

# A Home for K&K

It all began on a warm, sunny, summer afternoon. Kayla and her twin brother Kyle were headed to the beach with their parents. It was the type of day that was the perfect temperature, and sunny with few clouds in the sky.

Kayla and Kyle were good friends, but hated being named similarly. Their parents had thought that it was 'cute' to name them almost the same.

That might have been true for toddlers, but not for eleven-year-olds. They constantly got teased for it. Luckily, that was their birth parents, not their *real* parents, the parents who had rescued them from the orphanage.

Both twins remembered those terrible years in the orphanage, wondering if they would ever get adopted. Whenever they were put in foster homes, they were kicked out because they were 'impertinent'.

So there they were, bouncing in between foster home and orphanage, until finally, the 'perfect family' came. They loved each other immediately, and were still together to that day. Little did Kyle and Kayla know, a tragedy would make their perfect family lost to them forever.

Kayla and her dad were in the cool water, playing the type of game that involves splashing, dunking and grabbing. Kyle was with his mom, drawing pictures of the shellfish in the tidepools. It was a perfect day on the beach, or so they thought.

Kyle saw it first, looking out at a seagull floating on the water. He saw thin, translucent tentacles seep out of the water and wrap around the seagull. Death's hug. The seagull was dead instantly. The tentacles moved closer. Kyle screamed, the lifeguard blew her whistle and people fled the water. Kyle could hear whistles all the way down the beach.

Kayla was pulling at their dad, telling him to come out of the water. He nodded, shrugging her off, and she continued, assuming he was following her. He wasn't. By now, he was the only one left in the water and didn't seem to notice the jellyfish. Kyle could see the tentacles moving closer and closer. He shouted, and Kayla heard him and sensed something wrong. She turned around, and the expression of horror on her face was too much for Kyle. Both twins started running down the beach, but it was too late. The tentacles of Death wrapped around their dad, catching him by surprise. "Good b-" he called - And then he was gone.



"It was a jellyfish" was what the twins' mom reported the next day.

"I killed him!" sobbed Kayla, "I should've waited for him!"

"You didn't kill him." their mom was serious. "He didn't think that it was an emergency. He didn't see the jellyfish. You didn't kill him because he isn't dead."

Kayla immediately looked up. "He's not?"

"No," their mom confirmed. "He is in intensive care at the hospital. Terribly injured, I'm afraid, but he is not dead." Both Kayla and Kyle cheered up sufficiently at that. In fact, they both started jumping up and down and singing for joy. But suddenly, Kayla looked downcast again. "But it's still my fault that he is in intensive care. What if he never recovers? It will be my fault."

"It's not your fault." Their mom replied stoically. "But, I am going to have to send you back to the orphanage. -Don't worry, it's not for what you think." she hurriedly added when she saw their expressions. "It's just, your dad and I are getting old, and we aren't fit to take care of children anymore. This incident decided it for us. I can't help him recover and take care of kids as well. It's too much. I'm sorry." The twins pleaded and begged. Anything but the orphanage! But their former mom insisted. And the twins knew that they could not change their fate.

It was different being back at the orphanage. The building was the same. But the *people*. They couldn't see anyone they knew. Their mother was gone, their father was as good as dead to them, and they had to face it all alone. The next few months in the orphanage passed in a blur of sleeping, eating, and despairing of life. But one day, as they were eating breakfast, one of the volunteers came up to the twins, looked them in the eye and said. "You're being adopted." The twins halfheartedly packed, having lost faith in a good family adopting them a long time ago. When the doors opened on their new family, their mouths fell open. For here, standing before them, was their old mother and father. Their father was almost fully recovered even after only a few months, and both parents were smiling to welcome them back. They barely noticed how thin they'd become pining for each other as they flew into one another's arms.

**THE END**