

Through a Broken Mirror

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During spring break, Jade decides to earn volunteer hours at a children's mental health centre. However, a shocking discovery could change her life forever.

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Chapter 1 - Through a Broken Mirror

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1 - Through a Broken Mirror

The bus stopped where I was going. I payed my fee and hopped out, the doors closing behind me. As the bus departed, I turned around to see a huge building towering above me. It looked nice, and the gardens in the front were well kept. I took in a deep breath, and I headed toward the doors.[br]

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It was spring break, and this is my first day of volunteering for hours. The place? The name escapes my mind, but it was a facility not too far out of my small town that helps and treats troubled youth.

However, I never intended on being a youth councilor as a career. I just like trying to help people. Also, I've been through some rough times myself, so hopefully, I'll be able to emphazise with some of the younger childeren I'll be working with.[br]

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"Good morning!" [br]

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I turned around, to see a woman in her early thirties standing at a doorway. She had her long dark hair pulled back, and seemed to be alot taller than me. Clad in a blazer and dress shirt, I assumed that she worked here.[br]

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"You must be Jade," She said, flipping through some papers, smiling at me. "I'm Mrs. Kelly, and you're going to be working with me for your hours. However, since we're working together, you don't need to be formal with me, so call me Rachel."[br]

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I laughed awkwardly, due to my shy nature, and extended my hand out to shake hers. "It's nice to meet you."[br]

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"Great!" She exclaimed. "Come on, since it's your first day, let me show you around and get you started." She started walking out of the lobby, and I quickly followed.[br]

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Throughout the tour of the building, I was astounded with how everything looked. The white tiles looked pristine and were waxed, the pale coloured walls complimented the furniture, and the rooms where some children stayed were well furnished and looked comfortable. The staff I met seemed really nice as well. These childeren were certainly lucky. [br]

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We finished the tour around the building, and we returned to Rachel's office and took a seat. Earlier, she explained to me that I could help her out with the younger childeren in the next week or two, since I was new and inexperienced. Instead, during the wait, I would be able to sort through papers and organize her desk. Organization was certainly not my best talent, but it was for hours, so I didn't have much of a choice. I just pray it's good enough for Rachel.[br]

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While Rachel was out working with her clients, I sat at her desk, in her office, doing paper work. It was incredibly quiet , and especially boring. However, looking through the papers of the different children was interesting. I read through a few profiles, and I learned the broad ranges of age between them all. Some of these kids are around my age, and they can also be as young as five. After going through about twenty sheets, I came across a profile labeled 'Special Case'. I took a look through, and my eyes widened in shock. The contents seemed almost surreal.[br]

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Her name was Amanda Labelle, she was sixteen, and seemed to be a carbon copy of myself. The photo on the sheet revealed her short, messily layered, pale blonde hair and her warm brown eyes. She appeared to be fairly short, kind of like myself, as well. The only thing different between the two of us is that I have glasses. I took a glance at the paper again. She looked so happy in the photo. I wonder what happened to her to put her in a facility like this?[br]

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At the end of the day, Rachel returned to the office. I spoke to her about the uncanny resemblance of Amanda and I. She took a look and compared the image and myself.[br]

[br]

"Huh..." She murmured, looking at the sheet. "Well, isn't that a coincidence. She's actually coming in tomorrow, if you were allowed yet, I'd take you with me to assess her."[br]

[br]

" I understand completely." I assured her with a smile. "I have to go now, though. I need to catch my bus. I'll see you tomorrow." I got up and walked out.[br]

[br]

On the bus ride home, I couldn't help but think of my carbon copy. The same thoughts kept running through my head. What was she like? Why was she coming to the Help Ward? Does she share the same life as I do? I honestly wouldn't know for sure. Sadly, I cannot go see her. So, all my questions probably won't get answered.[br]

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I walked into the building the next day, feelings of anxiety pulsed through my veins. She was still in my thoughts, and even though I had my coffee in my hand, I still was all over the place. I sat at the desk to work on more papers as Rachel greeted me and headed out to greet the other employees. [br]

