Painkiller

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by [paige_who](#)

Summary

Lydia Deetz was born with beautiful curly blonde hair, a shock to her brunette parents. When her mother dies she is left feeling alone and invisible, with only photographs of her mother to remind her of what she lost. Desperate she does the only thing she knows will make her father see her.

Everyone always said Lydia had the most beautiful blonde hair. When she was first born everyone was so shocked to see this tiny baby girl with light blonde hair when both her mother and father had dark hair, it wasn't until they remembered Charles' red-headed father that it all made sense that Lydia was blonde. From the day she was born, nobody could deny that Lydia was Charles' daughter. Even as a baby she looked exactly like him from her eye color, the shape of her nose, and her face in general. Emily tried not to be envious, though she did land in a few remarks about how unfair it was that she grew Lydia inside of her for nine months and she looked exactly like her father, who's job in making the baby ended nine months and fifteen minutes ago. Little did Emily know that even though she looked like Charles, Lydia would undeniably be considered Emily's little clone.

As a toddler, she had little curls that killed people when she gave a rosy-cheeked and buck-toothed smile. Her mother would love to braid flowers in Lydia's hair and pretend they were fairies in the garden. Her father used to gush about how he loved the light, almost white colored hair that contrasted Lydia's dark brown eyes. As she got older Lydia always just kept her hair long. She liked the way that it blew all crazy when she was running on the playground, and the time spent every morning with her mother helping her fix her hair for the day. She begged her mother to let her get bangs when she was around ten years old, and Emily begrudgingly agreed only because she also had bangs as a child and hoped that letting Lydia get them done once would get it out of her system. Lydia ADORED her new hair cut, and even Emily thought the look suited her. Mostly she was just thrilled her daughter was happy and expressing herself.

Lydia never really thought much about having blonde hair, she just thought it was funny when people would joke about how her family must have brought home the wrong baby because her hair was so light compared to hers. Her father kept his brown hair in a professional style like all the other father's Lydia saw of her classmates, she teased him for being boring. Emily though, she had shorter hair from as early as Lydia could remember. It was dark brown, nearly black hair that Emily kept cut just above her chin in a messy bob. At nights Emily and Lydia would flip through old photo albums and Emily would groan when photos of her with long hair appeared.

"My parents always wanted me to keep it long, said it was 'proper of a young lady' " Emily mocked in a stuffy voice, "As soon as I turned sixteen, I went to the hairdresser and told them to chop it off! My mother was less than thrilled when I came home missing ten inches of hair."

"Would you be mad if I cut my hair like that?" a ten-year-old Lydia asked

Emily shook her head, "Of course I wouldn't be. You can do whatever you want with your hair. I just like mine this way, I've kept it this short ever since I was sixteen years old. I think it's very me, don't you?"

Lydia nodded, "I like my hair like this. I think I would keep it that way, besides daddy really loves my hair long."

"I think you'd look cute with short hair, but if this is how you like it you should keep it that way."

Lydia thought about it for a second, "Maybe when I'm older...I'll test out some new looks."

"Didn't you just test out these bangs little lady?"

Lydia was twelve years old when Emily first got sick. The doctors seemed hopeful in the beginning, said that her chance of beating it was sixty percent, but as time went on Emily got worse and worse. Emily's once beautiful black hair was brittle and falling out as a reaction from the medication she was on, by the time the end was drawing near, she had only patches of hair left. Lydia remembered crying when her mom asked to braid her hair one more time, just hadn't been able to do her own in so long, and even though Lydia was all grown up now, just once more Emily wanted to it. Slowly and deliberately Emily twisted Lydia's blonde hair into two strands, and when she was done both women were in tears. Charles, who was silent for the whole thing, remarked how beautiful they both looked.

A few days later Emily took her last breath. Lydia and Charles at both sides of the bed, holding her hands in theirs. Lydia doesn't remember much of what happened afterward, it was all a blur to her but it still pains Charles to play over in his mind how Lydia screamed and cried for her mother to come back, that she wasn't ready to let go, how he had to pry his sobbing daughter away from her dead mother, Lydia's arms still outstretched reaching for one more hug, one more kiss, one more time of Emily doing her hair. He regretted not letting her, at the time he found it morbid but he often wondered if he had just let her say goodbye on her own terms that she would be coped better. Instead of righting his wrongs, he simply tried to ignore it, and hope that Lydia would come around.

