

Marie E. Goyette

---

## SOMETHING TO BE REMOVED

When the doctor came into the room and announced that her mother had given birth to a two-headed baby, Glenna laughed. She was six, and thought he was telling a joke. And it was the perfect thing for this doctor to say, it seemed, looking as much like a clown as he did, with his bulbous red nose and enormous shoes encased in green paper booties. Like he forgot which end the shower cap went on. But he was a somber clown and he wouldn't look at Glenna, only at her Uncle Dell sitting next to her. And her uncle only looked at him.

Dell snorted and kicked his feet out in front of him. Then, when the doctor crossed his hairy arms over his chest like he meant business, Dell wanted to know what exactly he meant by two-headed.

"Have you ever heard of parasitic twins?" asked the doctor.

Glenna started playing with her ears, tugging and twisting until they were hot and tender, something she did when she was uncomfortable. Otherwise her hands felt like they were just hanging there. Her mother was always saying something about idle hands and the devil, which never failed to scare Glenna into getting busy.

Glenna didn't understand what the doctor was saying to her uncle, but the way he was standing, shifting his weight from one big foot to the other, was making her nervous.

She hadn't seen this doctor before. He was a stand-in for her mother's oft-vacationing OB-GYN. Dr. Birk was the one who, four months ago, announced the sex of the baby—a girl—to Glenna and her parents and who, having no lollypops on hand, dug into her own purse and handed Glenna a dainty pink dinner mint before they left. Glenna's mother shot her daughter a look that forbade her from eating it—the doctor hadn't even bothered to blow the fuzz from it—but Glenna had a strong argument, the giver of the candy being a *medical doctor*, so she popped it into her mouth and chewed until the paste coated her teeth.

Glenna's Uncle Dell was, according to her parents, first and foremost a drunk. He was Glenna's mother's little brother and he always drank the most wine on family holidays. It was clear to Glenna that neither of her parents were delighted with the idea of Dell being in charge of Glenna while the new baby was being born, especially overnight, but she didn't think he was a bad uncle at all. He took her swimming in the

summer and almost always brought her candy. She knew that, if alcohol was number one, she still cracked the top five on Dell's list of favorite things. But she worried a little that she might be bumped once the baby was born.

Earlier that day, before anyone knew anything about the baby's second head, Glenna's father picked her up from Forest Edge Elementary, pulling her away from story hour, and took her to the hospital where her mother was in labor. Once they were inside, he led Glenna by the shoulder to a payphone in the hallway and called Dell, who didn't answer. "Dell, John here," Glenna's father said into Dell's machine. "Sherry's having the baby. We need you to be with Glenna. Meet us in waiting room one, second floor, east wing. Hurry it up." He hung up the phone and shook his head.

"What's wrong, Dad?" asked Glenna.

"Your uncle's an alcoholic bum, sweetheart," he said gruffly. "Nothing for you to worry about."

Glenna and her father went to the waiting room to wait, for Dell and for the baby. Once they were settled in the hard wooden waiting-room seats, they played "I Spy" until her father started spying things the color of puce and taupe. Glenna forfeited and pulled a *Highlights* off the table. On the cover there was a cartoon sandcastle with a feisty looking crab perched on top even though it was smack in the middle of January in northern Virginia. She half-watched her father while she flipped through the pages—there weren't any games or puzzles that hadn't been scribbled over in crayon; she didn't think crayons came in puce or taupe—and he kept looking at his watch. She knew he was wondering when Dell would show up. His eyes were squinty, like they'd get whenever she was sassy and he didn't think it was cute. It looked like he was mad at the wall, the way he was glaring at it. The wall was a really dull green, just like all the other walls in the hospital. It must have been the favorite color of whoever built the hospital, Glenna figured. She stared at the wall too; it didn't make her angry, but she did start to get a little sleepy. She didn't close her eyes, though, because she thought it might make her father even madder. Glenna knew he needed Dell to come for her, so that he could be there for the birth of his second daughter, so she was feeling a little guilty for just existing. Every hour or so, her

father got up and went to check on her mother and gave Glenna updates when he got back: dilated five centimeters, six centimeters, seven centimeters, and so on. Glenna had no idea what that meant. She hadn't learned how to measure in school yet and thought her father was saying centipedes, making her wonder what little wormy bugs with lots of legs had to do with having a baby.