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The first few hours of the day were long, it certainly wasn't fun. I was stacking papers and putting them in file cabinets, a repetitive yet tedious task. It wasn't even lunch time yet, so work was all I had to do for the next little while.[br]

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Finally, it was twelve in the afternoon. I finished stacking a pile of papers and grabbed my bag to head to the cafeteria. I opened the door to the office and I began walking out. In the main hall, I heard a series of foot steps. I turned around on instinct, wondering who they belonged to. It was her! The foot steps belonged to Amanda, my double. She was being escorted by two officers into the back. This just made me all the more curious of what happened. [br]

[br]

Suddenly, she turned her head around into my direction, and our eyes met. At that moment, the tension in the hall was infinite. She looked astonished, but managed to force out a weak smile at me as she was

forced off.[br]

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I sat at the table with other teen volunteers during my break. While they were all talking about their days so far and what they were doing on the weekend, I sat there silent, focusing more on my poutine and my thoughts. It scared me how just one child profile could take over my thoughts. The night before, I was talking to my friend, Caleb about the whole situation.[br]

[br]

*"Maybe you should sneak in and see her when there are no adults around." He replied with a smirk across his face. I laughed, and assumed he was kidding.[br]*

[br]

*"Very funny." I sat on his bed as he was sitting at his desk with a book. He looked away from the book and his eyes met mine. [br]*

[br]

*"I'm serious, you know."[br]*

[br]

*I jumped up from the bed and waved my arms spaztically. "Are you crazy!? I couldn't do that! I might get kicked out of the facility!"[br]*

[br]

*Caleb shook his head and walked over to me, putting his hand on my shoulder to calm my frantic movements down. "Listen, if you don't do this, you won't get the chance to see her. Once you do, your mind will be put to rest." I looked up at him, and nodded.[br]*

[br]

*"You're right." I pulled away from him and sat down. "I probably should go see her."[br]*

[br]

*"Atta girl." He sat down next to her, and offered her a hug.[br]*

[br]

"Jade.... Jade.... JADEY!" I snapped out of my daze and looked to my side. Carmen, one of the volunteers was apparently trying to get my attention, and she stopped waving her hand in front of me. "Are you okay? You seemed a little... spacey." I shook my head to bring my concience back to reality.[br]

[br]

"Yeah, I'm fine. Just thinking."[br]

[br]

"Alright then, keep focused though." She smiled as she went back to talking to the others.[br]

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After enjoying that fantastic poutine, I began heading back to the office. While walking, I notice Rachel walking out of a counciling room. Curious, I walked over and peeked through a window to see what was in there. When I saw Amanda in there, my stomach made a back flip. This was my chance. I slipped though the door, and walked over towards her. She turned around nervously, and our eyes met again.[br]

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"I-It's you!" She stammered. Man, she even sounded like me as well. What is this!?![br]

[br]

"Yes it is." I said calmly with a smile. "And you're Amanda-"[br]

[br]

"Mandie." She corrected. "Please call me Mandie. What's your name?"[br]

[br]

"Jade." I introduced myself. She got up and walked over to me, taking my small hands into hers.[br]

[br]

"Jade, I like that!" She exclaimed. "I have a favour to ask you, could you help me?"[br]

[br]

I looked at her, and the anxiety built up in my stomach again. "Sure... what is it?"[br]

[br]

She guided me to the table in the room and sat down in the chairs. The table had a folder with paper inside of it, and a massive variety of pencils. I opened the folder, and all I could see were pages of works of art, drawings. I looked at them in awe.[br]

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"These are beautiful." I whispered. "You are really good." [br]

[br]

She smiled weakly. "Thank you."[br]

[br]

"So..." I began. "What is it that you need help with?" Her eyes darted into different directions out of pure nervousness.[br]

[br]

"Can you help me get out of here?"[br]

[br]

I immediately looked up from the pictures and towards her in shock. "I beg your pardon... WHAT!?" Why would she want to leave here, I thought she needed help? Sure, no kid wants to talk about their rough life, especially teenagers, but I never expected that question.[br]

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"Can you help me escape?" She repeated. "Like... you know, we look alike. So, we could pretend to be each other, and then I could leave the building, pretending to be on break. Then, when your 'break' is done, you could sneak back into the office and pretend nothing happened." A smile formed on her lips, her eyes gleaming with hope.[br]

