

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

By Marrayllynn Ready

(with props to Myoshi Erwin for inspiration)

The sign above Alan read "Labor and Delivery", you would think this to be a happy sign but in his case it was bittersweet sadness. Alan Richmond and his wife Bridget were expecting twins, but that's not what they received. Bridget gave birth to two beautiful little girls; but one of them did not make it to the NICU. Millie Anne Richmond born at 2:06am, passed away at 2:20am, Hannah Michelle Richmond born at 2:03am went from only child to big sister in three minutes, but she was back to only child in 14. The happiness of first time parents Alan and Bridget was masked by the sadness of the loss of their second born daughter.

As Hannah got older the pull towards her twin began to show threw despite her lack of sister. One day Mr. and Mrs. Richmond got a call from Hannah's second grade teacher.

"Mr. and Mrs. Richmond"

"Alan and Bridget" Alan interrupted pointing to himself and his wife

"Alan, Bridget" The teacher continued; "We need to discuss your daughter Hannah. Hannah has been doing some very interesting things during recess."

"Like what?" Bridget asked calmly.

"Well..." Beverly Tompkins stated as she stood and walked over to the class room door and peered thru. Alan and Bridget followed her and did the same. Alan saw his tiny daughter sitting on the on the floor in front of a mirror talking to it.

"She's just playing" Bridget whispered to the teacher.

"Just keep watching" Slowly Hannah stood and looked around to make sure she was alone, she gently caressed her reflection in the mirror and began to speak what sounded like gibberish. "What's she saying?" Alan asked.

"I don't know... The only time I've ever heard anything like this was with a set of fraternal twins I had a few years ago... Their parents called it cryptophasia, a language that the twins created so they could talk to each other privately. I think that she understands more than we think she does." "What does that mean?" Bridget asked confused.

"You've always told her about her sister right?"

"Well of course" Alan said defensively.

"Well I think that Hannah knows that she's lost something important. She can feel her sister when she looks in the mirror. If she's not careful she could lose her life in front of it."

Alan laughed "You can die from looking in the mirror too much."

"I don't mean lose her life as in die; I mean lose her life as in waste away."

Time pasted and still Hannah would speak to the Mirror. One day while Bridget was cleaning up Hannah's room Bridget noticed that in the corner of Hannah's closet there was a mirror with a drawing taped to it which just happened to bare a resemblance to Hannah. When Alan arrived home with Hannah, Bridget confronted her little girl about it.

"Hey Hannah-Banana"

"Yes Mommy."

"What's this?" Bridget asked as she picked up the drawing from the table and showed it to her daughter.

"Nothing..."

"It's very pretty." Alan said not knowing what he was looking at or where it came from.

"It's Soror" Hannah replied.

"Soror?"

"Yep" Hannah turned and went to go play. Bridget stood and looked at Alan.

"Bridge, where did you get that?"

Bridget's face turned cold. "It was taped to a mirror." Alan was stunned and turned in the direction Hannah had run off in.

"This is bad."

"Very"

Over that next week they tried to get Hannah to open up about Soror. Bridget began to research it on the computer till finally she got a hit on a dictionary web site.

"Sister!" Bridget yelled

"What?" Alan said all groggily.

"Soror: the Latin word for sister!"

"Yeah right go back to sleep honey"

"I never went to sleep"

"Bridget it's three in the morning... Come on babe."

"I wonder who told her that."

"We'll talk about it later just go to sleep."

In the morning Bridget took Hannah to school and had a talk with her Teacher.

"Beverly"

"Whoa Bridget you look terrible"

"I was up all night... All week"

"That's not good for you"

"I know, listen Beverly... Do you know what the word 'Soror' mean?"

"Sister"

"And how do you know that?"

"Well we're talking about Siblings in class and I thought it would be fun to teach the children different words..."

"Like brother and sister... So it was you who's keeping me up 24 hours a day"

"What do you mean Bridget?"

"I found a picture of Hannah taped to a mirror with the word Soror written on it"

"Oh no I'm sorry I should have told you guys..."

"It's alright Ill just sleep all weekend to catch up," both women laughed.

"Look if we ever we do any other sibling related things, I'll tell you that way you can be prepared."

"Thank you Beverly"

For years this went on, from age 7 till now. But at age 16 it was a bit harder to talk to her sister and not get looked at like a crazy person. Hannah's parents had taken all of the mirrors out of Hannah's room and bathroom. The only mirror she had was one little one in her purse and the ones at school. Once Hannah managed to get a rather big mirror into her locker, but she hated not being able to talk to her sister.

