

Nia's Story

Alone. It's like being lost in a sea of eternal darkness with no way out and no one to help you. It's like having a fist of pain grasp your heart. And there's nothing that you can do about it. Nothing. It's not even like I've been alone forever. I had a friend once. But she left. She left me stranded. So I guess it's worse for me than anyone else.

I remember it clearly, that day. We walked up to the clinic together, perfectly in step. A woman with a shiny smile sent us to a room, and laid us on a bed. Neither of us spoke a word. I clutched her hand tight, I never wanted her to let go. But she did. She let go, and from then I knew I'd never see her again.

The surgery happened swiftly. I remember feeling queer after it: my head had been swimming, and suddenly, I felt as if I was underwater. But I felt light, clean, free, even though my head was throbbing intensely. Then my bubble of happiness burst when I heard someone talking, saying my name repeatedly like a broken record. I opened my eyes, and although my vision was blurred, I saw her face. Her soft, blonde hair surrounded her head like a halo, and her jade green eyes were glistening. Then she faded away from me, until I could see her no more.

After a week, I was allowed back home. In the hospital, I was overwhelmed with enigmatic nightmares. I thought they leave me, abandon my mind when I was sleeping in my own bed. They didn't. In fact they got worse, haunting me every night. A girl, with golden hair cascading down to her shoulders and green eyes- she was in all of them. I often woke up screaming... They felt so real! It was as if she was right next to me, caressing my face. I knew her from somewhere...

The idea of school hung over me like a dark cloud. Nerves took over, strangling my every breath. What would they think of me? I wasn't the most attractive, with the great gash on my forehead. But that couldn't be helped really, unless I wanted to keep the tumour. So whether they'd like me or not- I couldn't tell. Anxiety engulfed me and twisted in my stomach like a knife.

I drew near to the gates of my new school nervously and walked gingerly onto the grounds. My heart was beating against my chest like a drum as a sudden wave of apprehension flooded over me. I couldn't do it. I turned to leave, but before I could, a girl with blonde hair and jade coloured eyes approached me. I swear it was the one from my nightmares. Then she smiled at me.

"I'm Pearl..." she said, and suddenly I was drowning in my own memories.

Nia Sutherland