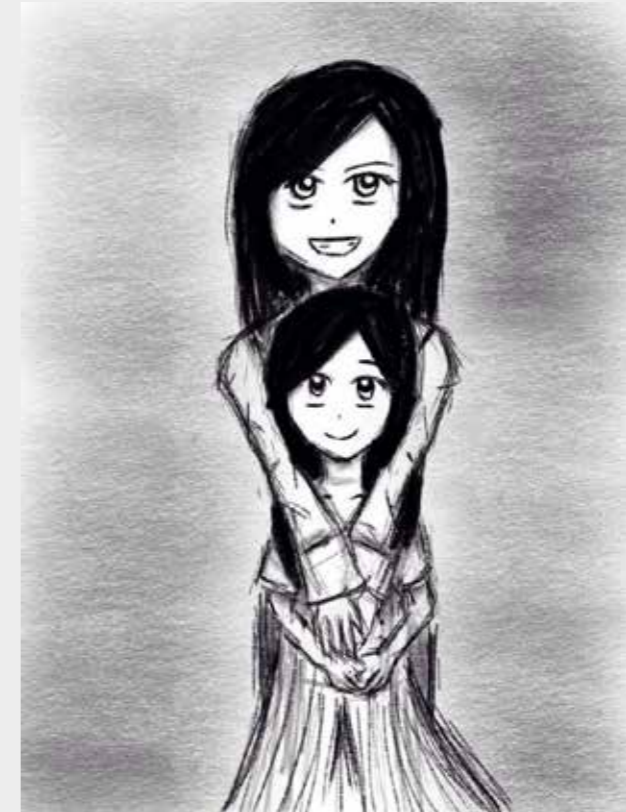


There's No Place Like Home...

Saleisha Rose



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Hi my name is Quinn, I used to be a happy person...

Last year on my birthday, my mother died unexpectedly and now I have to live with my step-dad Will, and my three infuriating step-siblings: Jazlyn, Jayleen and Noah.

I had to move cities, change schools and make new friends and that's something I never planned on doing. Since then everybody has said I have changed.

Monday, November 1st

7:25am

I squint at the clock and realise it's time to get up. A cold tingle goes from my feet to my head as soon as I touch the carpet.

How is everyone ready before me? I think to myself.

"C'mon, C'mon, It's time to go!" Will yells, "Quinn *sighs* why aren't you ready?"

"Because I'm not going," I said.

After that he got mad and we were arguing about why I don't want to go and he said he would ground me. But who on earth gets grounded anymore... he's so old.

Anyways, I have to go to Central High now.

YEAR 9, HERE I COME...

Jazlyn, Jayleen and Noah sprinted into Central High enthusiastically whilst Quinn walked unhurriedly to the head teacher's office.

Quinn pushed the door open impolitely.

"EXCUSE ME!", screamed Ms Cicklebun, "WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE!"

"Relax, I'm new here, my name is Qu-"

Ms Cicklebun cut off Quinn.

"I know who you are, and listen here young lady, you do not enter any member of staff's office or classroom with knocking and you do not tell me to relax." explained Ms Cicklebun.

Ms Cicklebun gave Quinn a tour around the school.

Lunch

1:30pm

AHHHHH! My head teacher Ms Cicklebun or whatever her name is, is so, so irritating. I don't know how everyone deals with her. She gave me a lecture about speaking to members of staff and not entering the way I did in her office.

I had a tour round Central High and to be honest it's not that bad. It has big classrooms but a small reception, AND OMGGGG! The toilets are so clean.

I haven't made any new friends since I have been here because all I have been doing is bunking class and hiding in the toilets. HAHAHA. Lol

The school days are very short, we have to be in form by 9am and the day ends at 2:30pm everyday which isn't that bad I guess..

Break and lunch are 25 minutes long..

UGH THE BELL RANG..

I guess I'm going back to bunking in the toilets :)

A girl with long braids and glasses walked into the bathroom, startling Quinn.

"Oh you scared me, lol!" squealed Quinn.

"Sorry I didn't mean too, I'm Asia."

"I'm Quinn"

"Oh you're Noah's sister, right?"

"STEP- sister!" Quinn said with aggression.

Quinn and Asia chatted for a while.

At the end of the school day. Ms Cicklebun approached Quinn.

"Quinn, where were you for the whole of the day?"

"Well, you gave me a long lecture on members of staff and how to enter a classroom and office with respect. Then you gave me a tour until lunch and after that, I was in the toilets for the rest of the day." explained Quinn.

"So you're telling me that from lunch you have been truanting your fourth and fifth period?"