"Hannah!" Olivia yelled down the hall...

"Liv! Oh I love that shirt."

"I know isn't it great I got it yesterday... How've you been all summer?"

"Oh it was good, spent the summer at my Grandma's house, lots of Kool-Aid and card games... You?"

"Oh with my Dad in Kansas... oh what fun!" Olivia said sarcastically.

Olivia had been Hannah's best friend since third grade and Hannah loved her, but not like a sister... Later in the day Hannah made a rather long trip to the "bathroom" where she didn't go, in fact she didn't even see the bathroom. Hannah loved 7th period she was in good with the teacher and could be gone as long as she wanted. Hannah snuck to her locker and got her huge mirror and took it to the football field... Everyday just about she would sit under the

bleachers and visit with Millie.

"Hey Mill I'm not sure I'll be able to do this anymore."

"Do what?" Millie Replied

"Talk with you at school."

"Why?"

"If the teachers see or if someone tells somebody then I might get in trouble... Like when mom and dad took the mirrors away at home..."

"Good point we wouldn't want that"

"But Hey Mill at least there's lots of shiny surfaces in this building so I can see you during the day."

"That's not good enough... Nana what if I want to talk to you during the day?"

"You can Mill but I can't talk back..."

Hannah looked up and saw Liv coming over there

"Ah Just right"

Hannah said pretending to groom herself in the mirror.

"Yeah I love you too Nana"

Hannah gently placed the mirror on the ground.

"Who were you talking to?" Olivia asked as she sat on the ground.

"Nobody" Hannah glanced down "Just my beautiful reflection." Hannah stated with a smile.

Everyday when Hannah would walk down the hallway she would look for her reflection in shiny places and many times she would wink.

"Nana you should really stand up to that girl"

"Who do you think you are my BIG sister?"

"No but that doesn't matter at least I try and get things done!"

"Shut up Mill I can't talk right now."

"You can't EVER talk anymore!"

"But it's not because I don't want to, you know that"

"So what! Wanting to and doing so are two different things! We don't talk at school, we can't talk at home, when are we ever gonna spend time together?"

"I DON'T KNOW!" Hannah screamed. Hannah stopped and looked down the hall only about three people had noticed but it wasn't anyone important.

"Just freshman." She thought.

Hannah went in to a nearby restroom and made sure no one was in there and locked the door. "Ok listen Mill I CAN'T talk, I want to, I will later"

"psssh"

"no, I will, I promise."

"Yeah right..."

"Mill... Soror"

"Don't"

"Please Mill"

"Fine. But I'm not happy about it and I don't believe you."

"Millie Billie..." Hannah pleaded

"Now isn't the time to pick"

"I'm sorry Soror, I promise, will have the time..."

"Fine then, But Hannah, I will make your life a living hell if you ignore me"

"Millie" Hannah said in a shocked tone.

"After all what are sisters for"

"Ok, no, when sisters pick you can at least pull their hair"

"Ha ha, not funny Hannah"

"Ah, just right..." Hannah said solemnly...

"I love you too." Millie replied.

Hannah turned and left the bathroom.

"Ok what was that about?" Kristen stated as she lowered her legs to the floor and left the stall...

The next day Hannah was called down to the principal's office.

"Hannah we've had an accusation made against you."

"What do you mean?" the nameplate on Mr. Fadler desk was extra clean you could even see your reflection. Mr. Fadler called in another student in and when the door opened Hannah instantly knew something bad was about to happen.

"Ms. Richmond, Kristen here has brought something to my attention. She says that yesterday in the A hall bathroom you were yelling for a long time having an odd conversation with yourself."

Hannah had never had a very good poker face she knew this and dropped her head she glanced at the nameplate Millie was shaking her head.

"I told you, you should have stood up to her. Now she will out us and it will all be over."

"No" Hannah whispered

"Pardon?" Kristen said in a mocking tone.

"I, um, I was talking alone in the restroom."

"WHAT! No! Hannah shut up!" Millie yelled.

"I was on my Cell phone" Hannah continued.

"Sure she was" Kristen said with a rude inflection.

"I know there against school rules; that's why I was in the restroom."

"Prove it" Kristen interjected

"Well Hannah, don't do it again"

Mr. Fadler ended

"WHAT! No I tell you, she's crazy! She was talking to, somebody, but there wasn't a cell phone, she didn't even say goodbye or Hello or anything! She had already been talking and it was a continuation. She ended it with 'Awe just perfect' "

"Ah just right" Hannah whispered

"shhh!" Millie insisted.

