

Walnut

When I was around three years old, my parents took a plane, my father was piloting the aircraft, my life has been through huge changes since. My parents, Vivian and Bryant passed away the day the plane departed, it crashed. Shortly after I was adopted with my little sister Kobe into a home where we would be severely abused.

This may not make sense, so let's back up. My adoptive mother was never the greatest, I gained six siblings. We shared everything from our bedroom to our underwear, not my brother though, he was the only boy out of my new siblings. Our new father felt cold and distant, he was the source of our suffering, he raped me through my entire childhood, honestly you could hardly call it a childhood.

Something to note about my family is that we are very religious Christian Mormons. In our faith they institute the ideal of "virginity," as a middle schooler I felt absolutely disgusting and worthless every single day. I would walk into school ashamed, feeling impure for a reason that I couldn't control.

I was afraid to tell anyone, afraid to be shamed by my family. In the Mormon faith family is everything, I was so terrified I would ruin our whole family, everyone would despise me, so naturally I shut my mouth and faced it alone.

When I was in college my story slipped through my grasps into the hands of my mother who instantly shot the idea down and disowned me. I had worked so hard to keep all of the emotions

hunkered down in my shell all deep within my chest for the family, now my shell was shattered and now nothing seemed worth it. The whole world sunk beneath my feet, I wasn't allowed to see my siblings, I think that hurt the most.

I survived three years being separated from them until I just could not take it. I sent a letter to my mother asking to have a connection with family on the condition that I did not bring up anything about the abuse I suffered. I received a write back, a small white envelope with my room number and my name. I shook as I slowly grasped the letter from inside and pulled it out. This was the first contact I had with my family in three whole years. I teared up as I read its contents "Ginger, you may join us at Lisa's wedding - Mom." My heart overflowed with joy. It was such a small gesture, but it meant the world to me. I was invited to my sister Lisa's wedding, I was back in!

Years later I was speaking to my sister, Diana who was not there when I told the rest of the family, she was on forigen exchange. Somewhere in the conversation my abuse came up, I panicked and scrambled for words as she kept demanding answers. Thoughts and lies slipped through my brain as I wondered what to tell her. It wasnt that I did not want to, that was not the problem, I feared abandonment again.

My sister finally cracked the fragile walnut shell that was my truth, trapped inside for years taped back together as best as it could be, the weak shell had grown and grown over my lifetime and finally I let it all out. After having a taste of the bittersweet nut inside, my sister was furious. She drove three whole hours to our parents house and confronted them.

Hours after Diana left, I sat with myself, in dread of what my mother could do. Minutes passed like hours, hours passed like days, all the while I stared at the door, finally came a knock. Shaking, I stood from my chair, opening the door with a creak. There stood my father, “For anything that I have ever done to hurt you, I am sorry.” He said, at that point I felt a wave of emotions covering me like a warm quilt blanket. I did not need closure, but even then, I just wanted to talk, perhaps mend wounds, that's why I thought he had come. I began explaining that if we were going to talk about what happened, he must understand what he put me through, but he stopped me. “If you can't forgive me, that's on you.” He replied bluntly, not allowing me to finish my sentence, and with that he was gone, just went to his car and drove off leaving me stunned.

I tried to keep in contact with my father, the majority of my family cut him off, I was still determined to fix things, I felt responsible for breaking the family even after all those years. I reached out to him on a few occasions, the last time I reached out to him was when my second son was born, I had reached out before to no avail, I told him this time that I had in fact forgiven him. In reply I got a short, concise letter from my father, congratulating me. At that point I decided it was no longer worth it, he did not want to put the effort into our relationship, so neither would I, it took a bit more for me to finally cut him off.

After so long of not hearing anything from him I got a friend request on facebook, it was from my aunt, my fathers sister. I was already so overwhelmed with school and I was preparing a huge paper, seeing that friend request, I instantly spiraled at even the thought of him. It hadn't even been him reaching out, but it was too late, I came to terms with it. He is never ever going to

reach out to me and I do not need him. He will not fix anything and I cannot make him. I am 49 now and have a genuinely good life now, without him and I plan to keep it that way.