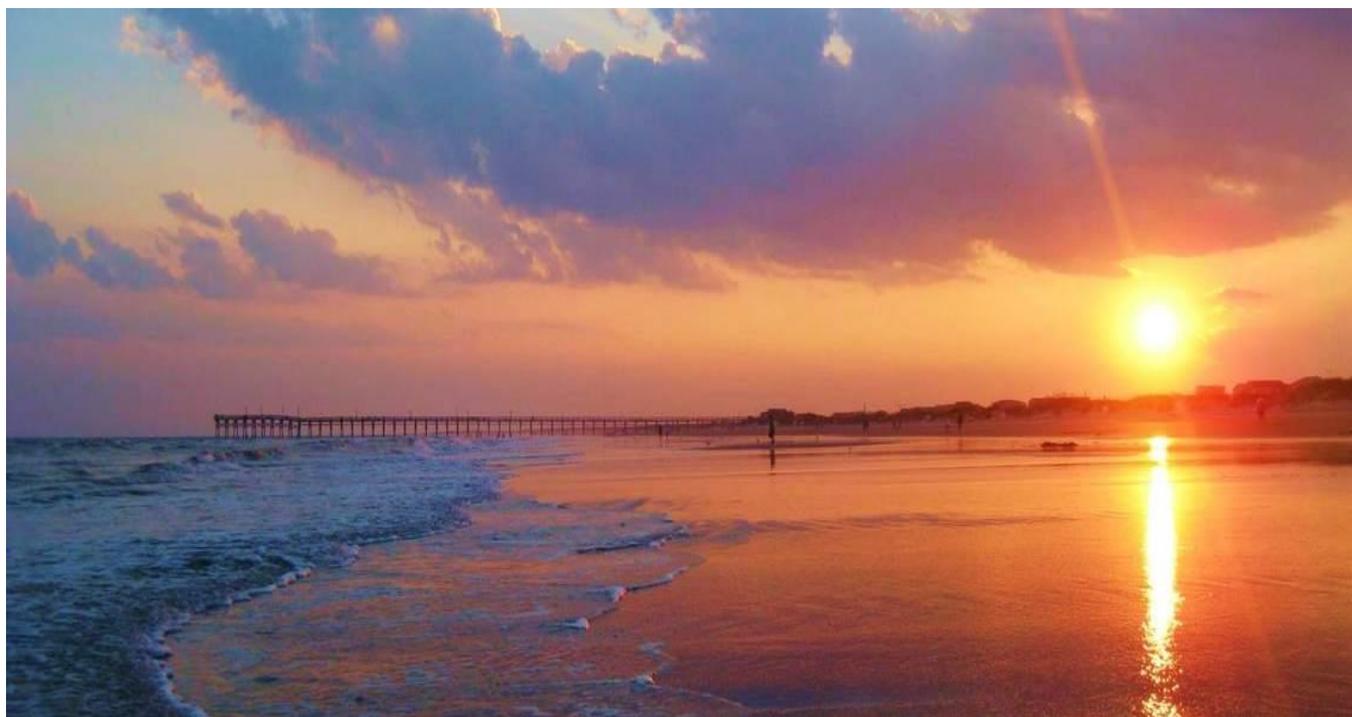


# *The Strength in Writing*



*Grace Ragozzino*

*June 11, 2014*

# *Table of Contents*

<i>Reflection</i> .....	3
<i>Prose</i> .....	4
<i>21 Line Narrative</i> .....	4
<i>Narrative</i> .....	5
<i>Poetry</i> .....	10
<i>Imagist</i> .....	10
<i>Haiku</i> .....	11
<i>Tanka/Cinquain</i> .....	11
<i>Music and Poetry</i> .....	11
<i>Picture and Poetry</i> .....	12
<i>Ode</i> .....	12
<i>Elegy</i> .....	12
<i>Sonnet</i> .....	14
<i>Carpe Diem</i> .....	15
<i>Prose</i> .....	18
<i>One Scene Play w/ Monologue</i> .....	15
<i>Picture Play</i> .....	16
<i>Three Scene, One Act Play</i> .....	18