"Yeah that was it 'Ah just right'!"

The principle looked over at Hannah quizzically.

"Hannah, I hate to have to ask this but I'm going to need you to produce this cell phone?"

"NO! I can't my, Parents took it up, too many minutes" Hannah said as she glared at Kristen.

"Well then I guess we'll have to call your parents."

"Why are you doing this to me? If it was the other way around you'd be all 'just don't do it again' Why are you gonna call my parents? It was just a phone call." Hannah pleaded. Hannah dropped her head and saw Millie in the nameplate.

"Nana let it go. He's gonna call. We'll deal."

Hannah nodded, looked up and said. "But whatever you think is best, sir." She stood and walked out of the office.

That evening during dinner the principle did in fact call Hannah's parents. Hannah did not return to school for the rest of the week, and was subsequently removed from public school.

"Ms. Mayberry,"

"Yes Mr. Fadler?"

"Do you think I made the wrong choice involving that girl's parents?"

"Well Sir I'm just a secretary, but from what you told me was said, and the fact that they pulled her out of school. I'd say yes, you made a very bad choice."

"I think so too." He replied.

For the next 2 years Hannah was home schooled. Hannah saw Olivia almost every weekend, but never once did Olivia tell Hannah that she mirrored Hannah's pain.

"Hannah," Olivia started.

"Yes"

"You've never actually told me the truth."

"Liv what are you talking about?"

"Why did your parents pull you out of school?"

"I can't Liv" Hannah replied regretfully.

"Why?"

"I just can't"

"Liar"

"no."

"You are one of the biggest liars I know!"

"True, but I don't lie to you. Liv you're like my sis..." Hannah paused and glanced at the window in her bedroom. Millie looked at Hannah in disgust.

"Sister" Hannah finished.

Millie shook her head. Hannah began to cry.

"Oh Hannah don't cry" Olivia pleaded.

"I love you like a sister too. But sister tell each other everything right?"

"Yes Liv but if I tell you then you won't be my sister anymore."

"Hannah it can't be that bad."

"You tell her mom and dad will kill you." Millie interjected.

Hannah looked at the window and frowned.

"Hannah?"

"Yes Olivia..."

"Please tell me..."

"Ok..."

Hannah and Olivia sat down on the floor and Hannah told Olivia everything; about the mirror, the football field, the bathroom, everything that she had done with Millie.

"So now you know." Olivia glanced down stunned.

“And how long have you talked to her?”

“Since I can remember...”

Olivia shook her head.

“I can’t do this.”

“Liv” Hannah begged.

“No.” Olivia stood and ran out of the house.

Hannah looked at Millie.

“I told you so.” She replied

“Shut up Mill! Now is not the time!”

“Oh come on I told you what would happen, I told you that she would freak. Now Olivia is going to tell mom and dad and we’re going to be imprisoned!”

“No I’m going to be imprisoned, you’re free to go!”

“The hell I am Hannah; no one else can see me! I’m gonna be with you till the day you die!” Millie said harshly. “And there’s nothing you can do about it.”

A year passed and Hannah started college. Millie of course went with her. Hannah dated and studied and never spoke of Millie.

“I have a date with Justin tonight.”

“Ooh; go Nana!”

“So Mill what should I wear?”

“Who are you talking to?” April yelled from the bathroom down the hall.

The only downside to college was the roommate.

“Nobody just myself”

“I do that too.” April continued as she entered the bedroom “you know like talking to your evil twin?” April laughed.

Hannah didn’t find it quite so funny.

Later that night Hannah ventured to Justin’s dorm room. Justin Hodges was perfect for Hannah in every way, even the most critical one. Justin and Hannah met in a twin less twin support group. Justin’s twin Lawrence died at the age of 2 from heart failure; and Justin unlike the world understood the significance of the mirror. Justin and Hannah dated for 3 years and that following summer were wed.

“Hannah.” Justin whispered. She grunted

“Hannah.”

“What?” she asked rudely

"Melina is crying which mean soon so will Mizell." Hannah grunted again.

"Come on Honey I got up last night; and the night before and..."

"I got it I got it." Hannah staggered down the upstairs hall.

After College Justin had acquired a fantastic job in architecture and the house he built them was gorgeous. Hannah slowly opened the nursery room door.

"Millie baby don't cry. Melina." She said as she picked up her first-born twin.

