

Please, God, Not Two

by [Alberta H. Sequeira](#)

Debbie phoned me from work. “Mom, I think Lori has to go into a rehab again. Maybe we can talk her into going. Brian and I went to see her, and she looks awful. She’s so thin and shaky, and I don’t think she’s eating.”

“Al and I will meet at your house, and we can all go together.”

Brian, Debbie, Al, and I met and went to Lori’s house. When we knocked on the door, there was no answer. Brian tried the door. It was unlocked, so we went in.

We couldn’t see her anywhere, and Lori didn’t answer when we called out her name. Debbie walked into her bedroom, and we heard them talking softly. It was ten o’clock in the morning, and Lori was still in bed.

Lori came out of her bedroom; her condition was worse than I could ever have imagined. This happens to other people, not my daughter, I thought as she walked toward us. She was in her pajamas and sat at the kitchen table. There wasn’t a part of her body that wasn’t shaking. Her lips were quivering and her hands were trembling so much that she sat on them trying to control the shaking.

The reality of losing Lori hit me like a ton of bricks; seeing her completely out-of-control and in this terrible condition. She had been staying home, alone, and so sick, without a telephone to call family.

Debbie started the conversation. “Lori, we think you should go into Butler Hospital. Debbie’s eyes filled with tears at seeing her sister in such awful physical shape.

I couldn’t get my eyes off my precious daughter. It was the hardest thing in the world to sit there and watch Lori suffering. There wasn’t anything that any of us could do, but try to give her support.

“I don’t know,” Lori answered weakly. The muscles in her face and eyes were actually jumping.

Al looked at her. “Honey, you can’t stay like this. You need help.”

Lori loved Al, and he felt the same toward her.

“I’d rather go back to Gosnold Rehab in Falmouth.”

Al continued, “We can try to get you into Gosnold, but it’s further away. Get your things together, and we’ll take you to Debbie’s. We’ll make the call and see how soon they can take you. We don’t even know if they’ll take you today.”

Debbie went with Lori to her bedroom to collect some clothes. Lori could hardly keep her balance, she was shaking so badly. After seeing her, I knew that she hadn't eaten anything substantial for days or maybe months.

Gosnold had no beds available, and Butler Hospital couldn't get a bed for her until the next afternoon. There were so many people suffering from drug and alcohol abuse that the beds filled up as fast as they emptied. Lori and her kids stayed at Debbie's, and after a few hours, Al and I returned home.

The next afternoon Al, Debbie, and I took Lori to Butler Hospital. It was a forty-five minute ride, and I sat in the back seat with Lori. All the way there she continued to sit on her trembling hands while her lips quivered.

My God, this disease is killing her, I thought, as I watched my daughter falling apart.

We reached East Providence, Rhode Island and drove along the beautiful grounds of Butler Hospital. The road was winding and thickly landscaped with vibrant azalea bushes and different colored, budding trees and plants on the side of the road going up to the parking lot. The old, red, brick building looked cold to me. I felt myself becoming nauseous, thinking how frightened Lori had to be. This was a strange place to her.

"I don't want to go here."

"We know, Lori, but Gosnold doesn't have a bed, and you need help now," Al said when he took her overnight bag out of the car.

Getting her admitted was a nightmare. Even though we called ahead a few days ago with Lori's information, she had to fill out paperwork. We sat for over four hours waiting for her to be admitted. It was ludicrous! Couldn't they have a better system to get a sick person to their room? They gave us a time to arrive, but no room was ready, and no one showed any concern.

The staff had to see patients being admitted everyday in horrible health conditions with the shakes or being completely intoxicated. They seemed to be separated from the patient's state. Others in the room could have been worse sitting with us as they battled withdrawal, but it didn't lessen our anxiety. The substance abusers must have simply become numbers to the workforce.

After two hours, Al couldn't stand seeing Lori shake. He went up to the desk. "I'd like to have someone give our daughter something to calm her down."

"We have to have the doctor's approval before we can give her anything," the girl at the desk replied in a routine voice.

"Well—call him!" he shouted. "There's no need for her to shake this way for so long."

“I still can’t stop shaking,” Lori said trying to cross her arms when she wasn’t sitting on them.

Al put his arm around her, “You’ll be all right, honey, but you’ve got to quit drinking this time. You don’t want to go through this again.”

A nurse finally came to get Lori to take her upstairs. We were allowed to go as far as the ward on the second floor, and then they stopped us from passing through the locked doors.

“This is a private area, and we can’t allow you to go any further with Lori,” the girl stated with a smile.

We each hugged and kissed Lori, and the fear on her face was obvious when she passed through the doors. We watched through the door window as she was led down the long, empty hallway.