

# *All Our Wrongs*

*By Heather Mimikos*

# Sarah

We were all wrong about each other.

Me included.

It all started on the first day of fifth grade at Hillside Elementary. I walked up the front steps to Hillside Elementary School. I was worried out of my mind because I was new here. Suddenly I bumped into someone and our things went flying.

“Excuse me, watch where you’re going.” A girl about my age muttered.

“Kate, how about you shut up and go away?” snapped another girl also my age. She stood glaring at the girl next to me.

This new girl was my step-sister, Dale. She always acted like I was younger than her, but I was actually two months and seven days older than her! But because I was new here, apparently I needed someone to tell me how to act. Someone called Dale the bossy pig.

Kate scowled and gathered her things. Ugh! I hate bullies. There were way too many in my life. In California, where my dad died in the fire. Wisconsin. Colorado. Everywhere I turn, someone’s looking to pick a fight with me. They never care about my feelings, or what I think.

I sighed, and then trudged inside for homeroom with Mrs. Pianna.

## Dale

I'm Dale. Well, no. I lied. I'm actually Dayliasana, but don't call me that. (Who names their child *Dayliasana*? Pronounced: *D-AY-lee-uh-sah-nuh*.)

I'm Sarah's step-sister. The only thing she's good at is inciting the wrath of Kate Matthews. I should have known she would have been humiliated beyond my control if I hadn't swooped in to save the day.

Kate isn't my worst enemy. Though she is horrible.

No. My worst enemy is Hannah White.

She thinks she is *so* special. But I'm the one who made the winning goal in the national soccer championships last summer!

She's also a jock like me. Yet she's a total braggart!

Humpf.

My mom died in a bike-bus collision (she was on the bike). My dad was miserable for years and I got no attention. I hated it so badly because I hated to see him sad. I started up sports. It was the only thing that took my mind off of the sadness. But then Hannah came into my life, did sports, and ruined it for me. I was shrouded in sadness again.



I'm Kate, and I'm not as bad as they make me seem.

I'm an orphan. My parents died in a car crash and I live with my grandparents. But I don't tell anyone.

Everyone always judges me, thinks I'm the bully, just because I have blonde hair and blue eyes. But really *they* are the bully for treating me like one. I see people all the time- they look at me and they point and snicker. But I keep my head held high. I tell people what for if they do that. Apparently people take that as bullying. Every day in my room for some reason I always find myself crying like a baby. I may seem strong on the outside, but it hurts to be bullied, you know that?

No one ever comforts me. My grandparents- it's more like I'm taking care of *them*. My grandma is 83 and my grandpa is 81. I tell them some things, but it's not like they can do anything.

Right away I knew that Sarah was going to be seen as the "good guy", the one that always gets "bullied" by me. And Dale was going to be the "friend" that always "saved" Sarah. I hate situations like that. It always makes me feel like it's me against the world. But that's because it is.

# Emily

I hate labels.

They stick to you all throughout school and until you die. My mom is labeled the “popular girl”, and my dad and older brother are the “popular guys”.

And stuck to my forehead is a big fat sticker that says “NERD”.

I have thick black glasses (thanks to my mom) and like to wear a tie all the time. I love checkered shirts and overalls, so that’s all I wear. It’s the classic nerd look, but that doesn’t mean I am one! OK, I’m also super smart. And as Dale or Hannah would say, “If it looks like a nerd and it quacks like a nerd, than it must be a nerd.”

I hate jocks. They are so bossy and irreverent.

“Popular” and “Kira Jacobs” or “Daniel Jacobs” or “Marco Jacobs”- that fits like a glove. But “popular” and “Emily Jacobs”? ...not so much.

Yep. Story of my life.

When I was five, I realized I would never be the “popular one”. I felt I had to live up to my brother Marco and my parents, but I couldn’t. So I studied a whole lot and became the nerdiest nerd on the planet.

Not my best choice.

# Sannah

FYI for you: I'm n-o-t a gloater.

I'm BEING PROUD OF MYSELF! Sheesh.

I don't know how Dale McKenna-Hart thinks "Yeah! We won the game! Woo-hoo!" is gloating. Because it's so not.