Dell showed up four hours after he was supposed to; at least that's what Glenna's father told him when he finally poked his head into the waiting room. Then he added, "I don't even want to hear it, Dell," and left Glenna there with her uncle.

"Glenna girl!" Dell said, kissing her on the top of the head. "You're going to have yourself a little sis, huh? How cool is that?"

"Yeah," she said. "It'll be fun, I think."

"Hey," he said, standing up. "You want a soda or something? Or," he kind of sang, smiling really big, "some candy maybe? Some M&Ms?"

"Okay," she said. "I like M&Ms." As much as she loved her uncle, she hated that he was always leaving when she most wanted him to stay.

After Dell left to find the vending machines, Glenna noticed a boy from her class—a spikey haired green-eyed boy named Jake. He was staring at her. They weren't friends; they never played together. Once their teacher put them in the same art group, but they didn't speak. Now, from across the room, he wouldn't take his eyes off her. It was making her mad, so she gave him the dirtiest look she could muster, scrunching up her face, trying to make her eyes look the way her father's had looked earlier. Then she stuck out her tongue for emphasis. Jake didn't seem to mind any of it. There was a woman sitting next to him who Glenna assumed was his mother. She looked like a bird, with her yellow hair and sharp features. She kept leaning toward Jake, hovering over him and whispering things, fluttering her fingers like wings. Even as she spoke to him, he kept his eyes on Glenna, nodding or shrugging his shoulders in response to the woman.

Before long, a tall skinny doctor came in and invited them into the hall. Jake's mother pulled him out of the door by the wrist. Glenna stuck out her tongue again as he passed by, but seeing him so close made her lose her anger. From a few feet away, he looked sad, maybe even frightened. Glenna felt guilty for glaring at him, and especially for sticking out her tongue, and hoped that Jake wasn't here because someone he cared about was really sick. But she still wondered why he had been staring at

her like he was. Maybe he thought it was weird to see a kid alone in public; maybe he was trying to figure out what was missing.

As the sad clown doctor explained the two-headed baby business to Dell, Glenna sat and wondered what it would be like to have a little sister with two heads, and if it even meant how it sounded—that she'd really have two separate heads, speaking, eating, sleeping on their own separate terms. Glenna wondered if she'd need to multiply every effect she expected this baby to have on her by two, or if this was just another case of adults having their own language.

Once the doctor finished explaining the situation to Dell, he settled his weight in the middle, crossed his arms again, and said very seriously, “Mother will be fine. She and the father have made the decision to remove the growth.”

Dell said, “Sure,” and nodded like this was old news. “Can we see her? The baby?”

The doctor leaned so far back on his heels he looked like a Bobo doll that had just been sucker punched in the face, then he said, “I’m sorry, but no. Not today. The father asked that I let you know he’ll be out here soon.” Then the sad clown of a doctor left the waiting room.

Dell looked at Glenna like he didn’t know what to say.

“There’s something wrong with the baby?” she asked.

Her uncle leaned back in the chair and kicked his feet out, crossing one ankle over the other. “Said she’s got a growth they have to remove.” He scratched at his nostril like he was trying to get a booger out without actually picking his nose. “It doesn’t sound so bad to me.”

“I think it sounds kind of bad,” Glenna said.

He shrugged his shoulders, then wiggled his left thumb in the air. “Remember this?”

She nodded. Last September, Dell had been at her house for a Labor Day barbecue. Her mother had asked him to slice up a pineapple for the fruit salad. He ended up slicing off the top inch of his left thumb, which had just been lying there like another piece of fruit waiting to be cut into pieces. Glenna’s mother reminded her of the story every time she cut Glenna’s meat for her at the dinner table.

“Knife cut through it like butter. Barely felt a thing though. Weird,

huh?”

“Yeah, weird,” she agreed, looking straight ahead at the green wall.

“There wasn’t even a lot of blood. Remember? We just wrapped my thumb up real tight in a towel. And remember how your dad packed the tip of my thumb in a bag of ice?” He looked at her and she nodded. “Then when I got to the hospital, they just sewed it right back on. Just like that,” he said, snapping the fingers on his right hand.

“I also had a wart burned off once,” he continued. “Big ol’ hairy thing right inside my ear.” He jammed his index finger in his right ear. “Didn’t feel a thing that time either. Feels kind of funny now though.” He wiggled his finger around in his ear. “The skin’s all soft and jiggly.” He took out his finger and leaned towards her. “Wanna feel?”

