

Anna's Story

Written by Joshua Cole

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I was born on August 29, 1988, in the same city in Birmingham I still live in. I lived in an apartment downtown with my parents and older sister, Amy, until I was 5. When I was 5 years old things started happening with my parents. At the time, I didn't really know what it was. I just remember they were fighting more and more often and my mother was always crying. Then one night, Daddy left. My mom was screaming at him, and he looked like he was going to cry. I ran to my room and climbed out the window. I walked the whole way to my grandmother's house about 6 miles away. When I got there, my grandmother called my mom and told her where I was and that I would be staying with her for a few days. I ended up staying much longer than a few days. My sister still lived with my mother, though she came to visit me and my grandparents frequently. One day I asked her what happened to Daddy. She told me he had died. I of course believed her, having no proof that she wasn't telling me the truth. I still don't really know why she told me this; maybe she thought it would be easier for me to understand that telling me that he didn't love us anymore and ran away from home and wouldn't come back. After all, I'm sure the thought he was never coming back. He eventually did move back in with my mother and sister. I would live with my parents for a few days, sometimes a week, and then go back to my grandparents house, feeling much safer and more at home there. One night while visiting my parents when I was 9, my dad had left again, and I was sitting on the back steps with my mother. She was drinking a glass of wine, calming herself down, after an obvious ordeal of tears and anger. I asked her for the truth about why my father left. She told me it was because he had loved someone more than her. I asked her if everything would be ok... she said she didn't know. When I was staying with her, I realized she cried every night. I would walk in there and tell her everyone was going to be alright. She seemed to get comfort from it. While living with my grandparents, my half-crazy grandfather sexually abused me for years. I learned all about running. I could run to a friend's house and eat dinner with them, or run to the library where no one would ever look for me (though they should have thought of it first) or just ride my bike around until everything was calm again. I spent most of my young childhood running. This isn't to say there were no happy points. There were. I always enjoyed every summer when my mother and father would take Amy and I to Six Flags and spend the night in Atlanta. By the time I was 12 I felt completely grown up. I took care of myself, worked at my grandmother's gift shop, and raised my younger cousin, Nathan. I was more of a mother to the boy than his real one. He was my responsibility. I was to take care of him because my grandmother was working and couldn't. When my grandfather would hit him, I would be the one to rescue him. When his father (my uncle) would get angry and start yelling and threatening us, I was the one who would run away with him until it was safe. His mother was never there. She left him and my uncle a year after Nathan was born.

When I was 13 my grandmother sat me down in the living room and told me that I was going to

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go stay with my parents. I assumed it would be no longer than a week. I didn't really respond. She told me they had gotten a house. Ok... so I would stay with them for maybe two weeks? No. I would be living with them permanently. *blink* What? I had to move in with them for... good? I had to change schools?! So... for the first time since I was 5 I moved into my parents new house (which is where I am now). I've been here for 3 years now.

By the time I was 14 I knew something wasn't right with me. After doing a lot of research I thought I was either suffering from depression or I was bipolar. I couldn't figure it out, but I didn't want to see a doctor. All I wanted was to be left alone. I started having more and more problems and I was screwing up all my relationships, friendships... everything was messed up. I started dating Ryan not thinking that it would turn into anything serious. I just needed to be held. Little did I know that 16 months later we would still be together.

Not long ago I met Wes, a good friend who has been recovering fro BPD. He told me about it and told me that he suspected that it could be what was wrong with me. He said after everything he felt and had learned about it, he understood me way too well and that he recognized the symptoms. So I started doing research. Life by this point was falling apart, and I just needed to know what was wrong. After all the research I did on bpd I figured there was very high chance it was my problem. I tried to talk to my parents, but they never did listen. So, I've been pretty much on my own. That's how I got here.

Thanks for listening. Sorry I ranted so long.