

A Bright & Unique Sibling



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Preface

This fiction-short story is the biography of my special little brother from his birth till manhood. I describe how life threw challenges at him and how he retreated into his shell. Yet with love and regard for his dream wishes, he could be recovered, and in the process he not only survived but also thrived at great heights. Such is the brilliant story of my baby brother. If you have a brother you love, you wouldn't want to miss this story. So be sure to read the entire story.

--Rosina S Khan

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Table of Content

<i>Preface</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>My Parents' Decision</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>The Sibling Gradually Grows</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>The Sibling misses Dad's Parenthood.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>The Sibling's Passion</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Time to Go to University</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>The Sibling Goes for Abroad.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>More Interesting fbooks to Read.....</i>	<i>21</i>

Introduction

There were the three of us, all girls, more like, “The three (female) Musketeers” always together, clothed in the same trio set of dresses, more like the triplet twins but we were not twins. My younger sister was a year smaller and my little sister by six years.

We felt great, being the trio for years. We were proud to tell everyone we came across in life, “Yes we are only three sisters and no brother!!” People liked looking at us while we passed them by. They saw us as special and their thinking made us feel extra special.

Born with silver spoons and yet, our family was very economic and yet, still being economic we had everything we needed. There may been more influx of money into the family during some of the times than other times but yet, we were a happy family.

While we, the sisters were happy living together in the same bedroom, sometimes I would hear squabbles among my parents during the nights and I wondered what was wrong. It distressed me to think that my parents had arguments over something I did not understand. But during the day everything was normal, my parents, happy and laughing with us. Surely, I knew that deep inside somewhere something must be wrong.

My Parents' Decision

It was not until seven years later that we came to know there would be the addition of a new member to our family. Although my sisters took the matter lightly, I was deeply concerned. Dad always made it look like he was in some financial crisis although he catered for all the necessary things, but asking for something just important (not just some fancy stuff) was so hard. So, if there was going to be a new family member, that meant money would be tighter for the family. But little was I to know Dad had actually all the resources to run a little bigger family as life was going to show. He only liked to be economic. It was good in one way that he acted like that because by the time we were grown up, none of us sisters fantasized about holding on to a husband. We all wanted to be well established before we got married.

So the grand day arrived. Our little brother was born. He was a tiny, cute length of a bundle. Dad and Mom, especially Dad wondered if they would live to see him all grown up and how many ages would it take. Mom got released from the hospital and she was soon lying on the bed with the baby and us cuddling around to watch him in wonder. Dad was out. So Mom took the opportunity to explain why there was a new addition to the family. A family needed a son to protect all the properties of the family and overall, to take care of the family in old age and in order to be the pillar of the family. Especially a man like our Dad needed a son. The reasons all

sounded good to me but why after all these years and not earlier. After all I was fifteen now. Anyways, better late, than never.

The Sibling Gradually Grows

Soon from breast feeding, the baby stabilized on supple food. His colicky cries were less frequent. He was a pleasure to be around. We, the sisters took him in our bosoms and carried him around. He was given a walker to move around the house. His gums ached we could see. So after consulting a doctor, he was given a set of colored teethers to bite on them. Soon his front tooth appeared and later others followed. He went to anyone's lap not minding who it was.

He gradually learned to walk after trial and error, falling down and rising again. His walk finally became steady. By this time, he knew all our faces; if anybody other than us appeared, he would cry and refuse to go near them.

By and by he grew bigger and bigger. Now he was as naughty as he could be. He liked to throw everything down that was within his reach. So everything was placed somewhere that was out of his reach.

Soon he was three years old. Our parents decided to admit him in playgroup in a nearby school. He loved it there, playing games, coloring pictures and learning nursery rhymes. Gradually he walked up his ladder of life, laughing and smiling, being extremely naughty.

Our mom used to say that raising her son had been more difficult than raising us, sisters altogether. Yet it was fun to be with him, watching his activities and caricatures. He was Dad's favorite and a real dear to him. He took him out with him frequently on his errand visits outside.