She giggled. “Ewww, no. Gross.”

Then he grabbed her nose to steer her face in his direction, which made her keep smiling. “It’ll be just like my thumb, I bet. No pain, no blood. Just quick and easy. Then your mom and the baby will be good as new.”

When her father finally came back, Glenna asked if she could see the baby before they left. The baby was her sister, she contended. And Glenna was hers.

“Tomorrow,” he told her as he handed Dell a spare house key. “Promise. It’s dark now. You’re probably tired. Dell will stay over and bring you back in the morning.”

“Please?”

“I said no.”

“Fine,” she muttered, jamming her hands into the pockets of her coat and tucking all her fingers back into fists except for the two middle ones, which was something she’d seen the older kids do to each other on the bus the few times she’d ridden it.

Glenna didn’t like the way this was going so far. She’d never asked for a little sister, or brother for that matter, and didn’t particularly want one. She thought if her parents had adopted an older child into the family, that would’ve been fine, because she’d still be the youngest. Being the youngest makes you something special, Glenna knew, forever innocent and unaccountable. It meant you never really had to grow up. And only one kid in a family can be the youngest, even with twins.

Dell drove a ’79 Ford Pinto, rusted from red to dull pink. Up until last year he had personalized plates that read “IHRTFISH”—I heart fish; he got rid of them because too many people assumed he hurt fish.

Fishing wasn't a distant second to drinking in Dell's book. When he wasn't working as a janitor at the junior high down the street from Glenna's school, he was fishing the Anacostia River. He told Glenna once he couldn't eat any of the fish he caught because the water's so dirty, but it wasn't about eating the fish; it was about being out on the water, drinking beer and feeling the sun and breeze on his face at the same time. But his car still always smelled like fish.

By the time they got back to Glenna's house and were out of the car, the cold air had frozen the smell right out of her nostrils. Before she got out of the car, the clock on the dash read 8:42 in green block letters, but it was already dark as a black hole outside. Glenna looked up but couldn't see the moon or even any stars.

When Dell opened up the front door and let them in, Glenna was instantly glad to be home. It was dark and warm inside and she couldn't remember the house ever feeling so welcoming, like it was giving her a big hug.

Dell flipped on the floor lamp in the entry way and said, "Want to watch a movie or something?"

Glenna put *Jaws* in the VCR, a movie her parents had forbidden her to watch, and waited on the floor in front of the TV for her uncle. After a few minutes, he came out of the kitchen with a big bowl of popcorn in one hand, a Coke in the other, and a beer tucked under his arm. "Start 'er up," he said. When she sat down on the couch beside him, he handed her the Coke and popped open his beer. "Cheers!" he toasted, as the movie began.

Whenever anyone was eaten and blood seeped to the surface, clouding the water red, Glenna would look away from the screen, towards Dell on the other end of the couch. His bare feet were propped up on the coffee table, his beer held tight between his thighs. Halfway through the movie, he got up for another one then belched as he fell back onto the couch.

"Uncle Dell," she said as the credits rolled, "what's that taste like?" nudging his thigh with her big toe. "That beer."

"Why do you ask, Glenna girl?" She loved it when he called her that.

She shrugged. "I don't know. I just want to know."

He gripped the top of the can and sloshed the liquid around. "There's a sip or two left in here." He grinned. "You want to try it?"

Glenna didn't answer right away. She knew alcohol was the reason her parents seemed not to like her uncle. At six years old, this was the biggest decision she'd ever had to make. What she knew about alcohol came mostly from a talk given during a school assembly in the beginning of the year from a member of the Reston police force. He was a large black man, wearing an all black uniform. Sitting near the back of the auditorium, she couldn't see his expressions very well, but remembered the flash of white whenever he smiled. He talked about how drinking and doing drugs made you stupid, not cool, and that doing them might end up making you hurt someone badly or even kill them; then how would you feel?

"Bad," they'd all responded.

But she finally nodded okay because Uncle Dell was her uncle and an adult and her babysitter for the night. She let the worries she had about doing the wrong thing and about what her parents might say filter out of her mind like spaghetti water out of a colander.

She sniffed it first then sloshed it around like he had. She looked at Dell, who was smiling like he thought this was funny. Then she took a big drink, pouring it all into her mouth and down her throat. She was lucky to swallow before she gagged.