My parents don't care if I win or not. They don't care if I swear or get bad grades. They don't care how much money I pay for music on my phone. I bike to my games and school alone. They don't care how many times I go to the principal's office. They don't care that I sometimes skip up to two meals a day and eat snacks from the vending machine behind the stadium. They don't care if I lose a tooth or if my nails are like an inch long. I'm guessing that they have no clue when my birthday is. They probably wouldn't notice if I ran away. I have corn chips for dinner watching sports on my TV in my room while they're eating gourmet meals. I might be able to become a chef because I make all my own meals. I haven't ever had a birthday party. There's no Santa for me because when I come down on Christmas morning my parents are opening *their* presents and when they're done there's nothing left for me. I could become a doctor, I've healed so many scrapes and splints and bruises on guess who?

I might as well not exist.

## Mrs. Pianna

I'm Hannah, Dale, Sarah, Emily, and Kate's homeroom teacher. I assigned the whole class a project: write in a diary for a week. All of the diaries looked the same and I told them to write their name on the inside. This was only practice for next month and no one had to turn theirs in. I said to write whatever. They could even write swear words in the journals, but I didn't suggest that even if their parents would let them.

Now, I've been teaching for a long time, and I can tell what kids like each other and which loathe each other. I know the cliques and the enemies. But I don't know that on the first day. Heavens, no! I don't judge a person on the very first day of school, or whenever it is that I meet them the first time. I can only tell if I've known them for... hm... say, as short as a couple of days to as long as the end of the year. But I could tell in the second week that Kate was judged by her beauty. People thought she was a "queen bee", so to speak, but she wasn't. Dale loved her father, and their lives were covered in sadness; Dale's mother had died. Hannah's parents paid no attention to her and she hates it. Sarah's life was full of moving from state to state and bullies. And Emily hated labels because she'd been labeled a nerd since pre-school.

I also knew that all these girls loathed each other because they judged one another too quickly. I realized that they'd all be friends if they actually got to know each other, but they were too stubborn to try. Well, I was going to change that, Mrs. Pianna style.

On Wednesday, I grouped Kate, Hannah, Dale, Sarah, and Emily together to give them more ideas of what to write. I watched them

talk a little bit. They set down their journals in a pile. When the bell rang, they didn't grab their own journal.

Dale got Hannah's journal.

Sarah got Kate's.

Emily got Dale's.

Hannah got Sarah's.

Kate got Emily's.

This is exactly what I wanted.

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When the girls came back on Thursday, they handed each other back their own journals. I thought I was going to cry. They were apologizing and I think they were crying themselves. They then came over to me and said, "You are the best homeroom teacher we have ever had," and gave me a hug.

"Thank you," I said.

"No. Thank you, Mrs. Pianna," said Hannah. A tear trickled down my cheek as I smiled and said softly, "You're welcome."

*The End*



# Epilogue

**Sarah:** I hated bullies. But when I read Kate's journal, I thought about my hatred of bullies. I know now that I shouldn't just assume bullies are mean to be fun. Some of them aren't even being mean in the first place.

**Dale:** When I read Hannah's diary, I remembered when my dad paid no attention to me. I knew I wouldn't be able to bear that for my whole life. I felt so bad for judging her, thinking she was a braggart when she wasn't.

**Kate:** Emily's diary was similar to mine and when I read it, I felt like we were sisters and she was telling me about life. We were pretty much judged the same; by our looks. We both vowed to never judge anyone again.

**Emily:** I originally hated jocks. But now, stepping into Dale's shoes, I found they aren't as cocky and irreverent as they make out to be. Dale and Hannah are the best jocks ever.

**Hannah:** In the beginning, I believed Sarah was just going to be another girl at school, one that wasn't popular, got bullied by the popular and protected by Dale. But she's more than that. She's a special girl with a big heart that shines beneath her clothes. She is awesome in every single way with kind, caring parents that accept me sometimes, too.

**Mrs. Pianna:** So what you girls learned is a simple lesson that some people don't learn until their much older.

**Sarah:** What's that?

*Mrs. Pianna:* Don't judge a book by its cover. You girls learned that the world would be a better place if we didn't judge a person by their appearance, or the color of their skin, or if they are a boy or a girl, or the things they like to do.

*Dale:* Cool.

*Mrs. Pianna:* Yes, cool indeed.

*Now The End*