

**'I hate it when my brother Charlie has to go away'**  
by **horrorinpureform**

I hate it when my brother Charlie has to go away. My parents constantly try to explain to me how sick he is. That I am lucky for having a brain where all the chemicals flow properly to their destinations like undammed rivers. When I complain about how bored I am without a little brother to play with, they try to make me feel bad by pointing out that his boredom likely far surpasses mine, considering his confine to a dark room in an institution. I always beg for them to give him one last chance. Of course, they did at first. Charlie has been back home several times, each shorter in duration than the last. Every time without fail, it all starts again. The neighbourhood cats with gouged out eyes showing up in his toy chest, my dad's razors found dropped on the baby slide in the park across the street, mom's vitamins replaced by bits of dishwasher tablets. My parents are hesitant now, using "last chances" sparingly. They say his disorder makes him charming, makes it easy for him to fake normalcy, and to trick the doctors who care for him into thinking he is ready for rehabilitation. That I will just have to put up with my boredom if it means staying safe from him. I hate it when Charlie has to go away. It makes me have to pretend to be good until he is back.