Yes, everything seemed well and happy. Life looked perfect, with laughter, happiness and above all, love flowing around.

The Sibling misses Dad's Parenthood

While our brother kept us busy with all his fun and naughty activities and he was a joy and an array of hope for the future, Dad's health suddenly took its toll. Late one night, he was having severe pain in his chest and he was admitted to a nearby hospital. After recovering from his attack, Dad came back home. We thought that was it. No more problems!!

But it didn't end there. He had three more attacks and he was always in and out of hospitals. But the last attack didn't let him survive. He was gone for good. It was a terrible loss for us all. Most of all, our brother was only six; yet he understood that he was never going to see Dad again. He always felt uncomfortable when our discussions turned to Dad's memories. He didn't want to listen or avoided them completely since then.

So our six year old sibling was going to miss Dad's parenthood for good. Could the rest of all of us compensate for that? Surely not. But we tried our best.

Mom got busy with taking power of ownership for our properties and assets. We were busy with our own stuffs. And we let our brother play on the playground of our complex. He came back on time when evenings approached. But we only realized years later that those were his loneliest

moments. We should have given him more attention all the time to bear with his grief for Dad.

We took care to give him good schooling and helped him with his studies. He earned enough good friends for his outgoing nature. We made sure he was eating properly now that it was his growing stage. He seemed happy now but his feelings of discomfort whenever we talked about Dad or even mentioned his name still retained. So for his sake of peace of mind, we ceased to bring up the discussions on Dad in front of him.

The Sibling's Passion

When our brother reached grade 4, his music teacher encouraged him and his classmates to buy guitars from him so that he could teach some good music and show how to play on the guitar. Although our brother was allowed to buy the guitar, and he did take a few lessons on the guitar from his teacher, the teacher did not stay long in the school and left. So the guitar took a back corner in our home. We thought of selling it but our sibling wouldn't allow it. The guitar meant a lot to him.

As he waded successfully up through his grade classes, he soon got addicted to working on the PC. He not only chatted, browsed and downloaded audio music but also started downloading guitar tabs. He soon began to understand the guitar tabs and applied to his guitar. His room soon became packed with his own modern PC, new electric guitars, sound mixing equipment, amplifier and music processor and he got addicted to playing on the guitar with all these stuffs. His sisters abroad catered for these things thinking that if he got what he wanted, he would remain attentive to his studies. But the opposite happened. He began to skip school and only concentrated on playing music and chatting. Our mom kept paying his tuition fees at school, thinking someday he would realize and attend classes at school. But that didn't happen either.

Realizing that his O-level exams under the Board of University of London were quite near, Mom asked him to at least go for coaching under different course tutors and gave him the freedom to choose his own tutors. Of course, Mom helped him with this as well. And soon he was going to tutors without attending school, which he hated. He learned a lot from his tutors and his tutors prepared him well for his exams.

Finally, our dear brother did appear in the exams and his grades weren't the best but they were good enough for entrance to A-level classes at school.

Time to Go to University

Like O-level classes, dragging our brother to A-level classes at school was a pain. He simply refused to attend and instead, roamed about outside with alike do-nothing friends and while he was at home, he chatted or played the guitar.

With only a few months left for A-level exams, Mom again pushed him to find the appropriate tutors and take lessons from them for his subject courses. Mom and son having found the tutors, the son did go for tutorial classes but not all tutors were that caring and friendly unlike what he wanted them to be. So he had to change tutors in the process to find the ones that met his real needs.

It was easy to do well in O-levels and A-levels now if you studied hard, attended classes at school and had the right tutors. In our time, it was so hard to find the right tutors plus Dad insisted we work hard on our own and just attend the classes in school. Now that more tools were at hand, we were ready to cater for them to our brother only if he knew how to grab them.

