



Schools United

# I Cry Alone

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## CHAPTER 1

When I woke up it was still dark and I knew straightaway that everything was different. As I looked around I was puzzled by the unfamiliar surroundings and disorientated by the bright florescent lights of the hospital. It was an early winter's morning and it was still black and dark outside.

As the hospital slowly came to life and began its morning routine, the awful, horrific events of the previous day suddenly flooded into my mind – bursting into my brain and stealing my peace. Crash! Thud! Scream! The violent skidding of tyres. Boom! The sudden inflation of airbags. The early morning frost and black ice had left the road like a skating rink. My dad was powerless, compared to the treacherous road beneath us. He tried to swerve and re-direct the car but failed. Our car, with my mum, dad and myself in it, smashed against a large oak tree. Upon impact, the windscreen shattered into thousands of prickly particles, showering us with glass.

I was violently catapulted forward from the back seat and pressed up against my parents in the front. But there was an eerie silence. Their bodies lay motionless, deathly still and slumped forward. I could see droplets of blood trickling down my dad's pale face. I drifted into an unconscious, drowsy sleep and in the background, I could faintly hear the ambulance siren approaching, and a concerned passer-by trying to engage me in conversation.

Now, as I lie here in my hospital bed, the news is devastating. My parents were killed in the accident and my trauma is compounded by the fact that I have no other living relatives. A kindly nurse has just informed me that my only option now is to go and live in the local orphanage.

I know this place well. On many occasions I've passed this dreary, dull, lifeless building and my thoughts often drifted to those unfortunate orphans cruelly trapped inside, destined for a loveless life of misery with no mum or dad to love them, hug them, hold them, laugh with them or cry with them. From now on, I'll be crying alone – all alone.

**By Carmel Conway, Orlaith McGinley, Niamh Haughey, Cora McCloskey and Laura Mallon, Year 8 students at Thornhill College, Derry. With thanks to Ms Sinead O'Doherty, English Department, Thornhill College.**

## CHAPTER 2

The taxi was rattling along the dark, gravelled driveway leading up to the dreary looking orphanage. The gargoyles overlooking the Victorian styled gates stared down menacingly at me.

I continued to sit motionless as the storm thundered around me but despite the grubby windows of the taxi I could still see the orphans' faces staring blankly from the windows.

"Children, may I introduce Benjamin" the slightly rounded chairwoman of the orphanage bellowed to those in front of her. Miss Jackson, desperately attempting to make my stay a little more pleasant, proceeded to show me around. Nobody, however, wanted to know me.

After what seemed like a lifetime of scuffing my trainers along the endless corridors it was time for bed. At my room I was greeted by my roommate, Pierre. He was tall, dark skinned and spoke with a foreign accent.

"So, Benjamin, do you know anyone here?" he asked.

"No, but what's that girl with the blonde, curly hair called?" I had found it odd that her face had seemed so familiar to me.

"Oh, that's Maisy" he replied.

Exhausted after the events of the day I quickly climbed into bed, trying not to reveal an emotion to anyone who might use it against me.

Awoken by the clock as it struck midnight, the thirst in my throat made me leave my bed in search of water.

I walked along the eerie corridors, all I could hear was the raised voice of an adult coming from the direction of the lounge. It sounded like Mr. Jones, the vice-chairman of Waterside Orphanage, arguing with Miss Jackson.

Too inquisitive to ignore this, I soon forgot my thirst and headed towards the voices. Tip-toeing down the stairs I could hear the door to the room they were in creaking open enough for me to eavesdrop without effort.

"We have twins here, we can't simply not tell them," exclaimed Mr. Jones.

"We can and we will! Benjamin's been through enough of a trauma without knowing he has a twin!"

No longer was it the creaking hinge that filled my ears but the pounding of my heart.

