

A Christmas Alone

By

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A mother and daughter experiencing grief differently at
Christmas

EXT. FAMILY HOME- NIGHT

Every light in the house is in. Through the front window you can see a Christmas tree. In the front garden of the house there are inflatable snowmen and lights around the trees. Music can be heard from the outside and mummings of yelling.

INT. KITCHEN- NIGHT

STEPHANIE late 40s standing in the kitchen with a plate of gammon in her hand.

GAVIN late 40s sat at the head of the table. Sitting uncomfortably not knowing which way he should look.

STEPHANIE

Did you really expect me to not care?
Christmas is tomorrow and you have
been nothing but disrespectful to me
and your father.

VANESSA

I have not done anything to disrespect
you or dad. All I asked was if I could
go out tonight.

STEPHANIE

You never spend any time at home
anymore. We are your family and it is
Christmas and you have the audacity to
ask to leave. We have given you so
much and all we ask in return is that
you show up for the family.

VANESSA

You know the reason that I don't want
to stay at home and it has nothing to
do with you. Why can't you let me live
my life? We all grieve differently and
this is my way.

STEPHANIE

It's been 2 years Vanessa. We have
been there through it all. We
understood when your grades started
dropping but we did not question
anything or ask you to do better we
said you need time. You have had time.

VANESSA

Dad, you don't agree with her do you?

We can't just forget her that's not how this works.

GAVIN

I don't want to get involved with this. It is between the two of you.

STEPHANIE

Your father just doesn't want to hurt your feelings of course he agrees with me.

VANESSA

It is like you can't even talk about her anymore or even care that she is gone. You haven't said her name since the funeral or even visited her grave

STEPHANIE

Of course we care that she is gone. She was -is our daughter.

VANESSA

Say her name then. Talk about her. Tell the stories about her. I want to know them we need to keep her memory alive.

STEPHANIE

We are not talking about her right now we are talking about you and how much you have been letting down this family.

VANESSA

Molly! That's all you had to stay to show that you care.

Vanessa runs upstairs to her room and slams the door.

GAVIN

You didn't really need to be that harsh on her she is going through a loss just like us and maybe even worse.

Stephanie shrugs and goes back to sorting out the table.

INT. VANESSA'S ROOM- NIGHT

There are clothes strewn all over the room. The bed is unmade

with tissues scrunched up over the pillows. There is piles of books. On the bedside table there is pictures of Vanessa and Molly when they were younger. There are also cigarettes lying on the desk and bedside tables

Vanessa is sat on the edge of her bed angrily texting on her phone. She throws her phone down and begins pacing around the room crying and looking through all her stuff. She began mumbling to herself

VANESSA

She doesn't care about me or Molly anymore. She only wants a good look for the family.

Vanessa paces to go get a bag and starts throwing her clothes in a bag.

VANESSA

I can't stay here anymore.

Vanessa throws more clothes into a bag and puts the pictures from her bedside table and places them in her bag.

INT. KITCHEN- NIGHT

Stephanie is washing up in the kitchen while Gavin is drying up. They are both in silence. Christmas music is still playing in the background. Gavin clears his throat.

GAVIN

I know we have cut Vanessa slack ever since Molly passed away but we need to still be there for her. She lost her sister just like we lost our daughter all she wants is to keep her memory alive.

STEPHANIE

I am not ready to talk about her yet. We need to get on with our lives. Vanessa needs to focus on her school work the next few years are really important for her.

GAVIN

The World does not revolve around what grades someone gets.

STEPHANIE

I don't want to talk about this

anymore I am going to bed!

Stephanie stamps up the stairs and slams the door. Gavin sits back down at the table and puts his head in his hands. The clock in the kitchen chimes 12 times. Gavin looks up at the clock and then looks up to the sky.

GAVIN

Merry Christmas Everyone. I miss you
Molly.

INT. VANESSA'S ROOM- NIGHT

Vanessa is sat at her desk writing a note. Her bag is now full sitting next to the door. In the letter she writes that she is leaving and needs to be left alone so that she can remember Molly the best way she knows how.

Vanessa hears Gavin walk up the stairs to bed. She hears the door close. She gets up to make her bed and places the letter on the pillow. Vanessa sits back down on her bed and puts her shoes and coat on. She gets up and walks towards the door and opens the door. She walks downstairs and leaves out of the front door.

INT. VANESSA'S ROOM- MORNING

Stephanie knocks on Vanessa's door. She seems nervous about the conversation she is about to have. Stephanie hears no response so she walks into the room. Stephanie is shocked when she opens the door to see Vanessa's made bed and a letter sitting on it.

Stephanie rushes over to the bed and read the letter to herself. As she read tears fall down her face. She then hears footsteps coming towards the room

GAVIN

What's wrong? Why are you crying?
Where is Vanessa?

STEPHANIE

She is gone. Look.

Stephanie hands Gavin the letter. He begins to scan over it. A tear falls down his face too and he wipes it away.

STEPHANIE CONT.

I did this. She left because of me. I
can't believe we have lost another
child. She hates me.

Gavin wraps his arms around Stephanie as she sobs.

GAVIN

We need to go out and look for. We
can't spend Christmas without her.

STEPHANIE

I don't even know where we should
start looking. Do you think she could
have gone to my mums or yours?

GAVIN

I think the best place for us to look
is Molly's grave. It is Christmas
shouldn't go today without
talking to her.

STEPHANIE

I think it is best if you go find her.
She doesn't want to talk to me I am
the reason that she left.

GAVIN

You know that it should be you. Even
if Vanessa isn't there it would be
good for you to see Molly.

Stephanie nervously nods and gets up to leave the room. Gavin
sits staring around the room and sees a picture of the family
on Christmas day years before.

EXT. GRAVEYARD- MIDDAY

Vanessa is sat in front of Molly's gravestone. The graveyard
has fresh flowers on it. Vanessa is talking to it.

VANESSA

I know that you don't like it when me
and mum fight but I had to say
something. It was for you. I want to
talk to you and I want for mum to be
able to talk about you and tell
stories about you...

Stephanie arrives at the graveyard and spots Vanessa. She
stops and just looks at her. She can hear words being mumbled
coming from Vanessa. She began walking again towards Vanessa.

VANESSA CONT.

I miss you Molly. Christmas without
you is never the same. I just sit

downstairs waiting for you to come
bursting through the door to let us
know some random fact about Christmas.

Stephanie reaches Vanessa and clears her throat. Vanessa
jumps and turns around. She sees Stephanie and stands up.

STEPHANIE

Hi Vanessa.

VANESSA

What are you doing here? You are meant
to be at home enjoying Christmas the
way you want it.

STEPHANIE

The way that I want Christmas is to
spend time at home with you and your
father. I want to tell stories about
your sister.

VANESSA

No you don't you are just telling me
that to make me come home.

STEPHANIE

I miss Molly too. I just don't want to
let anyone know how depressed I am and
how much I struggle without your
sister here. You and her mean the
absolute World to me and losing her
was one of the hardest things I have
ever been through.

Vanessa looks up at Stephanie with tears in her eyes. Nodding
as her mother talks.

STEPHANIE CONT.

Christmas is so hard for me without
your sister around but when I woke up
this morning to see you were gone my
heart was broken. I know I pushed you
away but I need you around. I want to
tell stories about her. I want to
visit Molly's grave with you.

Vanessa got up and hugged her mum. They were both crying.

VANESSA

Can you take me home? I want to go
enjoy Christmas with you and dad.

