

## The New Baby

Mummy told me that I must think about what I have done quietly in my room. A timeout, she said. I was naughty, she said. To *it*, she said *nothing*. Nothing at all. It was wailing so loud that I had to cover my ears and scream at the top of my lungs to not hear it. Then mummy got super-duper angry with me and told me to go to my room and not come out until I was done thinking about my *behavior*. Everyone keeps talking about *my* behavior. Nobody talks about *its* behavior. My behavior is perfect. I can drink my own milk and eat my own cookies with my *own* hands. I can even use the potty by myself now and flush the toilet after. And nobody needs to pick me up because I am so tall. If I stand on my bed, I am almost as tall as mummy. I can't wait to be as tall as mummy, so I can reach the cookie jar all by myself. I asked mummy when I would be as tall as her, and she said after drinking my milk. Sometimes I think mummy thinks I am super silly. If drinking milk made people taller, *it* would be the tallest of everyone. All it does is drink milk all day long and not even by itself! So, I didn't drink my milk because I knew mummy was making it up, and I accidentally knocked my milk glass over. It made a big mess. Mummy hates mess most, and I don't know why she was crying over a little bit of spilled milk. So, daddy came to help her, and then he took me to my room, read me a book, and told me he loved me. I love daddy too. I wish he was always at home. But he has to go to work. When I am a grown-up (not after drinking my milk), I will work with daddy. It and mummy can stay home all they like. It will be like a mega timeout for both of them for their *behavior*.

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The next day mummy came with *it* to drop me off at school. She and Miss Cassandra stood in the doorway looking at me weirdly. Mummy never used to look at me that way until *it* came along. Silly Suzie came to where I was building my playdough monster truck and asked in her silly Suzie voice, "Hayden, is that your baby sister?! She is sooo cute".

"No, that's *it*," I told her.

But Silly Suzie is the silliest of all. When the teacher asks for something that starts with Ah Ah-A, she says, Eh Eh- Elephant! So silly. I know all my letters, even the hard ones like Z' xylophone'. Mummy used to tell everyone how I was so smart. Now she just looks at me with that weird look on her face like now. It makes me feel so hot and wobbly in my tummy. So, when Silly Suzie asked me, "what do you mean 'it' Hayden. Your mummy told my mummy that your baby sister's name was Holly,". Silly Suzie should not have said that because it made me feel hot and wobbly in my tummy, so I splatted her with my playdough monster truck. She started crying, and then *it* started crying too, and mummy had to leave. Miss Cassandra took me to the feelings corner in the class. I like it because we get to sit on a big fuzzy chair and look at lava lamps which Miss Cassandra said is like the hot wobbly feeling I got in my tummy when I splatted Silly Suzie. She said the feeling is called 'anger,' and we feel it when we feel unsafe. She said just like feelings have a name, so does *it*. Then Miss Cassandra asked me if *it* made me feel unsafe. I said no because *it* was so small *it* couldn't hurt me but because I am big.

Miss Cassandra said, "Well, there you go. You are a big boy. Guess what? Your baby sister will never be as big as you, so you have to look out for her, okay? Make sure nobody splats her. Do you think you are big enough to do that?" I looked at the orange, yellow and red lava in the lamp. If you turn it upside down, all the lava starts flowing the other way, but it goes super slow. Miss Cassandra said that when we feel angry, we have to turn the big hot feeling upside down and

slow down by taking deep breaths. I took a deep breath, "Of course I can. I am Holly's big brother, after all."

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Holly was not in her baby car seat when mummy came to pick me up from school that day. Mummy asked me about my day at school, and I told her all about my day, and she listened without turning to look back at Holly even once. When we got home, I kicked off my shoes and threw my jacket on the floor like I always do, but Mummy didn't yell at me to pick them up because she wasn't carrying Holly. She just picked up my things herself like she used to before. I looked around, but I didn't see Holly anywhere. I didn't even see her play gym or her baby chair or downstairs crib.

"Hayden, I made you favorite chocolate chip cookies today, sweetie. Come on, we will have some cookies and milk now. Just you and me," mummy said from the kitchen.

Mummy's chocolate chip cookies are my most favorite ever. I can eat a hundred of them!

Mummy sat with me while I ate and folded my clothes from the laundry. She was folding my blue pirate ship t-shirt when I decided to ask her, "where is it?" Mummy looked at me and asked, "who?"

"You know...it...Holly," I whispered. It was the first time I had said her name in the house.

Mummy smiled and little and said, "well, she is gone."

"Gone where?" I asked her.

"Well, I returned her back to the stork who brought her. I know you weren't feeling happy about her. So, I guess we couldn't keep her. She was a little cutie, though, right?" mummy was looking at me with her serious face. It's not the one she makes when she tells me I will grow taller after

drinking milk. It's the one she makes when she measures the flour for making her chocolate chip cookies. Her serious, serious face.

I blinked.

"You gave her away? You can't do that!" I felt the hot angry lava in my tummy again.

"Sweetie, I thought you didn't want Holly. What's the matter?" Mummy asked me, pulling me closer. She hugged me tightly and whispered, "I love you, Hayden. I will always love you."

But that's not what I wanted. I didn't know what I wanted. I was going to be a big strong brother for teeny weeny baby Holly, but now she was gone? I didn't want that. I wanted Holly back, so I could be the best big brother ever. I told mummy that. Mummy looked at me with a smile and said, "Well, if that's what you really want, I guess we could write a letter to Mr. Stork."

So I went upstairs to my room that mummy had painted my favorite color – green. She had even put pictures of my monster trucks on the wall above my bed. I took out my nicest pencil, the one with the monster truck eraser on the back, and then mummy gave me a pink paper (Holly's favorite color), and I wrote a letter to Mr. Stork:

Dear Mr. Stork

Can you please bring my baby sister Holly back? I ~~promise~~ promise not to call her it anymore. I am her big strong ~~brother~~ brother. I have my own room so its okay if she sleeps with mommy. I wont wake her up. I will also drink all my milk. Please bring her back ~~tomore~~ tomorrow.

Thank you,

Hayden

After that, mummy said we must prepare for a Welcome Back Holly party. I helped Mummy bake a special cake with sprinkles and even blow some balloons. I was such a helpful big boy. Mummy said she was proud of me. We waited and waited until it got all dark and finally daddy's car came and in it was Holly! I told Mummy I wanted to hold her right away, and Mummy didn't say no. She placed Holly on my knees when I sat down and took pictures of us. Holly looked super-duper pinky-pink cutie pie. After that, we all cut the cake I helped bake, and then it was time for Holly to sleep. I said goodnight to her, and mummy took her to mummy's room. I went with Daddy to my room, and we did a puzzle before I went to bed. That night when I closed my eyes to sleep, the red angry feeling was gone. I was a super-duper happy big brother.