At home that night Lydia felt so numb, she had already cried so much that she couldn't even make tears anymore. Her father was so busy preparing arrangements for the funeral and organizing family that he didn't have time to console his grieving child. She would stand right in front of him, tears running down her face but he would dismiss her, as he scrambled to get everything in order. She never felt so alone, even with all the people constantly parading in and out of her house. Adults simply giving her pitiful looks as they went to talk to Charles about how strong he was and what a good example he was for Lydia. She could hear their whispers to each other, and their glances at the frail and meek little girl sitting on the stairs. She knew they wished she could just give them a polite smile or thank them when they gave their condolences. She couldn't though, because she knew it was fake. They weren't sorry for her loss, they were sorry that she hadn't moved on. She couldn't tell anybody how she felt, any time she tried they would just turn away.

Her aunt sat by her in the living room and instead of reading the tone, Lydia was silent and tearful, she picked up a picture frame of Lydia's family and remarked, "You know, you look just like your father."

She lost it, she managed a mousy, "I get that a lot." before she ran up to her room, slammed the door and cried.

The night before the funeral Lydia came down the stairs and found her father clutching a framed photograph of Emily in his hands. Lydia stared at the photo. Her mother and father

were dancing, something that Charles never did unless Emily coaxed him into it. They were younger, maybe in their twenties. Charles in the photograph had messier hair and was frozen in a laugh as he dipped Emily. Emily's mouth was in a wide smile and her short black hair was fanned out behind her. Lydia held back a whimper as she snuck out the backdoor and walked down to the drug store a block away. It was a route she was familiar with, growing up in New York Lydia walked a lot of places, but talking to the drug store this time felt strange as if reality felt off. Mindlessly Lydia walked through the aisles, unsure of what she was even looking for until she stumbled into the rows of hair coloring. Cautiously she picked up a box in her hand and ran her fingers through her long blonde hair. Without saying a word she dropped the box on the counter, paid for it, and walked back home.

She went into the kitchen and grabbed a pair of gloves and a pair of scissors. She quietly went into the bathroom and set everything down, careful not to attract the attention of her father. She held a photograph of her mother up to the side of her face as she stared at herself in the mirror. She stayed emotionless as she applied the dye, showered, and dried her hair. Standing back in the mirror she twisted the now dark black hair around her fingers, looking back and forth between the photo of her mother and herself in the mirror. She picked up the scissors and aggressively started cutting, long curls of her hair falling to the floor. Tears were streaming liberally and her face burned a bright red as she sobbed. When she was done it was choppy, uneven, and short. Shorter than she had even had it before. The longest section rested above her chin, but it was exactly what she wanted. When she looked at her reflection she didn't even recognize who she was, but she felt like she was looking at a ghost.

"Lydia?" Charles called from downstairs, "What's going on up there, are you alright?"

She gathered up the mess she made and threw it away before walking calmly down the stairs to greet her father. She hesitated on the banister, but there was no going back. She stood in front of her father and just waited for a response.

"What the hell did you do!" He screamed, "Oh my god Lydia, why did you do this? The funeral is tomorrow and you had to do this tonight, do you not think before you do things! Look at it-"

Lydia's eyes started welling up with tears but she tried to keep herself under control. She knew he would be shocked, but she hadn't expected him to scream at her, not two days after her mother had died.

"Lydia your hair was beautiful! I loved it, your mother..she loved it! Why did you do this! What the hell have you done, can you please just explain why."

Lydia couldn't help herself, the dam broke and she started screaming back at him, she could feel angry and hot tears running down her face, and her chest felt so tight that she was afraid she couldn't breathe. She wouldn't give him a straightforward answer, she just yelled at him about everything that she had been feeling, for how everyone had been treating her.

"I'm invisible dad! Nobody sees me, you don't see me. All you do is look at everyone else, and look at pictures. Well, guess what dad, now you have to look at me! DO YOU SEE ME NOW DAD!"

"I am looking right at you, I haven't gone anywhere. It has just been a rough couple of days-"

"I am so sick of everyone telling me that. That it's been rough, and that it's going to get better. It's not going to get better, they are liars because they can't bring her back!"

He sagged his shoulders, "Lydia, I'm sorry you feel that way. I just, I don't understand why you felt like you had to do this. You cut your hair, you dyed it black. We understand you're in mourning, but isn't this taking it too far!?"

Lydia's face contorted, she collapsed on the ground as sobs violently wracked through her tiny frame. She looked up at her father and whimpered, "Do I look like her?"

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