Dell laughed. "Whoa, there. I didn't expect you to take such a big drink."

"Ughh," she moaned. "Gross. Is it supposed to taste like that?"

He laughed. "I said the same thing the first time I tried it." He paused. "Don't tell anyone that."

She nodded then said, "Uncle Dell? I heard the doctor say the baby has two heads." She pulled her feet up on the couch so that she was sitting Indian style. "What does that mean?"

"Aww, Glen. Don't worry about it. Like I already told you, it's just something they have to remove. It's not like this second *head*," he said, making sloppy quotation marks with his fingers, "that the doctor was talking about is *alive*. It's not. At all. It's like," he paused, "being born with an ear right smack in the middle of your forehead." He reached over and pressed the pad of his thumb, the severed one, firmly against her forehead. It was cool and felt nice against her skin. "You just have to get it taken off. Or else people will look at you funny your whole life."

"So they're going to cut it off, right? Like with a knife or something?" Glenna didn't usually ask so many questions. She wondered

briefly if this is what it was like to be drunk, thinking there wasn't anything so bad about it.

"Well," he said, and paused, "yeah. But they're going to give the baby some drugs, some medicine, so that she can't feel anything. She'll just sleep right through the whole thing."

"So, then what do they do with the head?" she asked. "Do we get to keep it?"

Dell laughed, and Glenna felt silly for asking; heat spread over her cheeks. "They might let you, if you asked nicely, but, no, your parents will probably have them incinerate it. Burn it up."

Visiting hours at the hospital began at 10:00. Glenna's father was waiting outside for them when they pulled up around 10:15. Dell went back to the waiting room so Glenna could be the first to see the baby, and her father led her by the arm to her mother's room. When they got to the door, he told her to wait in the hall, that he'd tell her mother she was there.

Glenna stood, leaning against the concrete wall until her legs got tired and she slid down to the floor, feeling her tailbone hit the tile. Whenever anyone passed, she drew her knees up into her chest, so they wouldn't trip over her. A few of the people who passed by, two or three nurses, an older man in a wheelchair, looked at her like they wanted to say something. Glenna was glad they didn't. There wasn't much to look at besides the door to her mother's room, Room 258, and the brown and white checkered tile she was sitting on. Her mother would have a fit, she knew, if she saw her daughter sitting on the floor of the hospital. Glenna knew this because a year or so ago, she'd gone with her mother to visit a neighbor in the hospital after the woman had had minor surgery and had plopped down on the floor when it didn't seem the women would ever stop talking. One would have thought Glenna's mother was having a heart attack from the look on her face and the way she clutched her arm when she saw the girl on the floor. "Get up," she'd ordered, sounding furious, but looking meek and closed in on herself. They'd driven home right away where her mother put her in the bathtub and scrubbed her down until Glenna's skin felt ragged.

On the floor in the hallway, Glenna reveled in it a little bit, the feeling of being dirty, maybe even fatally dirty. When no one was passing

by, she sprawled her legs into a “v” and sat with her palms pressed flat against the tile, staring at the door to her mother’s room.

It seemed to Glenna like hours had passed before the door opened and she could go in. The shades were drawn and the ceiling light was off; only a lamp by the bed was on. Her mother was in bed, staring down at a yellow bundle in her arms. “She’s sleeping,” she whispered as Glenna tiptoed toward the bed.

She bit her lip and looked down at her sister. At first she wasn’t sure what she was seeing. It just looked like the baby had a very tall head. Then she realized that the second head, the “growth,” grew from the top of the baby’s head, scalp to scalp, and rested there like a silly hat.

“Her name is Anna,” Glenna’s mother said. It had been the name of her mother, Glenna’s grandmother.

“Pretty,” she said, looking at the baby, having a hard time not being hurt, herself being named only after a friend of her father’s, a male friend. “What about the other one?”

The flesh of the second head was puckered and creased, colored by an intermingling of various shades of pink and gray, as if it weren’t receiving its fair share of blood flow. Her face was small and Frisbee-flat. Her mouth and eyes, although they remained closed, appeared fully formed and she had only a nubbin of an ear and nose.

