

MISSING MOMMY

The little boy peed in his sister's bottle then struggled to put a nipple over the top. He drank some before putting the bottle to her parched lips. The straps that held him to the bed hurt his shoulders and waist. Mommy tied each of them to the mattress before she disappeared.

He directed little sister to a corner of the mattress that was dry and did not have wet poop covering it. He looked up at a window that was higher than the top of his head. If only he could reach to see if Mommy was anywhere around. Or if he could get someone's attention they could find Mommy. He held little sister close. He was shivering from being too cold and panting from being too hot.

There was a cardboard box that was broken but could still be used. Sister whimpered when he pushed her away. He reassured her that he was not going to leave her. He pulled the box over to the window and propped it up on the mattress.

It worked but only if he held tightly to the windowsill and stopped himself from coughing. Coughing hurt. The box gave way a bit in the middle so he balanced by putting his sore feet on either end straddling the cardboard so it would not collapse. Finally, he pulled himself all the way up onto the windowsill. He pressed his face against the cool glass. He studied the heads on the people passing by. No one looked like Mommy.

Then some strangers stopped and gathered around the window. Their faces twisted as they ask - where is your mother? -Are you alone? - They tried to open the window but couldn't. An immense black ear held the window shut. Then the boy pulled on the ear but could not make it budge. Little Sister climbed up but could not see over the windowsill. The strange faces pressed against the glass and stared down at her -look there's another one in there -poor little things - something has to be done.-

The people left. Brother got down and the box broke forever. The sky was vibrant red and yellow before turning pitch black. Little Sister hugged little Brother shivering into sleep.

A siren woke the boy. A red light twirled around and around on the ceiling. The door burst open - a bright light raced around the room until it landed on the two small children in the corner. -My god!-

The giants pulled the leather belts from the tiny children. A man wearing an overcoat and fedora removed his coat wrapping the children in it carrying them to the car with the flashing red light.

After some time riding in the car the children begged for their mother. They missed mommy. They wanted to go home. What would mommy do if she came home and found them missing?

At the home for children the boy and his sister stood on chairs while a lady wearing thick

stockings and her hair in a tight bun cut the clothes from their bodies. -My god they don't make a sound when we pull the cloth from their sores- the lady told the men standing in the room.

Days and nights passed. The boy looked for his sister. He looked around the dining room where the other little boys ate from steel plates. He searched one hallway with locked doors that he tried to open. He called her name down a hallway that took him to large people who lead him back to a room for little boys. "I want my mommy!" He tried desperately not to shed tears but he couldn't stop them, "Where is my sister?" The large unknown to him beings ignored his pleas and returned him to the room for little boys.

The sister cried because she missed her brother. Both missed mommy. Then there were three candles on a cake and little sister blew them out. Little Brother could not help her because he coughed too much. She was allowed to be with her brother on her birthday. A day shared with all the other boys and girls.

It was difficult to know how long it had been since her birthday. A moving, stream of sunlight passed through the open curtain. The little girl stood at the clean, white box with flowers covering it. Big Brother was inside. She did not know why they put him in the box and closed it. At last her mommy came to get her...mommy with red swollen eyes and rivers of tears at her feet finally came to take them home.