### Introduction

I chose this class mainly because I had an option between this class and an agriculture class. However, I knew that I wasn't very strong in my writing abilities, and the description of the class seemed like it would help with my writing and possibly give me more freedom in my writing. Turns out, I really did enjoy the class. At some points it was difficult, but it only made me a better writer because I was able to think harder about what I was writing. My personal writing goal was to overall enjoy writing more and to be a better writer and poet. My favorite assignment given in this course was the narrative and the imagist poetry, because both gave me a lot of freedom and flexibility in what I was to write about. My least favorite assignment was towards the end of the poetry unit, when we wrote the Pindaric and horatian ode. I wasn't a fan of the strict structure, because it gave me less flexibility in my topics and what I wanted to say. A common theme I developed was mainly writing about family, friends and nature. Throughout the course I developed more respect for writers and writing in general. I found that I really enjoy writing on my own and being able to have the creative freedom I don't necessarily have in other classes. I believe that I did improve as a writer. My skills of writing both narratives, poetry and plays have grown throughout this semester. I developed a habit of thinking ahead when writing poetry, so that I can think about how I want things to play out with the finished product. I plan on keeping my own journal for anytime I have the urge or impulse to write. Something I would change about the class would probably be the poetry unit. While the unit was fun, it dragged on a bit for my taste. I wish I had taken more time to look over my work and edit rather than just

finishing and handing them in, because I think if I had I would have found parts of my writing that I could have changed or edited to make them better. However, towards the end of the semester when finishing up the one act play, I did read it over multiple times and made many corrections, including rewriting the play all together. If I hadn't done this, my grade probably would have been affected significantly, and I wouldn't have liked my work as much. Over all, this class has built up my skill as a writer to a point that I will carry throughout high school and beyond.

### **21 Line Narrative**

*“Waiting”*

I stopped in the doorway, my thoughts suddenly rushing to me. The wall that stood between Sarah and I was the difference between serenity and utter sorrow. The roll of thunder that shook the building sent shivers down my spine as I sat outside the hospital room. Rain poured down on the roof of the hospital and the sound made the stress and sorrow within me heighten. My fingers combed through my hair anxiously as I awaited my parents to allow me to see my beloved sister.

“Emily, you can come in,” my mom’s voice filled my ears as she stuck her head out of the door of the room. I opened my eyes to peer up at her, the bright lights and white walls of the hospital causing me to squint and wait for my eyes to readjust.

“Your sister’s condition has gotten slightly better, but she’s very, very tired, so don’t expect her to be speaking in full sentences,” my mother explained as I rose from my seated position. My eyes dropped, suddenly finding great interest in the multi-colored tiled floor beneath my feet. The bitter-cold handle of the door to Sarah’s room made my heart race for some odd reason. The metal was like ice- it sent a cold feeling through my body. As I entered the room, my

eyes curiously gazed along each detail of the fairly large space. Instead of the beaming smiles of my family, I was faced with a grey canvas, almost as if all the life and color had been drained. It made me nervous. The hospital bed Sarah was in sat in the middle of the room, plain chairs scattered around it.

“Why are the lights so dim?” I questioned quietly to my brother. My fingers tapped against my legs impatiently as I stared around the room. A sudden beeping was heard and I sharply turned my head – it was only the monitors hooked up to Sarah. The monitors rang through my ears like church bells on a Sunday morning. My hands were shaking as though I had just emerged from the ocean on New Year’s morning. I shifted past my parents to a spot next to my brother. We looked at each other, both of us sensing the morbid atmosphere emanating throughout the room.

“She’ll be okay, Emily,” my brother whispered to me from my side, patting my back supportively, and both of us praying that what he said was true.