"If you mean that I skipped class.. Yeah.. I did!"

“You will not last a week in this school if you keep behaving like this,” explained Ms Cicklebun, “I’m calling your step-dad!”

Quinn walked towards Noah.

“HEY QUINN!” screams Asia, “You should come hang out with us tomorrow after school!”

“Sure!” says Quinn.

Quinn walked off, but Noah grabbed her arm.

“Don’t go with her tomorrow after school, she’s bad news.”

“Well I can do what I want with whoever I want..”

On the way home

2:40pm

OMG. I think I made a friend. Asia is her name, she is tall and very pretty. Noah is just jealous that I got invited somewhere and he didn’t.

We were walking home and Jayleen pushed me into some random man. That made me mad so I pushed her on the floor.

Jaslyn pulled me off her.

Jayleen looked scared. She ran home crying and Jaslyn followed.

Noah stayed with me but I don’t know why.

He was about to say something but I told him to shut up. Before we turned onto our road Noah said,

“What are you going to say to dad when he asks what happened with Jayleen?”

At that point I had to do some quick thinking .

I said, “ Well she did start it. So why am I going to get in trouble?”

Quinn and Noah opened the door to see Will standing there in frustration.

“FIRST I GET A CALL FROM YOUR HEAD TEACHER AND SECONDLY YOU PIN MY DAUGHTER TO THE FLOOR!” screamed Will, “YOU HAVE BEEN RUDE TO MS CICKLEBUN AND SKIPPING CLASSES ON YOUR FIRST DAY!!”

“FIRST I WASN’T RUDE, I TOLD HER THE TRUTH AND SECOND, JAYLEEN PUSHED ME IN FRONT OF SOME MAN, SO YEAH I MIGHT HAVE REACTED BADLY BUT SHE DESERVED IT.” yells Quinn.

“NO SHE DID NOT, AND FIX YOUR TONE YOUNG LADY!”

“Believe it or not but Jayleen ain’t so innocent...”

“THAT'S IT, I HAVE HAD ENOUGH, GIVE ME YOUR PHONE AND GO TO YOUR ROOM. YOU ARE GROUNDED.!”

Quinn ran upstairs and slammed her bedroom door shut.

In Quinn’s bedroom

4:10pm

UGHHH! Will is so annoying. HIM AND HIS STUCK UP DAUGHTER CAN GO DIE IN A DITCH.

My mum would never take my phone...

She always knew how special it is to me. I have everything on there including her voice messages that are saved. Me and my mum were very close before Will, Jayleen, Jaslyn and Noah came into our lives.. Last year on December 20th (my birthday) my mum died. Will never told me how it happened but all I remember is her saying she loves each and everyone of us...

We have videos of mum but I have never brought myself to watch them to remind me how pretty and amazing she was..

A dark figure was blocking the light from the hallway into Quinn’s room.

“Uh Quinn, I’m sorry about what happened after school, It was my fault.” cried Jayleen.

Quinn walked away, not saying anything.

The dinner table was peaceful for once...

Apart from the sound of Jaslyn's fork clattering against her plate making a thin, high-pitched rattling sound.

"Can you not!" Quinn squealed

Jaslyn stopped and looked at Will.

"Quinn, are you going to eat?" cried Will, "Your food is going to get cold."

"I'm not hungry." murmured Quinn, "Tomorrow, I'm going out with a couple of friends."

Noah butted into the conversation before Will could answer.

"She's going out with Asia, as in Asia Marsell.."

"I don't think so Quinn, Asia is bad news!" explained Will.

"Oh my gosh Noah, you can't mind your own business can you, always getting involved in stuff that doesn't concern you!"

"Oh my bad, I'm just trying to look out for you!" screeched Noah

"I DON'T NEED YOU OR ANY OF YOU TO LOOK OUT FOR ME, I'M FINE ON MY OWN!" screamed Quinn.

Quinn stormed upstairs, followed closely by Noah.

"You need to relax, I'm trying to help you." Noah explained calmly.

The whole house shook, with a loud bang coming from the top of the staircase.

Night Time

10:30pm

I wish my mum were here.

She would have let me go out.

But NO, Noah has to stick his long nose into my business. He wouldn't like it if I told Will his secret, so why tell mine.

Jaslyn told me that Asia used to bully Jayleen and that's why she's so sensitive....

But who am I to be caring about what happened to Jayleen? IT HAPPENED YEARS AGO,

Like get over it. It's not that deep.

ANYWAYSSSS, I'm tired so I'm going to go to bed.

