

Writing Myself a Spark of Hope by Jaci S.

I stared boredly and plainly into the musty window. A green, rotting wall was peeling away and stinking up the petite room. I felt sedentary, stuck to the bed like super glue, heavy as the cement in my crumpled heart. I only leave this rotting room on Sister LuAnne's faithful call, meeting lonely parents. "Atticus is a fine boy!" LuAnne would always plead, begging on tired knees. "He acts strangely! Talkin' tomfoolery. Show us another!" The adults would hiss like evil and venomous snakes. LuAnne would weep, cryin' those salted saline tears, sendin' in another kid to be rejected cruelly. The Orphanage was not fun, especially for me.

I should've specified why the Orphanage isn't fun. It's 'cause I'm always rejected, or returned like an item. The families think me readin' books makes me weak, and a coward, who won't fight for no nothin'. Fools these urban days, I tell you. LuAnne always tryna get them to see clear like a sky with no clouds, but nothing will make them see with such blurred lenses they're already wearing. Miss LuAnne suggests I write an endearing letter, and mail it off to those dastardly parents with the sharpened, cleaned nails and the uptight curled stringy hair, with the white porcelain doll skin and poppy-flower colored nails with sharpened shark teeth.

Dunno why I felt like doing it, when obviously them parents ain't good nuff for me, but I took that rusted ballpoint, black as the night sky ink, and took to writing. The letter certainly had no stars or anything pretty. I had to get the point across, and tell those adults how I felt. What they done did to me, and these other kids! What harsh words they were spittin'! Fillin' my ears were the cackles, the rejections. Anger flew onto the paper. Those parents are gonna regret what they imagined up.

I saw my anger in motion, catching like a blaze. I had to calm myself. I'll get myself a petite and caring mother, fawn colored and soft hair and light blue doe eyes. A father who is strong and tall, smelling like fresh mahogany from those forests and the sweet-smelling cologne from the finest maker.

Yeah. I would get me some parents.

I set down the letter in shock, my long and combed hair popping up as I moved suddenly up. My red dress soared, as I marched to the office r. My high heels clicked and clacked and my earrings dangled and swooshed by how fast I was power walking. I batted my eyelashes a few times, adjusted my hair and dress, and sweetly and slowly paraded into the office. Behind the desk was my husband, work-filled and stressed.

"You know, I just received the most heartbreaking letter in the mail. It reminds me a lot of what I had to go through. And.. Someone else going through that would be heartbreaking, Leopold. I think going to the Orphanage immediately is exactly what we need."

I sat on the raggedy bed. The blankets were torn, and the roof was leaking. The lighting was dim and the floor was damp on my feet. Wooden planks creaked and babbling voices were laughing and chatting

outside. I rested my chin on my palm forlornly. What was the point of that dumb letter if no single soul was interested in ol' Atticus? My cramped fists pounded on the pillow.

The door creaked open, and I saw the rude face of Mrs. Padestry. She was the maid who made all of the children do her dirty work. Somehow, she was still paid by the Orphanage, and I have no certain clue why that is. It made me strawberry red, furiously angry. Mrs. Padestry scowled and angrily put down her eyebrows, her eyes flaming. "Make your bed, brush your teeth, wash your hands. Scrub that dirty sink and scrub the dirty window! I don't get paid enough to deal with you kids," the maid snorted, flying off.

As I was waddling up slowly like a snail to the door to grab its brass knob and shut it, the sweet old face of Sister LuAnne smiled deeply at me. "A young woman came today with her husband. Still here, actually. The girl claims to have read your letter, and want to speak to you. Now's your chance, little Atticus. I believe you won't have to live here much longer," the old woman almost looked like she had tears in her eyes. She wiped her eyelids, confirming my theories, as I hobbled down the corridor with her.

I'd never felt so happy. I was laughing up a storm, giggling and talking on and on. They weren't like Mrs. Padestry. They were just as sweet as Sister LuAnne, too. Delight dashed across my face. The woman claimed her name was Robin Redwing, and she was named after being as chipper and loud as a bird. Her husband was Leopold Redwing, a busy businessman. Sister LuAnne was sitting with us, but spoke no words. Wasn't needed.

Sister LuAnne smiled, speaking up. "I can predict you're taking Atticus. Such a fine, kind and smart boy. I'll get the paperwork right now, just hold on," the old lady was about to get up, but Leopold waved her down.

"Dear Robin, this child will be a burden to you, and I am forever busy. I am sorry, but we shan't take him." Leopold announced. Robin gasped, yelling and arguing with her husband, but succumbed to her sobs. Sadly, Robin uttered the words. "I want to take you. I want to, I want to. But if both of us don't agree, I simply can't,"

I was confused. My life was a blur. Sister LuAnne held me, but it did nothing. Robin and Leopold flew away.

I sobbed, but regained my strength. Tomorrow is a new day. I will get a family with letters, it worked this time.