

GIRL HIDDEN by Jesse René Gibbs

EXCERPT

A siren howled outside the window down in the street, and she clutched the sacred book to her chest. A small-town girl in a big city, all alone... Man, did she feel lost. She opened the well-worn book to one of her favorite Psalms and reminded herself that God was still in control. Sometimes she wondered, in the quietest part of her heart, if He had dropped the ball.

She finished reading and asked God to watch over her family while she was away. She prayed especially for her siblings and named them off one by one as if God would forget them if she failed even once to remind Him. "Luke... Ezra... Noah... Judah... Faith... Louise..."

She turned off the light and lay there in the semi-dark. Her eyes adjusted and the streetlamps down below left weird shadows in the corners of the room. She tossed and turned for a bit. Twelve years of having little kids in bed with her made sleeping alone a strange feeling. She pushed and pulled and got some of the big pink comforter into a pile so that it felt like someone was next to her. She lay on her back and tried desperately to get her mind to turn off.

Eventually, exhaustion won the battle. Jesse slept.