GOODNIGHT!! :)

"Quinn!!" roars Will, "Let's go!"

Everyone left the house going to school and Will went to work.

Tuesday, November 2nd

9:10am

I'm in the toilets again, 'Turanting' as Ms Cicklebun says. I don't want to go to form.

Have you seen my form tutor?

Her name is Mrs Harrison. She's old, wrinkly and has five cats. She wears old granny clothes like my old English teacher back in Burbon Academy.

Looool my memories in Burbon Academy, I miss it.

Anyways I better get to first period before Ms Cicklebun has a heart attack and calls Will. :(

Quinn walked at a snail's pace into first period, Maths.

Ms Cicklebun is waiting there, arms folded, for Quinn to arrive.

"There you are Quinn." Ms Cicklebun said sarcastically, "Why are you so late?"

"I was coming and uh I just got lost." Quinn said with a fright.

“Anyways, I was just looking for you. Come to my office.” Ms Cicklebun squinted at Quinn.

On the way to Ms Cicklebun’s office, Quinn stopped and noticed a picture.

There was a massive painting on the wall, with vibrant colours, A lady and one child sitting on her lap and two other children on each side of her. They looked so joyful with big smiles across their faces.

Quinn ran after Ms Cicklebun,

“Who are those people in that painting by the reception?” Quinn asked.

“They are the founders of Central High, The woman in the painting is Gretta Cent and her three children-”

“Jenna, Emma and Anna?”

Ms Cicklebun gave Quinn a surprised face.

“Wow Quinn, you actually know something useful!” Ms Cicklebun squealed in excitement.

Quinn smiled and looked away.

Outside Ms Cicklebun’s office, stood two vigorous looking men.

They stared at Quinn which gave her goosebumps.

“Miss, Can I go to the toilet?” asked Quinn, “Please?”

“Well since you used your manners, I guess you can, just be quick.”

Quinn sprinted like a cheetah to the girls’ toilets.

She took a few deep breaths but heard chattering getting louder and louder.

Two light shadows were surrounding her cubicle.

“OMG!” You know Quinn, I invited her to come hang with us but I'm going to give her the wrong place and the wrong time.”Asia said cheerfully.

“Good, she thinks she’s all that by coming late and bunking classes,” said Lilly.

First period, ish..

10:12am

Well after thinking that I made a friend...

I was wrong, Noah was right, she is bad news and whoever her little friend is..

At my old school, nothing like this would've happened.

I already had friends and a good life. I don't want anything else, but NO my mum has to die, then I have to move to a different city and a new school and make new friends..

I JUST WANT TO GO HOME AND GO BACK TO HOW MY LIFE WAS BEFORE EVERYTHING HAPPENED... :(

Quinn opened the cubicle door to see Asia and her friend standing there looking shocked.

"Well done for knowing what I'm like, you described me quite wrongly but I can work with it." Quinn smiles sarcastically.

Quinn ran out of the toilets, towards the reception and through the gates, searching for the nearest bus stop.

A big blue express bus suddenly stops right in front of Quinn.

"You need a ride to Central Bus Station?"

"Yes please."

"Well, hop in." The bus driver said with a small smirk.

At Central Bus Station

12 : 31pm

I ran away.

I ran out of school and the silly receptionist was calling my name.

100% she told Ms Cicklebun and she most probs called Will and Will most probs tried calling me but.... I BLOCKED HIM after our argument about my first day of school, and my phone is off so no one can track me...

There is a bus that takes me back to the city Burbon in 1 hour and 45 minutes.

So I guess I missed the first one :(

I'll just wait then...

Back at Central High

Ms Cicklebun sprinted to the telephone ready to call Will as it's been two hours since Quinn left the school grounds and no one knows where she is.

At Will's house

Running to get the phone, Will tripped over Quinn's jacket and found a flyer about Burbon where she used to live.

Will's mouth dropped as he answered the phone to hear Ms Cicklebun talking in a calm voice. Full of shock, Will totally blanked out what Ms Cicklebun was saying.

Central Bus Station

1:35pm

I know everyone doesn't care that I'm gone, maybe they haven't even realised yet.

Running away is something that I have never done before.

The bus is going to be here in 5 minutes to take me back to Burbon...

I'll end it here for now.

Quinn started to board the bus, putting her headphones on and blasting her music as she sat down.

Behind her there was a family, A mum, dad and daughter; all looking so cheerful.

Smiling in jealousy, Quinn stared at them and remembered all the fun she had when she first met Will, when her mum was still alive.

The bus started driving away.