[br]

I couldn't believe my ears, and I was completely deceived. How could someone who looked so much like an innocent porcelain doll, truly be so devious? A part of me wanted to help her, I even almost said yes. However, another part wanted me to keep my job. I was already going to be in enough trouble if I get caught in here, helping her escape would just make matters worse. [br]

[br]

"W-Why would you want to leave here?" I stuttered. Mandie's bright, hopeful eyes grew to be clouded and serious. [br]

[br]

She grabbed her canvas bag and pulled out a black sketch book. She opened it from the back, and began flipping through the pages, as if it were a stop motion animation. My face went pale as I watched the short. When it ended, she closed her book. She then began to explain her story.[br]

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"As you can see here, my father isn't the greatest of people. After I caught him cheating, he forced me into a mental ward due to my prior eccentricities. After desperate attempts to escape, and attacking my

father when he tried to visit me, I was put in restraints, and was misdiagnosed with schizophrenia. The medication that they were force feeding down my throat... it only made me worse. I was sent here to begin rehabilitation, and be back to 'normal' again." She drew a shaky breath, and brought her knees up to her chest. "I want to get out of here. I'm not crazy... not at all..."[br]

[br]

I gave her a sympathetic look. She certainly had it hard. However, I couldn't help her. This is something she has to do herself. I swallowed my fear and spoke up.[br]

[br]

"I can't help you."[br]

[br]

She snapped up at me, her serious, suddenly menacing glare locking in on me. "What?"[br]

[br]

"I cannot help you here. If you want to get out, you can do it yourself." I restated. "You seem to have some clever ideas up your sleeve. You can figure out something... right?" Her dark stare was redirected to the enormous window behind me. A sudden smirk appeared on her face.[br]

[br]

"Fine then."[br]

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"Ouch..." I whispered to myself. I had only just regained consciousness. What happened...? I slowly began to sit back up and I looked around. She was gone. All I could here was the security alarm blairing into my ears. I raise my hand to my face to rub my eyes, but I feel something wet. I pulled my hand back to figure out the mystery substance. It was blood.[br]

[br]

Scared, I jumped back, discovering that underneath of me was pieces of shattered glass. When I looked at the window, I noticed the gaping, jagged hole where the glass on the floor used to be. That's when I realized what happened to me.[br]

[br]

*After she said her final words, Mandie got up, and grabbed her chair. I wondered what has happening, when she started heading toward the window, I knew. I shot up and ran toward her.*[br]

[br]

*"Mandie! What are you doing!?" I cried out, grabbing her arm to resist her from committing her violent escape.*[br]

[br]

*"Get away from me!" She screamed, turning toward me. She struck the chair at me, sending me flying against a wall. As my consciousness began to fade, I heard a crash, and a maniacle laughter echo throughout the room.*[br]

[br]

I stared at the glass, and the crooked reflection the cracks formed. She was so much like me, not only in appearance, but with her nature in general. Mandie, as sweet and innocent as she was, showed a side that everyone would never see, unless provoked. I myself, do tend to have that same kind, sweet facade in the real world as well. What Mandie just showed, reminds me of the angst I have building up inside me from my own life, yet, I would never show that side to anybody.[br]

[br]

That's when I realized something. Looking at Mandie was like looking through a broken mirror. The

reflection would be as broken and twisted as that monster inside you, called rage. It keeps building up, and normally, you wouldn't express it directly at someone, or at all. Once it starts overpowering you, it's unleashed and it almost impossible to stop.[br]

[br]

The guards bolted into the room and took me away. I was at this point too weak to try to get out, and to weak to care. All I could think was the events that just happened. At this moment, I knew I was going to the hospital, and probably sent back here for therapy for Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome. Even so, I know the difference between Mandie Labelle and I, would be prominent. I'll be getting the help I need to get better.[br]

Mandie, on the other hand, she's out in the world on her own. Sure, she isn't crazy. However, her state of mind could lead to so much damage. Without the therapy and rehabilitaion needed, she would go over the edge.[br]

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