Battling the Enemy: My Sister

“Shut the hell up!!!” My sister screamed, as I begged her to stop. She didn't want my mom to hear from upstairs, as she was punching me.

I gripped my hands so tight around my head, trying to protect it. My knees were crushed into my stomach, I was trying to become as small as possible. My shoulder blade pierced into the floor, as she pushed me down further into it. I was curled up in a ball on my hardwood floor in my bedroom, with my arms around my head, letting it happen. She wouldn't stop. She kept throwing punch after punch, and kick after kick in my back. I could hear her grunting as she threw each punch. Over and over again. I was crying out in pain, it was unbearable. There was nothing I could do, she was much more stronger than me. I felt the physical pain in my back, and the aching pain in my heart. Why won't she stop? What did I do to her?

Ever since second grade, I dealt with physical abuse from my older sister.

I later learned she was diagnosed with a mental illness, and that she was battling with her own demons inside, and truly never wanted to hurt me. But how could I have believed that? I was her punching bag, her stress reliever, that helped her get all of her anger out from inside of her. It was almost a daily occurence, sometimes multiple times a day. When we got home from school and my parents were still at work, it was her job to babysit me. But instead, I would stay in my room, hoping she wouldn't come in. There was never a real reason. If she had a bad day at school, I would get hit. If I disagreed or said no to a favor, I would get hit. There was nothing to stop her. She wasn't a sister to me then, just a monster I was terrified of.

I was only 13 years old when I walked a couple blocks to the local hardware store. I bought a lock, and installed it on my door myself. Of course I told my parents about the beatings, but the most they did was ground her. That didn't help at all, it just made her more mad.

I felt trapped when my sister would take her anger out on me. I felt trapped when I would beg my parents not to leave me at home alone with her. No one else knew. I kept it from my friends until I was 15. I was embarrassed. What kind of person would do that to her little sister? What my sister did to me really affected me, and my childhood. It was normal to me, yet I knew it wasn't right. When she was 12, my parents had her start Karate, as a healthy way to relieve her anger. But that only made her stronger, and more dangerous to me.

It was my sister’s decision to do what she did to me, but it was also my fault for not putting an end to it sooner. I could have done more, and even tried to fight back. But I always felt trapped from her, and was too scared to act on it. As ironic as it sounds, I never wanted to hurt her, which is why I never fought back. As much as a monster she was, she was my sister and I loved her more than anything. I felt empathy for her, all the sadness she was going through. Yet I could have fought harder for myself, and my happiness. I will forget the feeling I had, and the terror I dealt with.

It was a regular school day. My sister and I were both in high school; she was a junior and I was a freshman. We got home at the same time, but never really acknowledged each other. I went into my room, laid down on my bed, and locked my door behind me. About an hour later, she knocked on my door. She didn't seem upset; she seemed calm, and was asking to borrow a shirt. At first I hesitated, but I opened the door. She wouldn’t go away if I ignored her. She then asked me if she could borrow a shirt. I let her in, she found it and showed it to me. I replied with a firm “no.” I had just bought that shirt, and haven't even worn it yet. Instantly her face dropped into a frown. I regretted the simply “no” I just said.

The next thing I knew I was on my hardwood floor, covering my head with my arms, while Sophia kicked me in my back. She would go back and forth from kicking me to punching me. As usual I just let it happen. I couldn’t move. I couldn't fight back. I felt so weak, and thought I could never over-power her. I remember I felt my back go numb.

“Sophia please, please stop” I cried out to her.

“Shut the fuck up!” she screamed with every punch she took.

It was almost like a bomb went off inside me. All of a sudden I wasn't scared, I was pissed off. I was tired of it. I was fed up with taking this abuse from her for many, many years. It was the hardest thing I had to do, but I got up. I kicked her legs out from under her, and threw one hard punch right in the center of her face. She instantly fell to the ground, and I couldn't believe what I had just done. I just stood there, standing over her, smiling. It was one of the greatest feelings I ever felt. I won. I won! All I felt was satisfaction, and freedom.