**Written by: Ryan Timmins, Josh Ruddell, Josh McAdams, Neil Reilly and Andrew Orr. Selected to represent the morning's efforts of 8A2 who worked in teams of five to write follow up chapters to Thornhill's and who then voted that this was the best of the six produced.**

### CHAPTER 3

Returning to my bed, I fell into a fitful sleep, away from the scary outside world, away from the trauma and away from all the confusion I felt. Why had my parents never told me about my twin when we had always been so close?

Suddenly I awoke with a start: ice-cold water soaked my whole upper-body and I could hear muffled laughter coming from around the bed. Maisy and Pierre were standing over me, ready for the next assault but Maisy hesitated when she realised I was crying. I hid my face in my hands to save what was left of my dignity. Instantly a picture of a young pale girl with blonde curls and piercing blue eyes shot through my mind. As I looked up, the same blue eyes met mine and prompted a most unexpected memory; the picture in my mind was much more sinister than before. I saw a dark figure towering menacingly over me. Before I could make out the shadowy profile, I was gripped by a feeling of dread and emptiness...

Maisy shot a startled glance at my arm and then at her own, where a faint birth mark lay in the exact same place. I couldn't explain why but I knew I had to tell her our secret.

Just as I was about to speak, there was a loud bang. It sounded like the front door slamming shut. Even from the top floor we could hear loud voices from the street below. Glancing at each other anxiously, Maisy and Pierre ran back to their beds.

At breakfast next morning, Mr Jones's seat was empty and beside it sat a very distracted Miss Jackson. She stood up, wringing her hands nervously as she announced that Mr Jones had had to leave the orphanage unexpectedly and would never be coming back...

**By Cillian Mc Minn , , Eimear Magennis, Aoife Maguire, Sarah Mullally and Luke Reihill. Year 8 Pupils at Aquinas Grammar School , Belfast.**

## CHAPTER 4

I couldn't believe it! Confused thoughts buzzed through my head like microscopic aeroplanes. I couldn't block out the feeling that I was the reason Mr Jones had left. What could it all mean? What was I going to tell Maisy? The birthmarks I saw that night were no coincidence. I knew we were twins – we had to be. As I stared at the cold porridge in front of me which was now encrusted to the bowl, the truth became clear and I knew what I had to do. I finally summoned up the courage to talk to Maisy. Slowly, carefully, I got up and approached Maisy's table, silently rehearsing what I was going to say with every heavy step I took. I tapped her back and she turned and stared at me. 'Maisy, can I talk to you? It is important' I asked, forcing the words out of my mouth that was now dry with fear. With a knowing look, she got up and followed me out of the gloomy hall. As soon as the tremendous roars of the breakfast hall had quelled, she turned towards me.

'Maisy, I know this will be a shock but I just have to tell you. I...I think..I think we m-might be twins,' I blurted out nervously. Her eyes widened and her face was motionless, then she gasped. 'What? What are you saying? I-It can't be true! It can't be! Leave me alone!' With tears streaming down her face, she turned and ran down the corridor, leaving me all alone.

That night, I lay awake, staring at the dull grey ceiling stained with patches of damp. Uncertainty and regrets about Maisy filled my mind. Why did she not believe me? Did I even believe it myself? Suddenly, I heard footsteps coming down the hall. Step after step. As they came closer and closer to the room I panicked, thinking that it might be Miss Jackson, but as the figure became clearer I realised it was Maisy. I didn't understand why she was here and as I studied her face I couldn't read her thoughts. As she sat down beside me, I felt the awkwardness between us. In hushed tones I asked her, 'Why are you here? You know you'll get caught!'

'I had to talk to you,' she replied. 'I think you might be right about us and I know a way we can find out the truth'

We crept cautiously along the dark corridor which led to Miss Jackson's office: Maisy leading the way and never once looking back. I didn't dare break the silence that hung between us for fear that Maisy would run off again. With every few steps, the floorboards creaked like rusty hinges and our limbs would freeze, fearing that Miss Jackson was following us. All of a sudden, Maisy tripped, making a loud clatter and we sought cover in the closet nearby. I was terrified. I could hear my heart beating quickly between each of Maisy's rasping breaths. Nobody came so we stepped out onto the corridor and kept walking, the door to Miss Jackson's office looming in front of us.