Almost immediately Mizell began to cry.

"Mize come on little boy please Mommy's already very tired." Hannah rocked both twins, her little girl in her arms and her little boy in his cradle.

As Hannah got older she found she was speaking to Millie less and less. And by the time Hannah's twins had turned 9 she almost had completely stopped.

"Mommy, mommy, mommy!" Melina yelled as she ran out of her school to the car.

"Mize was bad today so I told him that you didn't love him and he threw potatoes at me!"

"Millie that's horrible! Tell your brother you're sorry."

"I can't,"

"And why not?"

"Because he's crying in the bathroom."

"NO I'M NOT!" Mizell yelled from the backseat of the minivan.

"Mize you're here? Oh joy."

"Melina! Apologize now."

Melina got into the car and said she was sorry and in her own language said Mirror this and then proceeded to slap him.

"MOTHER SHE SLAPPED ME AND SHES BEING MEAN TO ME!!!"

"What all I said was..."

"I don't care Melina your grounded"

"MOM!"

"No. Now both of you sit back and buckle up. We're picking up daddy and going to see Grandma."

"Yes ma'am" Both children said in unison.

Hannah drove back to the house, picked up Justin and left for Park Wood Lake.

"Now Melina tell daddy what happened."

"Mom" Melina pleaded

"Fine I'll tell him and you know me I always exaggerate." Hannah said as she smiled

deviously. “Melina tell me what happened? Don’t make me find out from Mommy because you know what will happen.”

“Yes sir.” Melina admitted. “Well we were at school and Mize was throwing toys at me. So I went over to him slapped him and told him that no one loved him. But I didn’t mean it; I was just mad cause he was being mean!”

“But that doesn’t make it okay Melina. Tell your brother sorry.” Justin replied.

“I’m sorry.”

“And now tell him that we ALL love him”

“everyone loves you.” Melina said in an unhappy tone.

“Thank you.” Justin turned to Hannah. “Now Mize tell your sister you’re sorry you threw things at her.”

“Really?”

“Mize...”

“I’m sorry too.” Mizell said pouting.

“Well we both knew twins would be hard.” Justin admitted quietly to Hannah.

“Yeah but neither of us has experienced the brother sister thing.” Both parents smiled and they safely arrived at Hannah’s childhood home.

The next day as Justin and Hannah were getting ready to go home Mizell came running out side. “MOMMY, MOMMY, MOMMY! Melina’s going to die I saw it!”

Not 10 seconds later Melina did the same.

“What are you talking about?” Hannah replied. “Slowly and one at a time please.”

“Me first!” Mizell yelled. “I saw it there was fire and a snap. She died.”

“Me too! I was upside down and not moving. It was so scary Mommy.”

Hannah looked at Justin.

“Han come here.”

Justin pulled Hannah aside and began to quietly speak.

“When we were little, Lawrence and I began to have a strange fixation on hearts. 10 months later he died.” Justin paused “you don’t think...”

“No! Of course not. She can’t. She’s my little...” Hannah tried to hold back tears. She ran over to her little girl.

“Millie.”

“Yes mommy?”

“Where do you wanna go; anywhere in the whole world?”

Melina looked at her brother. "Home; I wanna go home."

Hannah smiled and they all piled into the van.

Months past and Hannah and Justin were still quiet worried, but they still sent the children to school and picked them up went to the park and lived life as normal. The haunting pictures that the twins had described plagued Hannah's dreams.

"Millie... Mill."

"Nana, long time no talk to. Not getting over your psychosis are you?"

"Millie I keep dreaming that Melina's going to die." Hannah gripped the mirror in fear. "I'm afraid. I don't want my little girl to die."

Hannah heard Justin calling from the bedroom.

"I have to go; I love you Mill."

"Sometimes I wonder why I even reflect that sentiment."

Hannah smirked at the mirror and Millie just smiled. As Hannah went to leave Millie insisted that she stop.

"What Mill?"

"Hannah I do love you; but soon... It will seem as though I don't I just want you to know that I'll always be with you. You know in your heart." Millie added with a sorrowful smile.

Hannah smiled. "Millie now isn't the time to get sappy. I'll talk to you later ok?"

"Awe, just perfect." Millie replied.

Hannah grinned and left the bathroom.

"Hey Han what's wrong?"

"Nothing sweetie go back to sleep."

Hannah and Justin embraced and went to sleep.

