

Jana` White

A Brownie Family

I can smell its chocolaty goodness from a mile away, as I stand in the kitchen in my on-campus apartment. The image of its warm, soft, moist, texture moving down my throat only makes my mouth water even more. I have a fetish for brownies and a cold glass of milk at the end of each hard week of school.

Every time I make a batch of brownies, the thought of my stepmom standing in the kitchen, whipping up a batch always comes to my mind. Oh, how the thought of Betty Crocker Brownies quickly triggers good memories; the vision of my stepmom in the kitchen on a Friday evening, wearing black spandex pants and a too big tee-shirt, making brownies, my older brother and I sitting at the kitchen table doing homework, while my younger brother watched the television in the background, and the sound clicking and grunting as my father lifts weights in the basement.

As I now take out the fresh batch of brownies, I see a strong, solid family that consists of three well-behaved, studious children, and a husband and a wife. As I smell the Hershey's chocolate, the two eggs, and the ½ cup of vegetable oil, I remember the family outings to the movies, visiting family members and museums, and going out to eat.

I begin to cut the brownies into squares; I visualize each cut as a cut made into our happy family: late nights when my brothers and I heard our parents arguing, watching our father beat on our stepmother. My older brother silent, me shock, and my little brother crying; the unhappiness in my stepmother's eyes and the sorrow that I felt for her.

I start to eat the brownie, with bitter, sweet memories. As the brownie moves from my mouth, down my throat, and to my stomach, I visualize my stomach acid dissolving the brownie. I remember sitting on the couch in our living room, my father holding my older brother and me in his arms as my stepmother packed up her things and my little brother (he was biologically hers) and left. The once strong, solid, happy family has officially dissolved, just like the brownie that is now in my stomach.

I stare down at the now empty plate and the empty glass of milk and I think about how much has changed. I am now 20 and in my junior year of college. My older brother is working at a hospital and living with his granny. My younger brother is in high school and he gets taller and his voice gets deeper every time I see him. My stepmother remarried, had another son and experienced yet another divorce. And my father...well my father is dead. As this brownie—that now sits in my stomach—moves on, so did my family.

Though this chocolaty dessert brings back some bad memories, it is still my favorite. It makes me reflect on things in the past and it shows me where I came from. So as I continue to eat my brownie I remember the family I use to have, the strong, solid family that consisted of three well-behaved, studious children, and a husband and a wife—a brownie family.

