

Script: Missing Natalie

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Research Week

Performing Art Presentation

March 14th, 2023

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Some of my friends don't even know I was born a twin. Her name was Natalie. She was born sixty-three seconds before me. And she never let me forget that she was older. We shared a room and split it down the middle. One day we decided to wallpaper the room with Super friends wrapping paper and Elmer's glue. Mom wasn't too crazy about that.

We would climb trees in our backyard and plan the houses we would build next to each other so we could visit when we had families of our own. We picked out the names for our husbands and for our children. I wanted two and she wanted five — Children, not husbands. When you're a twin, you always have a shadow. Natalie was my shadow, and I was hers. She was my everything.

One day Natalie and I were in the supermarket looking at the toys. There was a doll that I really wanted so I ran a couple aisles over to ask Mom.

“Please, please, please. I did all my homework this week, and I’ve kept my room clean”

She told me no because I already had too many dolls. She sent me back to get Natalie so we could leave the store. I skipped through the aisles looking for Natalie, shouting her name. Natalie? Natalie? Natalie? Natalie? I couldn't find her. It all happened in a minute. She was my everything. All I have left is the pain

On the surveillance camera, you can see Natalie walking out of the store with a man. He's grabbing her arm, and we don't know why she's going with him. She turns around for a second like she's saying goodbye. At least that's what I think it means.

I've gone over the video hundreds of times. It's burned in my mind like a horror film. Even now I could draw it for you, with the time code on the bottom of the screen and everything. I'm twenty-four now. But I'm frozen at nine.

I never saw Dad cry, but after it happened, he drinks alone now sometimes. He never used to do that. He's different when he starts drinking— sadder, angrier, louder. I'm glad Natalie never had to see him like this.

People tell us that in time the pieces will eventually come back together. But when I look in the mirror... I still have to see HER face. If she was alive, I'd know. If anyone would know I'd know and I haven't felt her near me in a long, long time.

Four months after she disappeared, it was our tenth birthday. I told Mom to forget about it but she insisted ... she always had a birthday party for us ... we had to go on with a normal life. The day of the party we hung up balloons and streamers and Mom pretended Natalie was away somewhere, like it was a surprise. I actually started to get excited because I've always loved our birthday. So, I baked my own cake and put on my favorite pink pants. I sat there and waited. I waited all day. Nobody came. All the kids who used to come to our parties now said they couldn't. Sometimes their mothers called and cancelled, like abductions were contagious and they didn't want their kids to catch it too.

That night Mom and I sat in the kitchen and ate a box of sugar cookies and talked about Natalie. We didn't have any more birthday parties after that. It became the birthday ritual. Dad still doesn't know. We would eat a whole box of sugar cookies and talk about Natalie for hours. We do it every year. She was patient, I was bossy. She was born sixty-three seconds before me. We came here together. She left without me.

My mom sent me to a child psychologist for a long time. She made me draw my "feelings." She said things like, "Let's draw your feelings. What do your feelings look like? Let me help you find healing."

I wanted to strangle her. Instead, I drew for an hour, so she'd shut up. I used only the black markers and drew me and a burned-out hole for Natalie. That's me, and that's Natalie. That's how it'll always be. The psychologist analyzed the drawings and talked to my parents, "The drawings tell me that she's having a very difficult time. Losing Natalie has left a void in her life"

Well, duh. You could have just asked me and saved yourself a lot of time and money. You want to know how I feel? You want to know what's bothering me? You want to know why I'm sad? Someone stole my sister. How am I supposed to find healing when someone took my everything away from me? How many pathetic drawings do you want me to make? Someone stole my sister? Her name was Natalie. She was born sixty-three seconds before me. We came here together. She left without me. She was my everything. My parents stopped making me go to the psychologist after that.

Keeping the pain alive is my way of keeping her alive. She was my everything. All I have left of her is the pain. I just want to know what happened. It's like watching a scary movie and the film breaks in the last fifteen minutes and they try to make everyone go home. I just want to know what happened. Nothing else matters. Nothing else matters.

Some of my friends don't even know I was born a twin. She was born sixty-three seconds before me. Her name was Natalie. We came here together. She left without me. She was my everything. All I have left of her is the pain.

Performance Preview

<https://youtu.be/BN8geOZgFHo>



References

Blackman, N. (2001). *Missing Natalie*. Blood Sugar.

