

## Gone but not Forgotten

The wind howled, pushing me back. The rain fell in icy cold sheets, chilling me to the bone. I didn't care; nothing could push me back further than the death of my sister. Nothing could chill me more than the knowledge that I would never see her smile again. Any pain I felt was welcome; it reminded me how much my sister had suffered for me, how much pain I had caused her by leaving her alone. As I kept laboring against the elements, walking to the tree house we spent so much of our lives in, I lost myself in agonizing memory.

Images and sounds flashed inside my head: a blood-curdling shriek, a maniacal laugh. Running, running, through those endless hallways, knowing I wouldn't make it in time, needing to try. Corridor after corridor passed in a blur, until I finally reached the origin of the screams. I rounded the corner, just in time to see the glint of the silver knife, the final cry from my best friend, hearing my enemy howling in triumph. Falling to the floor in front of the broken body of Stephanie, my Stephanie, pulling the knife out from her ribcage, and feeling anger tinge my vision red.

I spun around, throwing the bone hilted knife at the monster that had killed her. Wanting nothing more than the death of the horrible man who called himself our father, I watched as his eyes widened and as he fell. I knew I should feel triumph at my revenge as I saw his blood seep out, but I felt nothing more than despair as I stared, first at the man who had taken my sister and me off of the streets, the man who had lost himself to drugs, and then at the girl who had been my best friend all my life. I gingerly picked her up, and carried her out of the room, not sparing another glance for the dead man lying in the middle of the room.

And now, as I carry her broken body, intending to bury her in the place of our childhood memories, I hear a small cough from her. I look down at her, startled, and when I see her eyelids flutter, I quickly set her down. She smiles up at me, wiping the tears from my face, and whispers, "I love you...Sam. You...are the best sister ever." Her eyes close, and I know she sees no more.