

the forgotten griever

sibling loss is often called the forgotten grief. when a brother or sister dies, the world's attention turns, understandably, to the parents who lost a child, or the partner left behind. the sibling is asked how everyone else is holding up, and rarely how they are. this page is for you: the one whose grief was real, and large, and somehow expected to stay quiet.

your grief is no smaller for being overlooked. you do not have to earn the right to it.

WHY IT GOES UNSEEN

the world has a hierarchy of grief, and siblings are placed low on it, wrongly. a sibling is, for most of us, the longest relationship of our lives.

you may have stepped into a role, holding your parents up, organising, being strong, that left no room for your own mourning.

friends ask about your mother, your father, the children left behind, and forget to ask about you.

the bond was woven through childhood, shared rooms, shared history, and when it goes, a witness to your whole life goes with it.

WHAT IS TRUE, WHATEVER ANYONE SAYS

your grief deserves its own space. you are allowed to mourn fully, even while others mourn too. holding the family together does not mean setting yourself aside.

you lost a shared beginning. no one else knew the house you grew up in, the in-jokes, the particular weather of your family, in quite the way they did. that loss is real and lasting.

you are allowed to say it out loud. “i am grieving too” is not selfish. it is honest, and the people who love you need to hear it.

let every feeling have room. old rivalries and deep love, relief and longing can share the same hour, even if you were estranged. none of it cancels the bond.

IF THE DAYS FEEL UNBEARABLE

if you are struggling to carry on, please reach out. you should not have to hold this alone.

SADAG (South African Depression and Anxiety Group): 0800 567 567

Lifeline South Africa: 0861 322 322

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