“WAIT, STOP!” screamed Quinn, “ I would like to get off.”

Tears came dripping down her face as she ran across the road to get the express bus that will take her back to Central High.

Express Bus

1:50pm

Maybe running away isn't a good idea. I saw a happy family sitting behind me, I guess it made me remember when Will and my mum got together. I didn't like him then either but I grew to like him then I met Jayleen, Jaslyn and Noah and we were close, but I kinda drifted when mum died.

I was rude to them for no reason, I didn't listen to anything they said, I was so disrespectful.

I know Will loves me like I'm his own child but I felt left out because Jayleen, Jasyln and Noah still have both their parents, they go visit their mum every weekend but I stay at home by myself with nothing to do and no one to see, I thought I made a friend but I was wrong, she was only inviting me to make a fool out of me..

It's 2:45 so everyone should be out of school, I can't go home yet.

I don't feel like it.

My mum's grave is just in Burbon Town which is only 45 minutes away,

I'm going to go visit her :)

A cold breeze brushed Quinn's face as she approached her mother's grave.

“ It's been a while since I've come to see you, I hope you are well.”
Quinn said in a sad voice, “ It's been hard without you.”

As it was starting to get dark, Quinn placed an exquisite white rose on the grave and then, smiling to herself, she turned and walked towards the bus stop.

On the way home

5:02pm

I placed a white rose on my mum's grave to make it look nice. I haven't been to her grave since her birthday in July.

I know she can't help me now but I told her what's been going on and why I ran away.

Will, Jayleen, Jaslyn and Noah are most probs worried. Maybe they think I got into an accident and I'm in the hospital unconscious.

Well I'm almost home. I just need to walk down the road and I'm there.

I feel scared to go back. Will will shout and ground me for not telling him where I was and for not answering my phone....

Wish me luck..

Walking into the house with fright, Quinn noticed Will, Jayleen, Jaslyn and Noah sitting in the dining room.

The door closed and Will jumped up and saw Quinn.

"Where were you Quinn?" Will asked smoothly, "We were worried sick."

“I went to see mum..”

“Are you sure that's all you did?”

Tears started gushing down Quinn’s face.

“I hate it here, I want to go home, I have no friends, NOTHING IS HERE!! I miss mum!”

Will grabbed Quinn and gave her a hug,

“I miss her as well, but it will get better and soon you will like it here.”

Jayleen, Jaslyn and Noah join the hug.

“We love you Quinn.”



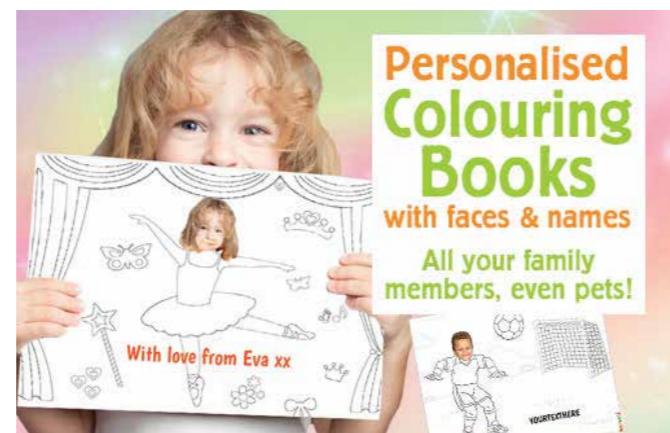
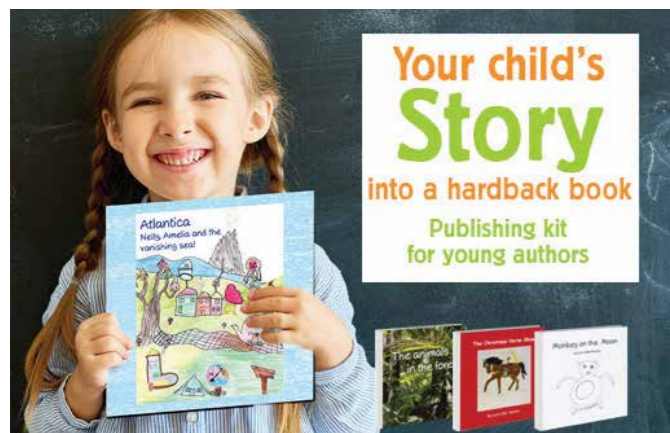
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My name is Quinn, I used to be a happy person...

Has anything tragic ever happened on your birthday?

Joining a new family, changing schools and making new friends isn't always fun as you may think it is,

But it gets better.