

Michael



Mirror Me

When I was little girl, I'd go to the pond and lean over the bank's edge. I'd sit there for hours, wondering who that little girl was supposed to be in the reflection of its water. My mother used to say, "Emily, don't you worry about that. It's those things inside you that count."

She'd take me by the hand and we'd walk all the way back home through the long grass to the top of the hill. I'd hold out my free hand and let the grasses wispy tips brush against it. I'd smile but I always wondered about that reflection I left behind.

Then a call came last week. I was frantically rushed to hospital for emergency surgery. Apparently I was the only donor who had a suitable match. I've never been the centre of so much attention before. Now I've more than a lifetime's worth because of one kidney.

They say she'll recover. They say she'll walk again. The fall wasn't enough to put her in a wheelchair. If my mother was here, I'm sure she'd be proud of me.

The patient's waking up and I want to be the first one she sees. I never knew I had an identical twin. I never knew I had a sister.

She's telling me how she slipped on a rock. I can't make out half of what she's saying because she's giggling and crying.

"What were you doing down in the rainforest?" I asked, wiping the tears from her eyes.

"Trying to get a look in the rock pool."

"A look? Why? What were you trying to look at?"

"At me silly."

It's been her dream to see herself in the water's reflection. It's been mine too—but we can't see anything at all. Like our mother was, we're blind. I've heard all about reflections but never known the experience.

"Put your hands out," I said. "Let me show you."

Leaning forward, I nestle my face gently into her palms. "This is what you look like."

Her hands are still—afraid to explore the face of a stranger. A few minutes ago she never knew I existed.

“I’m a part of you Amy. We are one. Don’t be afraid. Let me be your mirror.”

I feel a pulse racing through her fingertips—they begin to tap gently against the surface of my skin. Surely she trusts me. Please allow her to discover me... let me have the courage to discover her!

Her fingers begin to twitch and move. I can’t tell you how exquisite it feels to have my sister doing this. She’s beginning to explore me—crying over each valley and bump.

“Oh, you’re teary too,” she says, running a finger under my eyes. “You shouldn’t do that. You’re beautiful—like mum was.”

“Mum?”

The tears flow quickly. Yes, that’s right! She knew my mother. My sister Amy knows how my mother looked before she passed away!

“Yes, but our mum had a much bigger nose than this,” she giggled. “They say your nose keeps growing—always. Do you know that?”

Oh my God. I’ve no idea what *my* face really looks like. Impatiently, I reach for Amy so I can find out for myself—to find the mother I never knew and a reflection I never had.

Alarms suddenly go off. What’s happening? Amy’s room is filling with medical people all pushing each other. What’s going on?

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Amy died of an embolism. I hate doctors. If they can replace a kidney why can’t they fix an embolism?

I wrote a message to Amy on a piece of paper this morning and tied it to this stone. The bus brought me all the way to the seashore and now I can feel the water’s edge touching the tips of my toes. This’d be the place I’d want to go if I wasn’t here anymore. This’d be the place that’d sound perfect to me. Let me toss this stone as far as I can. I want to make sure Amy begins her new journey in deepest part of the sea. It just made a plopping sound as it went under. Did you hear it?

They say ripples are small waves that bend the water’s surface. I’m leaning over my toes looking for a distorted face looking back at me.

Are you able to look for me? Does it appear how I feel?