## **Narrative**

### A Second Chance

I never thought of Sarah as different. I’ve always just seen her as my sister. When somebody thinks of a human being, they think of being normal. Having perfect skin, perfect body type, a stereotypical Barbie. But what about the imperfect people? The ones with imperfect bodies and unclear skin? Are they not human beings like the rest of us? Of course they are, that’s ridiculous to say they aren’t. So why are people judged for being different? What’s there to judge? Are the so-called imperfect people not successful? Are people that were born with a birth defect incapable of going anywhere in life? All of these questions have one simple answer.

Everyone is different. But being different shouldn't change the fact that we are all humans, and we all share this planet and life.

Here's where the story starts. My older sister Sarah was born with a birth defect. Up until age seven she had to just deal with it. But at seven years old my mom, dad and sister travelled to Maryland to undergo a procedure that would hopefully make her life a lot easier. I was three at the time. The procedure worked, everything went well. Now, nine years later at age 16, my sister's life is almost completely normal. Almost. There are still a lot of surgeries she was to go through and even some emergencies where she's been in the hospital for a few days. Fear ran through my system in those days, not knowing if she would be okay, sometimes being completely unaware of what was wrong. Living with Sarah was always been difficult, whether she's having problems or just being my annoying older sister.

"Emily, come upstairs I need your help!" Sarah bellowed from the second story of our home. I slumped my shoulders and stood up, leaving my homework project behind and slugging my way up the stairs, hoping that whatever Sarah wanted from me was not a total waste of my time.

"What, Sarah? I'm really busy on this science project-" I complained on my way up the stairs, cutting my sentence short when I walked into the doorway of her room. My sister was sitting, huddled over her bed and clutching her sides and whimpering in pain. She had never been the type to truly cry in pain, and I knew in that moment that it wasn't alright. What only took minutes seemed like hours. Time dragged on as I rushed for a phone and dialed my mother. The second hand on the clock ticked and screamed as I sat with Sarah, waiting for my mother to rush home and drive us to the hospital. At 12 years old, most girls wouldn't expect to be in a situation like this. But I was, and I had no idea what kind of emotional hysteria I would be experiencing.

Sarah was rushed to the emergency room that night. It was difficult to understand what was happening because of all the doctors and nurses around. We parked ourselves in the hospital for ages, the concern for Sarah eating away at us. Long, agonizing hours of such sorrow and worry I had never experienced before.

"Mom, what's happening to Sarah?" I blurted suddenly, breaking the silence between my families as we remained seated in the waiting room chairs.

"Your sister had something wrong in her stomach, but the doctors are fixing it. She'll be fine," my mother explains, clearly not telling us the whole truth by the way Sarah looked when I found her. It seemed as though she wasn't even talking to us, like we were merely ghosts and she was talking to herself. She stared into the distance of the almost silent waiting room, looking like it was just her. She stood alone in a crowded room, as did all of us. The only thing that was on our minds was Sarah.

Hours passed. My brothers spent the time waiting by playing their video games, while I sat emotionless. My thoughts wandered to when I found Sarah in her room. *What if I had been too late to find her? What if I ignored her cry for help and she collapsed without me knowing? Would she be in worse condition? It would be my entire fault...* Suddenly my thoughts were interrupted by a doctor appearing around the corner to speak with my parents. Naturally, my brothers and I listened in as best we could.

"Sarah is stable, but she's not well. Her temperature is dangerously high... We aren't sure when it will go down. She also seems to have sepsis due to an infection in the blood stream. She might not make it..." He explained with deep sorrow. Watching my parents break down in tears has to be the hardest thing I've ever witnessed. Uncomfortably we sat, all of our faces stained with tears and none of our faces showing any positive emotions. We were just told our sister, my

parents' first daughter, might not live to see her senior year. Her first prom. Graduation. Marriage. Her first alcoholic drink. She would miss all of that. We knew it. We knew the damage it would cause. None of us would recover. But we had hope. I had hope. Sarah was courageous, one of the strongest people I know. She always told me to toughen up and suck up the pain, so I knew her words would affect herself. She was a fighter. She would get out of this.

