

Keri usually wrote short stories or essays, so this was an unexpected treat. Since Keri doesn't actually have an older brother, this is probably the most touching fictional memorial that I have ever read. I hope you enjoy it as much as we have.

~Chris Kruger, Tutor

My Older Brother

By Keri Kobussen

My older brother will always be older than me, and he'll never let me forget it.
My older brother watches me sleep through the bars in my crib, sometimes poking me until I wake up and scream.

My older brother steals food off the tray of my high chair when Mom isn't looking.
My older brother pushed me down and made me cry when I stepped on his trucks.
My older brother gets to go to school with a new blue backpack he got to pick out.
My older brother won't let me go in his room because he says his friends say girls have "cooties". He won't tell me what they are.

My older brother helps Daddy fix things in the garage, and says that girls can't play with tools.
My older brother can swim almost all the way out to the rope when we go camping. I can't touch the bottom out there, and I get scared.

My older brother says he can't cry, that boys can't cry. I think he's lying. I think I seen him once.
My older brother stepped on my new crayon box and broke them all in half.
My older brother pulled the head off my favorite Barbie doll, the one Mommy bought me for my birthday with the pretty pink dress.

My older brother wins every time we play Chutes and Ladders, or hide and seek, or "who can jump furthest", even though I try really really hard to beat him. I think he cheats.

My older brother pinches me in church when we sit next to each other, but I always get yelled at when I make noise because it hurts.

My older brother always says his stuff is better than my stuff because he's older.
My older brother chews with his mouth open and calls it see-food.
My older brother calls me a baby even though I'm in school now too. It's not fair.
My older brother hogs the trampoline and says I can't get on until he's done.
My older brother always runs in the kitchen and gets the piece of pizza with the most pepperoni on it before I can even look.

My older brother won't come out of the bathroom when he knows I have to go really bad.
My older brother thinks he's big and tough because he's started playing football. I think he looks dumb with those big pads on.

My older brother took my notebook with my homework in it and hid it in his room and wouldn't give it back until Dad told him to.

My older brother likes to scare me with his pet snake. I pretend I'm not scared, but I really am.
My older brother doesn't want his friends to meet me because he says I'm weird. I didn't really want to meet them anyways.

My older brother ignores me or runs away when I really want to ask him something.
My older brother loves his scars and cuts that he gets from hunting and fighting and sports. He sometimes picks the scabs off and flings them at me.

My older brother stole my new lipstick and mushed it all up.
My older brother watches shows with detectives and courtrooms. He says I wouldn't understand them so I shouldn't even try.

My older brother gets real mad when I make fun of his new girlfriend's funny red hair.
My older brother says high school is hard, and that his teachers are strict.
My older brother likes to tease my friends when they come over. One time he got them to go into his room and hide from me when I was in the bathroom.

My older brother got his left ear pierced. He says if a guy gets his right ear pierced it means he's gay. I'm still not sure what that means.

My older brother always asks me if he can borrow five bucks, and gets mad when I say no.
My older brother makes fun of how much I like to read Harry Potter.
My older brother failed his history class. Dad yelled louder than I've ever heard before.
My older brother got a broken leg from football. He calls it a battle wound. I have to bring him stuff from upstairs all the time now.

My older brother gets a ton of mail from a bunch of colleges.
My older brother loves loud rock music with a lot of drums. He plays them late at night when I'm trying to study or sleep.

My older brother has started telling me secrets. I don't know if I like this or not.
My older brother got drunk with his friends when they went to a party. He says he puked, then passed out.
My older brother had his friend give him a small tattoo of a cross on his hand. He showed me. It doesn't really look like a cross.

My older brother cheated on almost all of his end-of-year tests.
My older brother isn't a virgin anymore.
My older brother moved into college. Mom, Dad, and I went to help. His new room is really small, but I didn't say so.
My older brother emails me and wants to know everything I'm doing in high school. I try to tell him, but there's a lot he probably wouldn't want to hear.

My older brother's roommate smokes and drinks. When he first told me, he sounded like it bothered him.
My older brother smokes and drinks. I guess it doesn't anymore.
My older brother went to a beach party with his friends. He says they have parties like that a lot, and he usually goes, class or no class.

My older brother drank a lot of beer when he was there. He told me before that he knows what he's doing, and it's not going to get out of hand.

My older brother decided to swim out to where he couldn't touch the bottom.
My older brother's friends forgot he was out there. They were all really drunk, too.
My older brother drowned.

My older brother wore the same suit he'd always worn on Sundays. I kept thinking he would sit up and start singing the hymns with us. He looked almost the same, but different.

My older brother was mourned by hundreds of people in a church draped in black. They had to set up folding chairs.

My older brother made Mom cry harder than I've ever seen. She couldn't sing at all, and it took her 20 minutes to get through her 5 minute speech at the lectern.

My older brother made me cry. I didn't cry at the service, but I cried for the next week and a half, going through 3 boxes of Kleenex.

My older brother missed my 21st birthday when I drank so much I started hitting on our cousin. He would have never let me live that down.

My older brother never got to be a lawyer like he always said he'd wanted to be. I thought he was crazy when he brought up Harvard Law School in conversation one night at dinner.

My older brother missed my wedding. I wore a gorgeous white dress with beautiful beads and a long train. Dad gave me away, tears in his eyes. I remember thinking over and over that my older brother would really get along with the man I was marrying. That made me sad.

My older brother wasn't there for me to tell him he was an uncle. He would have thought my little boy was perfect, just like I do. It makes me sad realizing I will never be an aunt.

My older brother missed Christmas the year Dad died. Mom still put up all the decorations and lights, but there was a big part of the celebration missing. She still cries on Dad's birthday, or their anniversary.

My older brother wasn't there when Mom was diagnosed with breast cancer. I drove the 80 miles to her house and we cried together.

My older brother wasn't there when I suffered through a divorce. He probably would have comforted me by telling me that he always knew I was too good for that jerk.

My older brother missed my 40th birthday when everyone took me out to eat. I think I went through a slight depression, realizing my life was half over. He would have laughed at me and cheered me up. He would have pointed out that he was older than I am, and I shouldn't complain.

My older brother wasn't there when I finally quit smoking. Maybe we could have quit together, helped each other through it.

My older brother wasn't there when I found out I was a grandmother. He would have smiled and cried with me, rejoicing.

My older brother said he'd always be there when I wanted to talk.

My older brother wasn't there.

My older brother doesn't know how much I miss him each and every day.

My older brother wasn't there when I took my last breath.

My older brother will always be older than me, and he never let me forget it.

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