“The other one?” her mother asked, flicking her eyes toward Glenna. “What’s her name, you ask?” Her mother craned her neck to look behind Glenna, at her father, who was standing beside the door with his hands in his pockets. When she looked back at Glenna, she said, her voice hard, “No name, Glenna. That’s not a person to name. It’s a growth, a tumor.” She paused. “Something to be removed.”

Glenna looked back at the baby and thought that, if it were up to her, she’d name the other one Isabelle, which was hands down the prettiest name she’d found in the baby name book her father had brought home for her mother eight months ago. She didn’t think the first one, *Anna*, was worthy of such a name, being as plain as she was.

Glenna asked if she could touch her.

Her mother gently said, “Of course,” seeming to melt a little beneath the white hospital linens and soft lamplight.

Glenna leaned over the bed and placed one hand on Anna’s cheek, and the other on Isabelle’s, then with both hands, mussed their single mass of fleecy black hair with her fingertips. She stroked their faces, felt the slight difference in temperature between them. When something

twitched in Isabelle's face, her hand jumped.

"Now, Glenna," her father said, coming up behind her. "We need to tell you what's going to happen to Anna."

"Okay," she said, still looking at Isabelle's face.

"Glenna," her mother said, "look at your father when he's talking to you."

Glenna turned to him and he said, "She's going to have surgery. The doctor is going to remove the growth on her head. But we all know she'll be okay." He glanced at her mother, then back at her. Glenna thought he might cry, and it scared her.

"The surgery is scheduled for next week, Monday, so the doctors are letting us take her home this afternoon," her mother said.

"Okay," she said, and then, "I'm sorry," and realized a moment later that if they asked her why she was sorry, she wouldn't know what to say.

When they finally left the hospital, after standing around for all the paperwork and packing and the last minute question-and-answer session with Dr. Sad Clown, Glenna sat in the front seat of her parents' car, next to her father. Her mother hovered over the new car seat she'd gotten from a neighbor at the baby shower, cooing and singing softly in the back. On the way home, they stopped at the Wal-Mart on Baron Cameron; her father ran in and came back 10 minutes later with a grocery bag full of baby supplies they found out they needed and a prescription for her mother.

When Glenna asked what it was, he told her it was to help her sleep.

"I'm not taking those if I can't breastfeed, John," she called from the backseat.

"You might change your mind, love," he said as he pulled into traffic. "You need to sleep."

They pulled into the garage shortly after three o'clock in the afternoon. Glenna carried her mother's overnight bag, her mother carried the baby, and her father did all but carry her mother. After Glenna dropped the bag on the kitchen floor, she went to the VCR and made sure she'd put *Jaws* back into the cabinet, and her parents went upstairs with their baby and bag of supplies.

Glenna didn't see much of either of them for the rest of the night. Her father came down and made her some chicken fingers for dinner around six o'clock. After that, she watched *Jaws* again, not bothering to put it back in the cabinet this time. She fell asleep on the couch and

awoke the next morning, Saturday, to her father kissing her forehead.

"I'm going to run out, Glenna," he said. "I need to pick up a few things from work and get some groceries. Now, your mom and sister are upstairs." Hearing him refer to her "sister" made Glenna sit up. "Can you be a big girl and help out your mom if she needs anything while I'm gone?"

She nodded and rubbed her eyes.

"I'm going to try not to be too long, not more than a couple hours. Okay, kiddo?" He was already walking out the door.

Glenna ate cereal and watched cartoons until she heard the baby crying. Upstairs, the door to her parents' room was open. Her mother was sitting on the bed, topless, holding the baby to her chest; the baby's heads were both crying. Glenna had never seen her mother's breasts before, and instinctively turned away. "She won't nurse," her mother said. And when Glenna turned to look at her, she said more harshly, "What's wrong with her?" Her mother's head fell, her hair creating a blonde tent over the baby, and she began to sob.

Glenna walked to the bed and sat down. "I can help if you need it, Mom," she said. Her mother shook the hair out of her eyes and smiled a little at Glenna, encouraging her. "If you want to take a nap or something, I can watch her. I can watch Anna."

She sniffled and said, "Well, I guess I can take one of these now," grabbing the orange pill bottle off her nightstand. "Would you open this for me?" she asked, passing Glenna the bottle. "Just hold those tabs down and twist off the top." After Glenna got it open, her mother said, "Just one." She swallowed it dry.