Soon enough, we were able to see her. The hallway was long and narrow, giving off an eerie sense to it. As we approached the room, the stench of chemicals and rubber gloves filled the air. It was a bit surprising that it hadn't been apparent prior to entering Sarah's room. I halted outside her room, my thoughts suddenly getting to me. The wall that stood between Sarah and I was the difference between slight serenity and utter sorrow. The roar of thunder that shook the building sent shivers down my spine as I sat outside the hospital room. I wasn't ready to go in, and I explained that to my mom. I would let Sarah decide when she was ready for more of us to go in. Rain cascaded down on the roof of the hospital, and the sound made the stress and sorrow within me heighten. My fingers combed through my hair anxiously as I awaited my parents to allow me to see my beloved sister.

"Emily, you can come in," My mother's soft, shaken voice filled my ears as she stuck her head out of the door of the room. I opened my eyes to peer up at her, the bright lights and stark walls of the hospital causing me to squint and wait for my eyes to readjust.

"Your sister's condition has gotten slightly better, but she's very, very tired, So don't expect her to be speaking in full sentences and talking like everything is perfectly fine," My mother explained to me as I rose from my seated position. My eyes dropped, suddenly finding great interest in the multi shaded tiled floor beneath my feet. The bitter cold handle of the door to Sarah's room made my heart race for some odd reason. The metal was like ice- it sent a cold

feeling through my body. As I entered the room, my eyes curiously gazed along each detail of the fairly large space. Instead of the beaming smiles of my family, I was faced with a grey canvas, almost as if all the life and color had been drained. It made me nervous. The hospital bed Sarah was in sat in the middle of the room, plain chairs scattered around it.

"Why are the lights so dim?" I questioned quietly to my brother. My fingers tapped against my legs impatiently as I stared around the room. A sudden beeping was heard and I sharply turned my head - it was only the monitors hooked up to Sarah. The monitors rang through my ears like church bells on a Sunday morning. My hands were shaking as though I had just emerged from the ocean on New Year's morning. I shifted past my parents to a spot next to my brother. We looked at each other, both of us sensing the morbid atmosphere emanating throughout the room.

"She'll be okay, Emily." My brother whispered to me from my side, patting my back supportively, and both of us praying that what he said would come true.

Sarah spent three weeks in the hospital. They were long, painstaking weeks that put my through so much unimaginable stress. In those weeks, Sarah had miraculously pulled through and was slowly regaining the strength and once had. As soon as I was able to, I went and had the first conversation with her in what seemed like months, though it had only been a few weeks. I entered her room, and the first thing I noticed was the color of her eyes. The once sharp, luminescent green that stood out had now faded to a dull, weak gray.

"How are you feeling?" The question had been on my mind for hours. What kind of pain was she in, if any? Did she know how bad her condition was? Most likely questions my mother would end up asking her, along with the doctors.

"Tired, and I'm hungry. How about you?" She asked, her voice weak and brittle. She knew how much stress we were under. She understood the entirety of the situation. It must've been explained to her.

"Likewise. You know, you scared the crap out of me when I went into your room and saw you practically wailing on the floor." I mumbled, letting out a relieved sigh that she was okay. The doctor came into the room a few minutes later, explaining to Sarah that it was okay for her to finally return home if she felt up to it. Instantly, Sarah agreed. She was anxious to get home, we all knew it.

Sarah was discharged the following morning. Still weak, she required help to getting to the car. Clearly she wasn't entirely healed and ready to go back to school and her regular life. There would be a nurse coming to our house to supply her with medication she needed to help bring back more of her strength, so nothing would be spread, looks would be given. But so what? I would still have a sister. Someone to give me advice, to pick on me and play dress-up with. A person to share secrets with. A best friend

## **Poetry**

*"Saturday"*

A warm Saturday morning

Winter slowly transitioning to spring

My dog laying in the backyard, grazing

Sunlight beaming down on her side

Peace

Serenity

Utter calm in the grass

Wasting the day away.