It looked like his A-level exams did not turn out that bad either. Good for him!! There was a convocation held on behalf of his school for the students who passed A-Levels successfully that year. And I am proud to say the

cultural part of the ceremony was simply gorgeous. I felt prouder to see my brother on stage and get the school certificate which was different from the real certificate that could only be collected from British Council in the city. I had missed this kind of ceremony for his O-levels because then I was abroad for higher studies.

Now that our brother's A-Levels were over, it was high time for him to get admitted to university. He did pass elegantly the admission test of a reputable private university and got himself admitted there. Days went by and he was more-or-less doing well in his courses. But like before, his passion for music always took over; he had several friends in this area, and he started going for jamming sessions and even performed in small concerts held within the city.

So deep was his craving for guitar that he deliberately missed classes at the university and ultimately stopped attending classes. He was rebuked by the family and was told that playing guitar could be a passion hobby but not a good source of income. He had liked Physics and he himself chose the Electrical and Electronics Engineering program at the university. So, why not continue it?

Getting annoyed with all of us, he stopped all activities and shut himself inside his room for days on. Whether he ate or drank we couldn't tell. Now

we were more than worried. How to put him in the right direction of his life was a real concern for us. Luckily one day a friend of his came to visit and mom asked his help. My brother's friend yelled and shouted at him from outside his room to open the door but he didn't. His friend said he would get more friends and solve the problem.

Days went by; no friends appeared. But then a miracle happened. His friend did bring a few other friends and together they all yelled out his name and banged on the door. Still there was no response from our brother. Finally the door gave away and it opened from immense banging. They went inside, talked to him for a short while, asked him to dress and they all went outside for a heart to heart talk. Secretly Mom had asked them earlier to ask him what he wanted and whether he wanted to go abroad. Some of his other problems about going to the university were that it was too far away and the long and heavy traffic jams made him sick to death plus he did not get the lectures of most of the teachers at the university. Even if he did, they frequently left for somewhere else better and it was difficult to get the lectures of teachers who came as replacements.

But his friends only took the liberty of having fun and took no responsibility. But we were still grateful that his friends had helped him to come out of his shell. We prayed hard for him. Everything had to fall into place.

The Sibling Goes for Abroad

It turned out that our little sister would be getting married abroad and she invited all of us to attend her wedding. We had to face visa interview and since our brother was still not talking to us, this came as an opportunity to communicate with him initially via paper notes and then actually verbally. It looked like he was interested in going abroad even for a visit. So far so good...

We faced the visa interview and got the visa by the will of God. And then we were departing for abroad for the visit. Upon reaching our destination, our sisters greeted us happily at the airport. My younger sister's husband came with a van type car so that we would all fit in along with our luggage.

Now that our entire family was united, this gave the opportunity for our brother to talk out his heart. Our sisters asked if he was willing to study abroad. They cited a university where he could still study Electrical and Electronics Engineering as major (by credit transfer from his home university) and music (his deep passion) as minor. He agreed. And we felt blessed because that answered our prayers. While mom and myself came back home to attend our duties, our brother stayed back behind to give standardized tests and apply to different universities near about where one of our sisters lived.

Having done that and enjoying touring a little bit with our sisters around the city, he came back home with little gifts for us. I was happy and moved at the same time to get such little gifts as token of love from our little brother.

Now it was time for our brother to wait for the news about what the outcome of his applications abroad would be. And yes, he got exactly the university he wanted where he could have music as minor.

Soon it was time to face visa interview for my brother and he did get the visa and soon got the ticket for flying; in around two weeks he would be leaving. Mom and son were busy shopping the necessary items. The day to depart finally approached, and I felt a pang of agony as he came to say goodbye to me in my room. I stayed strong and wished him well with a good journey ahead.

He did have a pleasant journey all the way to overseas. My sister took great care of him and dropped him at the university so that he could attend the orientation and carry out all formalities needed. Yet he wanted my sister to be around and even asked her to take leave from her office to help him out. My sister laughed and said that if he couldn't manage all that by himself, it would be better if he went back home sweet home.

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