The baby was still crying. "C'mon, Glenna. We'll put her down in the nursery and go fix her some formula." Anna was wailing so hard her entire body shook as Glenna's mother put her down in the bassinette. "I still remember putting you down in this very bed," she said. Glenna noticed that Isabelle's mouth trembled, as if she had something to say.

Glenna went with her mother downstairs and together they read the label on a can of formula. By the time the water had boiled, Glenna saw that her mother's eyes were starting to flutter. Once they were back upstairs, her mother's eyes were half-closed, the baby still crying.

"Just hold her in the rocking chair while she takes it," she told Glenna, handing her the warm pink bottle.

Glenna heard the springs on her parents' bed creak as she looked

down at her sisters. The baby's cry had lost its force; instead of sounding angry, she sounded more like her feelings had been hurt. She touched Isabelle first, ran her finger over her little lips. Doing so seemed to calm Anna down even more; she only whimpered now. "Are you hungry?" Glenna asked. She carefully lifted the baby up, holding her securely to her chest, the way she had carried her mother's precious china last Christmas when she let her help set the table, and took her to the rocking chair. Before she put the bottle to Anna's lips, she offered it to Isabelle. Her mouth puckered when the nipple touched her lips; she sucked on it lightly when Glenna held the bottle up, but the liquid seeped out of her mouth and dribbled down her face. Glenna gave the bottle to Anna, who drank contentedly for several minutes.

As Glenna sat there, she thought of Jake, the boy she'd seen in the waiting room, and his mother. About how even though the woman held on to him and hovered over him and made him the center of her attention, she wasn't loving. Glenna knew what kind of mother she wanted to be some day—the kind who held her babies gently to her chest and rocked them, kissed their soft heads, and didn't put them down until they were ready.

She stroked Isabelle's head, and Anna's, as she held them to her in the dark nursery, hoping they didn't begin to cry again because she didn't want to put them down. Even though she didn't want to, she thought of Dell and what he said they would do to Isabelle, how they would burn her once they cut her off of Anna. The idea made Glenna so sad she didn't think she could handle it.

After kissing the spot where the two heads came together, Glenna rose and put the baby back in the bassinette. She went downstairs and when she came back a moment later, she held a large knife she'd pulled from the "off limits" drawer in the kitchen and two rags from the drawer below it. The pill bottle on her mother's nightstand was still open, making it easy for Glenna to shake two into her palm without setting down the knife. When she went back to the nursery, she turned on the overhead light and the table lamp to make the room as bright as possible. She looked at her sisters' little faces. "Hi, babies," she whispered to the girls. "It's all going to be okay soon. I'm going to fix this for you." As she tucked one sleeping pill into each of their mouths, she said, "And I brought you medicine, so it won't hurt even a little." Anna's eyes flickered open and closed, but Isabelle's eyes stayed shut.

When Dell recounted the day before how he cut off the tip of his

thumb, he told it like Glenna hadn't been standing there, watching it happen. But it was exactly the way she remembered it. Only a spot or two of blood had appeared on the dishtowel he'd wrapped around his hand. The experience seemed more like a minor surprise than an emergency. Dell had yelled the f-word when he realized what he'd done, but after that, it was smooth sailing.

Glenna took the knife, gripping its black plastic handle tightly, and positioned the blade perpendicular to the body, at the spot where the two heads came together, and pressed down. It felt like cutting through a large piece of fruit. Dark red blood and pink and blue tissue seeped out from the split, but she kept going. She pressed down until she'd passed through two thin walls of bone, and the blade touched the blanket the twins rested on. Glenna wasn't scared when she saw that the cut hadn't been as clean as she expected or that Anna's eyes were blinking wildly and out of sync. As she scooped Isabelle out with dishtowel, she didn't notice the blood draining out of Anna's head, pouring onto the blankets and small stuffed lamb that had been tucked into the back of the bassinette. She wrapped Isabelle up in the towel and took her back to her bedroom, placing her gently in the pink wooden doll bed below the window, and covering her up to her eyes with a small, soft white blanket. One eye had finally opened, Glenna noticed, and she was comforted, assured that what she had done was right.

When she went back to the nursery, she wrapped Anna's head up in the second towel, making sure not to block her nostrils, and picked her up. Her little eyes had stopped blinking. Glenna carried Anna into their mother's room and laid her down on one side of the bed; then she crawled up and settled on the other side, lifting up her mother's arm and pulling it over herself like a blanket.