back into the quiet, but her mind was yelling loud. Her thoughts were clear yet jumbled. She held the picture up to her face and stared at the large group picture of her friends by the water fountain in the park. Her eyes were only focused on Angel though, her Angel. She laid the picture down next to her carefully. She allowed her mind to be consumed by memories of that beautiful day.

Two hours later, she heard another knock at her door. Again, she did not answer the knock and simply laid still. She heard her door knob being turned, but she knew it was locked.

“Mom, I’m fine and I’m not hungry,” Katie said tiredly. She recited the same words day after day.

“It’s not your mother. Open the door, Kit Kat,” Heather said in a friendly way. It made Katie’s skin crawl to hear that name.

“Don’t call me that, I can’t stand it. No one can call me that anymore,” she said angrily from her bed.

“Alright then. Are you going to open the door?”

“No Heather. I want to be alone.”

“I can stay out here all night. This is important,” Heather said. Katie could hear her body sliding down the door to sit on the floor. Katie didn’t even understand why she was there. She had no guilty feelings about ignoring her. After all, she didn’t ask her to stay. At one time, she would have welcomed her with open arms, but those days weren’t coming back. The hallway was quiet.

“Brian, Nick, Dylan, and Anna didn’t come because we thought it would be a bit overwhelming for you, but they wanted to. We’ve all been worried about our friend.” When Katie heard Heather call her as their “friend”, it set something off inside her. She was ready to address this now. She quickly got up and went to the door.

“Stop leaning on the door and get up,” she said trying to hold her anger inside. She opened the door and was met with the sight of Heather. She turned away to go sit on her bed and left Heather to follow her inside. Heather stopped at the doorway as she took in the sight of what used to be Katie’s perfect room. She couldn’t keep her gasp inside, but she said nothing. Heather turned and closed the door behind her for some privacy. She stayed standing by the doorway.

“Hey, kiddo. Can I sign your cast?” Heather said in a joking, but nervous voice. Katie didn’t even bother answering her.

“Okay, you aren’t in the mood for jokes.”

“What do you want?” Katie asked firmly.

“I came to see how you were doing. I told you we have been worried sick about you. You haven’t been to school or outside at all since...” Heather’s voice trailed off weakly.

“I don't have the time to go outside. I’ve been busy here,” she said sarcastically.

“Yeah, I noticed.” Heather looked around again until the picture frame laying next to Katie caught her eyes. She started to walk towards it.

“No, stay over there,” Katie quickly said, stopping Heather in her tracks. Katie put the picture under her pillow, keeping it to herself. Heather looked down at the ground and took a deep breath. She knew that picture well enough without having to look at it.

“You know, she w-wasn’t just your friend. We lost her too,” Heather said in a shaky voice.

“She wasn't just my friend, she was my best friend.”

“We loved her, too, as much as we love you,” Heather said. She looked over at Katie to see her glaring at her. Heather took a step back as Katie stood up.

“Love me? You say you all love me? You have a funny way of showing it, Heather.” Katie said her name with venom and continued on, “You know I needed my friends to come visit me. I had no doubt that you would come. Angel was gone. I needed my friends to tell me it would be okay and somehow make me laugh like usual.” Heather stayed quiet and broke eye contact with Katie.

“I wanted to feel that nothing had changed. Only, you never came. I thought maybe you didn’t want to come see me in the hospital and I tried to understand so I kept my phone charged. I waited for a call or a text from any one of you. Anything would have been nice. After two days

of nothing, I stopped charging my phone,” Katie said with defeat. This had been the most she had talked in weeks. It felt good, but it left her throat burning.

“We were trying to process what had happened too. We were hurting too,” Heather said weakly trying to convince everyone in the room.

“I needed you! I had no one as I sat in that hospital. You forgot about me!”

“Katie, it wasn’t like that. Maybe I should go,” Heather said, turning around to open the door. Katie’s low voice stopped her.

“I was in the car with her. I was with her until we were brought to the hospital. I didn’t even get to say goodbye...” Katie felt as if something was clogging her throat and had to stop to breathe.

“We didn’t say goodbye either so you can’t be angry at us for that,” Heather tried to fight back as she turned back around to face Katie.

“Will you see her broken body or hear her whimpers when you close your eyes to try to remember your last moments with her?” Katie asked in a whisper. Heather had no answer for her, but she couldn’t make herself stay quiet.

“Katie, we all need each other to help each other move on. You are hurting so you can’t see our pain. Just stop saying these terrible things and let us help you,” Heather begged.

“You guys didn’t even come to her funeral. I know you weren’t too busy to come to one of your closest friends’ funeral.”

“We couldn’t see her that way.”

“You are all selfish, you should have come for Angel, you should have come for Angel’s family, you should have come for me. I was the only friend there and they asked me to speak. It was the hardest thing I’ve ever done in my life.” Heather’s eyes started to tear up at this point.

“I’m sorry, Katie.”

“Of course, you are,” Katie said. She was becoming weary from the overflow of emotions that she had been ignoring.

“ Stop bringing over my homework. It’s funny that you bring over my homework every week, but never asked to come up and see me. I see you really care. I guess you were too busy to talk or you were just avoiding this, avoiding seeing how you have abandoned me.” Heather again said nothing, but her eyes showed her shame for her.

Why don’t you just leave Heather? Just tell everyone else not to come either. You can all just stay away from me.”

“Katie, no. Deep down inside you know you need us now too,” Heather said as she backed up some more. Katie had walked over to stand directly in front of her while she was talking. Katie leaned in.

“NO! I don’t need you. I’ll never need any of you again. I want you all out of my life. The only thing that makes my blood boil more than the fact that I haven’t seen all of you in weeks is the fact that Angel died thinking that you all were her friends,” Katie said coldly and then she walked back over to her bed.

Heather wept as she ran out of the room and slammed the door behind her. She didn’t see Katie’s tear filled eyes. Katie ran to the door and locked it again before walking over to her bed. She pulled the picture from under her pillow and looked at it again. As she replayed the last

fifteen minutes, she became angry again. She turned the frame around and yanked the picture out. She ripped the picture in half, keeping the side with only her and Angel. She took the other side and ripped it into tiny pieces as she started to cry. This was her first time crying since the funeral. She began to sob loudly and out of control. She paid no attention to the approaching footsteps she heard.

“Katie, what happened? I saw Heather crying as she left. Open the door.”

Katie’s cries drowned out the sound of her mother’s voice. Her tears drowned out the thoughts that she had to be strong, that she couldn’t waste tears over them. Her tears drowned out the idea of mustering up the energy to stop crying. Her body wouldn’t let her stop. She allowed her tears to drown out the entire world.