### Haiku

*“Summer Days”*

Many people miss

The nice weather and hot sun

Peaceful summer days

*“Running”*

Rising and falling

Like a yo-yo on a string

Lungs pleading for air

### Tanka

*“The Leaf”*

A leaf on a tree

Lonely, hanging by a thread

Wind blows the colors

Away as the seasons pass

Taking warm weather with them

### Cinquain

*“Snowflakes”*

Snowflakes

Feathering down

Like angels descending

Onto the ground without a sound

They stick.

### Music and Poetry

*“A Field”*

Gazing out at the world around me,

The bright sun and long wheat fields, the only thing in sight

I am alone in a crowded car

Utter simplicity of the moment

*“Daydreaming”*

Looking out at the water, I gazed

Mind completely clear, the moon casting

A bright glow on the dark sea below me.

Making everything worth while

### Picture and Poetry

*“Serenity”*

Early morning mist

Draped across the open lake

Silence fills the air

*“Washed Away”*

A palm trees shadow

Casted across the white sand-

Washed into the sea

### Ode

*“Beach” (Pindaric)*

Glimmering water and golden strip of sand

Part of you fits into the palm of my hand

Ocean turning likes wheels on a bike

Various colors, so bright and so clear

Draws tourists and locals, from far and near

To get a look at what beauty’s really like.

Responsibility comes with beauty

Keeping it that way must be our duty

The radiant sea and golden sand

Wrapping around like a rubber band

Hear the loud waves crashing against the shore

*“Best Friend” (Horatian)*

Eyes as bright as the sun make better days

Someone I look forward to seeing

Someone whose tail wags in every which way

Definitely not a human being.

So loyal, my best friend, easily loved

Always giving me a warm ‘Welcome Home’

There is no way she can be unloved

No way will she be left alone to roam.

My best friend will always be there for me

It’s uncommon for her and me to part.

But that time will come eventually

And she will forever stay in my heart.

Just to be sucked back in for more and more.

### Elegy

*"The Loss of a Friend"*

Something we thought would last forever  
Ended within the blink of an eye  
Nothing could tear it apart whatsoever  
Except for one stupid, childish lie.  
You simply did not want to endeavor  
And it left our friendship to die.  
  
I was bitter at first but now I'm not  
A rough end to something truly great  
We knew it was coming, we had the same thought  
But the outcome was decided by fate.  
Everything's different, it changed a lot  
Bringing it back now? For that it's too late.  
  
The loss of a friend is an open door  
To find people that truly cares  
Though we thought it's last through college and more  
Finding friendship is like climbing a stair

### Capre Diem

*"Memories"*

Live how you would want to live  
And be who you want to be  
Time is not something you just give  
Something to spend carefully  
  
Eventually, time runs out  
All you have is memory  
The good times to think about  
The times when you were free  
  
So make memories now  
While you still have a chance  
And you won't wonder how  
Rather look back, look in advance  
  
Don't waste any time  
Want to do something? Do it!  
The clock ticks in a chime  
You'll regret it if you sit.

Through hardship and pain you'll reach the top floor  
And everything in the world will seem fair.

### Sonnet

*"Music" (Shakespearian)*

It can calm me down within an instant  
Or excite me for something big coming  
Never stopping, sound always consistent  
Like a clock ticking, always running.  
Warm melodies melting into the eat  
Different genres develop over time  
But though music changes over the years  
The populations love for it still climbs.  
Music is power; nothing can kill it  
It grows and changes, just like humans do  
The music creators will never quit  
It sticks with everyone, like a tattoo.  
Through past and present it's had an impact  
Everyone loves music, and that's a fact.