The door creaked open as we edged cautiously inside. A large leather office chair stood behind an oak desk that was layered with a collection of papers, pens and files. Maisy hurried over to the large grey filing cabinet. I followed but with my clumsy movements I knocked over a cup full of pens. In the stillness of the night, even this small thud seemed deafening. 'You idiot,' hissed Maisy, 'Come on!' I pulled out a drawer. All the pages were dusty and yellowed with age except for two files. They had obviously been read recently. I yanked them from their places. 'Look at these,' I whispered. Our eyes rapidly devoured the words on the pages and then my eyes locked with hers, realising what we had just unearthed. We both gasped.

**Written by Francesca Deans, Megan Doherty, Aidan McGinley, Sadb Morrison and Lauren Nicholl from 8D Lumen Christi College . Many thanks to Mrs Nora Dobbins, English Department.**

## CHAPTER 5

My heart was pounding as the pages dropped out of my shaking hands. Slicked with sweat and shaking with shock, I was stunned by what the medical report we found in the file revealed. While I was classified “sane”, Maisy was described as “displaying abnormal tendencies and prone to violent fits of rage.”

As I stood open mouthed, Maisy glared at me and her breathing started to come in quick, short gasps. I looked away embarrassed for her. She hissed in such a snake like way I could barely hear her, ‘Everyone here always treats me like I’m different. Ever since the day when Angela over heard a conversation between Miss Jackson and Mr Jones about my abnormal circumstances I’ve been teased and tormented.’

Here I interrupted, ‘what do you mean by abnormal circumstances?’ She replied, ‘When I was tiny I had two imaginary friends. You know the gargoyles outside the orphanage. Well they always told me to do stuff that wasn’t exactly pleasant. It started with just small things like soaking people with ice cold water but then it got more serious. Do you know what the voices inside my head are telling me to do now?’

I began to back away from Maisy, stuttering, “No no, I don’t want what you are saying to be true. You are my twin. I’ve only just found you. This isn’t real!” But I had to face the truth. Even though I missed my parents and wanted and needed someone to be there for me, it could never be. I had a twin but she was as separated from me now as if she’d been on another continent. She might look like a curly haired angel but she was clearly dangerous.

Her eyes glimmered with a strange light as she rasped, “My parents could have helped me. They could have saved me instead of leaving me to rot. Why did they keep you and not me? What makes you so special Benjamin?”

I replied in a slight stammer, “That’s something I don’t and will never understand”.

Suddenly, she turned on me like a tiger screaming, “You have taken everything from me! It’s time you paid in full”.

She seized my wrist in a vice like grip, forcing it behind my back while lashing out wildly with her other hand. She struck my face with her nails, causing it to bleed. Relentlessly, she repeatedly lashed out as if she was trying to kill me until the point where I was lying on the floor, gasping for breath. A vicious kick made my head spin and as I lay dazed, my eyes were drawn towards the scattered pages of the doom laden file.

There was a document showing how much inheritance we would get in the event that our parents died. They had left me everything to be held in trust until I was 21 under the guardianship of- Oh my God, this was insane. Maisy wasn’t going to let this go and I was in grave danger from someone else as well who would stop at nothing to end my life. I had to get out of here.

I crawled toward the door as Maisy shrieked, “You are not going anywhere you little worm.”

Just as she was about to deliver the final blow, the door swung open and in stepped Miss Jackson. She reacted surprisingly fast, grabbing my crazy twin and pinning her down.

I was just about able to mouth, “What are you doing here?” before everything went black.

The End

**By Rachel Weatherall, Kyle Graham, Jude Guiney, Kenneth Millar and Rose Jackson. Year 8 pupils at Wellington College, Belfast**