

It's not my fault

Short story by Melissa Nabre (1st year BA English student)

Here, could you finish this for me? It's her milk, but she's finally cried herself to sleep and it would be a waste so just drink the rest, will you?

No! Don't try to take her from me, I'm finally able to hold her without wanting to throw her into a wall so I want to hold her for a little longer.

She's so cute, now that she's quiet. I never realised how much I loved her until now.

Even just moments ago, I hated her to the very bone, even though she was my own daughter.

No matter what I did, she just wouldn't stop *crying*.

I gave her milk, I changed her diaper, I threw her, I played with her, I slapped her, I even tried to use my pillow to shut her up but she just wouldn't stop *crying*.

I hated it. I was so sick of it.

Sick of the tears dripping down her sweet, chubby cheeks. Sick of the wails coming out of her small pink lips stretched wide open at all hours of the night. Sick of the lack of sleep. Sick of not being able to get away from her. Sick of not being able to rest for just one *minute*.

Sick of the fear that she would wake up again and start it all over.

Don't look at me like that, you should drink more to stop your coughing.

You know how I felt about her. But it's alright now. I don't hate my beautiful daughter anymore; *I've never felt so in love with anyone's sleeping figure before.*

This is what you wanted to show me before, wasn't it? When you used to hold me back from her tiny crying figure in her cot, locking me in our room, you were protecting our adorable child for the day when I finally realised I did actually love her.

Well, don't worry now. *You won't lock me away anymore.* Or ever again.

Alright, I'm finished holding her, you can take her now. Come on, don't just lay there, you're spilling the last little bit of her milk!

Here, take her and pass me your cup.

Wrap your arms around her properly now, we wouldn't want her to wake up again after all my effort to get her to sleep.

I ended up finishing my new bottle of sleeping pills, the full fifty tablets, *and* her powdered milk.

You don't need to buy anymore, it's fine. I won't need it anyway.

Careful now, I know your arms are limp and you're tired from finishing her milk but you need to hold her properly or you'll drop your daughter.

You two look so cute together.

She looks just like you, doesn't she? Her nose, eyes, hair, all of it comes from you, you know. She doesn't look one bit like me.

She's the female version of you, my dear kidnapper.

Yes, you are my kidnapper, though maybe other girls would call you their prince in shining armour.

Whisking me away from my mother and father who would lock me away from anyone and anything they didn't like in their overbearing overprotectiveness, you brought me here and let me live with you. I still remember when you broke through the glass in my window and carried me out like a prince rescuing his princess from the evil clutches of the demon king and queen.

You're no prince though.

Rescuing your princess, and then refusing her the choice of being able to be free like she wanted to is not something a kind prince would do. A kind prince wouldn't lock his princess up like the demon king and queen did. He wouldn't hit her for trying to get her baby to be quiet for just a little longer. He wouldn't force his princess to give birth to her baby at home with only a wet nurse to help her.

That's why you're not my prince, but my kidnapper.

You know, if you were going to be so possessive of me then you might as well have left me with mother and father.

But that's alright, it's not like I knew any other lifestyle other than being kept inside a house all day every day, only looking out into the dangerous world behind the protection of our windows. Mother and father always told me that the world outside was corrupted and evil, and that they only locked me up for my own good, for the sake of my purity and 'innocent ignorance'. I wonder if that was why you kept me hidden away too.

I wonder if you would have kept our daughter hidden away with me.

Oh dear, you've fallen asleep too, haven't you?

How rude, falling asleep while I'm still talking. You could have waited until I was finished at least, now I feel silly for talking to myself all that time.

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Oh my. I'm so bored, both of you have fallen asleep and I'm the only one left awake.

I wonder if you're both having sweet dreams... Would you like me to close your eyes for you?

You know, my dear kidnapper, it's your fault that I'm like this.

You made me like this. My mother and father would kill you if they found out that their baby girl has lost everything they were trying to 'protect'. Haha.

Finally, some peace and quiet.

It's been a long time since the house was this quiet, don't you think? No crying from our sweet baby, no need for any more frustrated tears. No more shouting and screaming and banging and breaking.

It's all your fault. You were the one who made this house so loud, it all started from you.

You took me away, you locked me up. You took away my freedom, you protected me from the evil outside. You made me have a child, you kept me from killing her. You were my prince, and then my kidnapper. You left our baby with me, who hated her.

Well, I don't care. It's your turn to take care of her now. Wait for me, okay? I'll be with you both soon.



Sky (Photograph by BA English Student, Felek Yetik)