*"The Game" (Italian)*

Blood, sweat and tears are put into the part  
Though painful and tiring, it's worth it.  
But to achieve greatness, you must not quit  
No walk in the park, you've got to be smart.  
Don't just play with your mind, play with your heart.  
Snap of the ball whizzing into the mitt  
But the pain is numb, doesn't hurt one but.  
Have to give it your all, right from the start.  
The love of the sport, the love for the game  
Brings hard work and devotion to be great.  
Through when it's over, it won't be the same  
The memories still lay an open gate.  
Maybe one day they'll remember the name  
As the one who knew the game was their fate.

**One scene play w/ monologue**

*“Drivers Test”*

Mom: How'd your test go?

Joyce: I passed, surprisingly. I figured that goon would fail me for sure.

Mom: Why, what was wrong with him?

Joyce: Of course I had to get this examiner who has no sense of humor whatsoever. And he was big. Like ten feet eleven. Was lie riding next to the World Trade Center. And he was super grouchy. He was like, “Turn left. Turn right. Look over your shoulder. Move over to the center. Stop.” ‘Please’ was not a word in this man’s vocabulary. Hey, you’re nervous enough already without some sweaty gorilla in dirty jeans barking at you like you’re low-mental. And he had bad breath, too. And it was cold, so I couldn’t put down the window. Was like riding around in a garbage truck. Try not inhaling for fifteen minutes.

Mom: So... It was rough?

Joyce: Worse

Mom: Well at least you passed, now you can drive to your job at Burger King!

Joyce: DO I really have to pay for my own insurance? I mean, I’m a teenage girl. I shouldn’t have to handle gross, greasy fryers and wear dumb uniforms and have to say “Welcome to Burger King, would you like to try our new ‘blah blah’

Mom: Yes, you do have to work. Your father and I can’t pay for everything, you know. Besides, it’ll feel good to be making money on your own.

Joyce: You know what would feel great? Riding around in the new SUV with my friends and not having to pay for it in the process.

Mom: You're working, and you're paying for your own insurance. That's final

Joyce: I think I found something worse than taking your driver's test. Working!

### **Picture & Play**

*"Together at Last"*

*(The high school soccer team is practicing when a vehicle shows up)*

Jennie: My dad is finally coming home next week!

Sarah: That's great, Jennie!

Jacklyn: ugh, this practice is going on forever!

Jennie: I know! I can't wait for it to end

Jacklyn: We should totally go to the beach after

Jennie: ugh, I can't. I have to watch my stupid dork of a brother.

*(Their conversation is interrupted by a car pulling into the parking lot)*

Alexis: Who does that guy think he is?

Jennie: *(hands cover her mouth in awe)*

Jacklyn: Wait Jennie, isn't that your dad's car?

### SCENE II

*(Jennie, Jacklyn, Sarah and Alexis all watch and see Jennie's dad emerge from the car)*

Jennie: Dad? *(Running towards the car)* is that... Is that really you?

Bob: I got to come home early! Surprise!!

*(Jennie runs into his arms, holding him in a tight hug)*

Bob: Where's your brother?

Jennie: He's putting the soccer balls away over there. But I'm not too sure he wants-

Bob: Jacob! Come over here!

*(Jacob looks over with a look of annoyance towards his father before continuing what he was doing)*

Jennie: He's just been in a mood lately.

*(Bob shrugs a look of hurt on his face)*

Jennie: *(Turning to Jacob)* Seriously!?! Do you always have to ruin everything?

### SCENE III

*(Jennie's friends start murmuring about Jacobs actions)*

Alexis: I heard her dad's been away for so long. Jacob doesn't even remember him

Sarah: Yeah, can you believe that?

Jacklyn: Guys, stop- just be happy for Jennie. He's been away for 7 months.

*(Jennie goes over to Jacob)*

Jennie: Why do you always have to be so rude to him?

Jacob: He's just going to be gone next week anyway *(he turns away as a tear slowly falls)*

Jennie: *(Grabbing his shirt and dragging him to where their father waits)* you are going to say hi to him. You aren't ruining this for me again!

*(Jennie drags Jacob to their father and nudges his shoulder for him to say something)*

Jacob: *(Sarcastically)* Hi, Dad... I missed you sooo much

Bob: Well, I have some great news for you guys!

