

ABANDONED

By Laurie Allen

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CAST: SARA and JILL

SARA: (*pacing back and forth*) I couldn't sleep all night. All I could do was think.

JILL: It's all my fault.

SARA: It's not your fault.

JILL: I spilt the beans. I should have left it alone. All these years, you thought your mother was dead.

SARA: Looks like she did a fine job of raising you. Funny, she runs off and raises another man's child, but forgets about her own.

JILL: I never knew about you.

SARA: So see, it's not your fault.

JILL: Should I have kept it a secret?

SARA: No!...Oh, it hurts. It hurts all over. It's hard to understand. You know there's supposed to be a special bond between a mother and a daughter. But my mother, she just left. Left without a trace.

JILL: Sara, it wasn't your fault.

SARA: How do you know?

JILL: You were only five years old when she left!

SARA: Well, maybe I was a terrible child. Perhaps I cried all the time. Or maybe I was mean. I might have pulled everything out of the drawers and written on the walls with crayolas. Possibly I was never potty trained and I just went all over the house. (*pause*) Maybe she couldn't stand me!

JILL: Sara, I don't know why she left. She's the only one who has the answers.

SARA: My mother never talked about her past? Never uttered a word about me?

JILL: No. All I knew was that she was raised by her aunt because of her own mother dying. But that's about all.

SARA: Was my mother nice to you?

JILL: Yes...she was nice.

SARA: Did she ever tell you stories? You know, at bedtime when you were a little girl?

JILL: Yes. She would tell me stories every night.

SARA: Did she attend your activities at school? You know, PTA, Open House, special programs...

JILL: Yes, most of them.

SARA: She must have been proud of you.

JILL: I don't know. Maybe.

SARA: Sounds to me like she was a pretty good stepmother. Jill...do you love her?

JILL: Sara, she's been my stepmother since I was eight years old.

SARA: But do you love her?

JILL: I...I don't know.

SARA: My father did.

JILL: Did you?

SARA: I have bad memories.

JILL: Like what?

SARA: Like...she used to sew a lot. I remember...I remember playing with the scraps of material. And one day I was cutting this yellow flowery scrap of material with my scissors. And all of a sudden, she looked down at me from her chair and started screaming at me. "That's not a scrap! Why are you doing this to me? I hate you! I hate you! Do you hear me? I hate you!" **(pause)** I never told anyone that before.

JILL: I'm sorry those are the kinds of childhood memories you have about your mom.

SARA: Jill, who sent my mother those letters? The ones telling her all about me as I was growing up?

JILL: I don't know. There wasn't a signature.

SARA: What did they say?

JILL: The letters were very brief. When I found them, I knew I was looking at something I wasn't supposed to be seeing. I read them quickly because I was afraid I'd get caught. One letter talked about you singing a solo in church.

SARA: It was my father's birthday. I sang "Sweet Hour of Prayer." It was his favorite. What else?

JILL: One letter said that you broke your arm.

SARA: I was ten. I fell off Becky's horse. What else?

JILL: That you went steady with a boy, Scottie somebody.

SARA: Scottie...Scott. I was thirteen. What else?

JILL: Thirteen?

SARA: He was fifteen. What else?

JILL: You dated at thirteen?

SARA: We didn't date. We exchanged I.D. bracelets.

JILL: Oh.

SARA: What else?

JILL: I don't remember much more.

SARA: All these questions keep going around in my head. Why did she leave? Why didn't she take me with her? Why didn't she miss me?

JILL: Your mother is the only one who has the answers, Sara.

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