Jacob: *(mumbling)* sure...

Jennie: What is it dad?

Bob: I was going to wait until dinner, but, I got a new job and I no longer have to travel anymore!

*(Jacob and Jennie's faces fill with joy at the news)*

Jacob: So... I can spend more time with you?

Bob: Of course son! What's that soccer trick you wanted to show me again?

### **Three Scene, One Act Play**

*"New Beginnings"*

#### SCENE I

*In Kate's bedroom, Brooke is sitting against the wall and Kate is pacing the floor*

Kate: What are we supposed to do?

Brooke: I don't know Kate, It's not like I can just avoid moving to Florida.

Kate: *(Her head snapping in Brooke's direction)* What if you didn't? You can hide out in my room. We can like, fake your death or something. Nobody will know!

Brooke: *(rolling her eyes)* you're being ridiculous. You'll be fine without me.

Kate: No, I won't be 'fine'. You know how hard it is for me to go through what I go through.

Brooke: Kate, you stopped taking pain killers months ago. I know it was hard at first, but maybe by now you don't need my help.

Kate: But what if I slip again? What if I can't help myself and take more pills?

Brooke: Then you call me or text me, and I'll do what I can to help you.

Kate: But what if that's not enough?! I need you Brooke! You know that!

Brooke: Kate, calm down! There's nothing I can do about moving!

Kate: But you're my rock... you're the only person that knows how bad I got with my addiction...

Brooke: So tell someone! There are people out there that will help you a lot more than I have. I can't avoid moving, Kate. It's happening today, and it's final. I'm sorry.

Kate: *(looking down, tears starting to fall)* I can't go to anyone else... Nobody else will understand. They'll just stick me in a mental hospital with all the other drug addicts.

Brooke: Maybe we need to tell her.

*(Brooke walks out in a fuss.)*

## SCENE II

*(A few hours pass, Kate sits in her room crying, a soft knock is heard)*

Brooke: Kate, let in me... We need to talk

Kate: Why should I let you in? You told my mom everything!

Brooke: Because it was for your well being, Kate! Now will you just open the door so we can talk about this?

Kate: *(Opening the bedroom door)* Fine, let's talk.

Brooke: *(walking inside)* you know I had every right to tell your mom!

Kate: But it was my job to tell her! You shouldn't have because now I look like a liar!

Brooke: Well you wouldn't have told her anyway, and you know it!

Kate: So you're calling me an irresponsible liar?

Brooke: No! I'm saying it's not you to tell your mom what's going on with you!

Kate: She doesn't need to know!

Brooke: Well somebody besides me has to!

Kate: I thought you were my friend! We were supposed to get through this together! But now I'm on my own, once again. You know what, maybe it's a good thing you're moving, *and*

*(Brooke storms out of the room)*

SCENE III

*(A few hours pass and Brooke returns to Kate's house, knocking on the door. Kate opens the door)*

Kate: What do you want, Brooke?

Brooke: You know I can't stay mad at you...

Kate: *(Letting her inside)* I know, I can't stay mad at you either. I'm sorry for blowing up on you.

Brooke: It's okay... I should've asked you before I told your mom. But it's just because I care about you, Kate.

Kate: I know you care about me, and yeah, you probably should've just talked to me first. But I understand where you're coming from.

Brooke: I talked to my mom too... She knows about it. Since my dad is still living here, they agreed that I can stay with him on the weekends and over school vacations

Kate: Really?! That's awesome!

Brooke: Yeah, now it'll be like I just went to a different school or something.

Kate: Well I'm still going to miss you, but knowing you'll be around a lot is really reassuring.

Brooke: I could never leave you in the dust, you're my best friend.

Kate: Well we should really get you packed up, don't want to get to Florida too late.

Brooke: *(Putting her arm around her friend's shoulders)* yeah, probably.

*(The two friends walk out of Kate's house and head over to Brooke's to say their goodbyes)*