The next morning was perfect. The entire happy family went to the park and had a wonderful Saturday. At a quarter till 4 all the nightmares that had plagued Hannah and Justin for month became reality.

Hannah was grunting she could only hear the sirens.

"Melina... Melina... Mize..." she was barely speaking.

The next day Hannah awoke in the hospital.

"Where's Melina?" Hannah begged.

The doctor hesitated. Tears streamed from her unblinking eyes.

"She's dead isn't she." Hannah admitted. "And Mizell?"

"He's fine, he broke his arm but other than that just a few scrapes."

“And Justin? How’s my husband?”

“Justin is... He had multiple lacerations on his skull. I’m afraid there was massive internal bleeding. He’s on life support in the ICU. He’s in a coma.”

Hannah just sat there in shock.

A year past and Mizell celebrated his 10th birthday without his sister. Everyday Hannah and Mize would visit Justin in the hospital.

“Mrs. Hodges, we have good news. Justin had brain activity.”

Hannah looked at Dr. Johnson in bewilderment.

“Hannah” he said as he grabbed her arms. “This means that there is a small chance that he may wake up!”

Hannah was stunned and dropped into a chair. Mizell entered into the hospital room with a soda. “Mom! What’s wrong with Daddy?”

“Nothing honey.”

“Then why are you crying?”

Hannah picked up her baby boy. “Sweetie, daddy’s getting better.” Mize hugged Hannah tightly. “When? When will he wake up?” Hannah asked the doctor.

“I don’t know if he will for sure, but remember, there is some brain wave activity and a possible chance that he will. Maybe even with memory.”

Hannah clutched her face and tried to wipe away her flowing tears.

“Mom I thought it was good news?” Mizell asked as he walked over and sat on Justin’s hospital bed.

“It is honey it is.”

Another year past and another and another and Mizell started 7th grade. Hannah was left alone for 8 hours everyday to worry; to be alone.

“Hannah...”

“Oh hi Dan.”

“What are you doing?”

“Nothing”

Hannah replied as she put the mirror down...

“Absolutely nothing.” Hannah finished in a defeated tone.

Dr. Dan Johnson had become especially close to Hannah over the years.

“Mom! Mom!” Mize was yelling from the hall.

Hannah and Dan look up

“Oh no sounds like another bad day... Hang on Dan I'll be right back”

Hannah walked out into the waiting room.

“Sweetie, remember we talked about this, you can't be yelling and running in the hospital...”

“I'm sorry mom; but...”

“No” Hannah interrupted. She pulled him into Justin's room.

“Now tell me.”

“Hi Dan.”

“Hi buddy”

“Ok, mom at school I went into the bathroom and I was looking in the mirror and you won't believe what I saw...”

“What?” Hannah said in a mean tone.

“Well, of course I saw me, but also I could see Melina. She was little and dirty and bleeding. I screamed and I hit the mirror. It broke, I told the principle and he told me that it was ok but

that I would have to pay for it; I said that I would. I went back to class and was looking out the window. I could see her by a tree she reached out to me and said—“

“Hannah?” Dan paused.

“Hannah?”

“What?” she asked sleepily.

“Wake up visiting hours are over.” Hannah sat up and looked around.

“Where's Mize?” He's in the bathroom... Never mind, hey buddy.”

“Hey Dan. You wake her up?”

“Yeah.” Dan replied.

Hannah sighed in relief “It was only a dream” she whispered. “Ok Hon lets go home. Get your stuff.”

While Mize was getting his things together Hannah went into the rest room and threw up. “Millie... Where are you?” Hannah pleaded quietly. “Please Soror I need you. My family is falling apart, we can barely get threw a day without crying. My daughter is dead, my husband is a vegetable, where are you?”

There was a knock at the door.

“Mom? Are you ok?”

“Uh Yeah I'm fine.”

“Ok well Dan said the Nurses are getting pissed so we really do need to go.”

“Ok I’ll be out in a sec.” Hannah looked in the mirror and cleaned her mouth.

“Ah just right.” Hannah tried to smile but couldn’t, she gained her composure, and left.

“Mom?”

“Yeah honey” Hannah said as she was rocking back and forth on the bathroom floor.

“What’s wrong?”

“Nothing” she replied wiping her mouth.

“Mother... That’s not true, you haven’t visited dad in a week, you spent all your time either sleeping, crying, or puking and you haven’t eaten 3 days. Something is wrong.”

“No I’m fine.” She looked up at Mize and smiled. “I promise. Go to school you’re going to be late.”

“Mom today is Saturday.”

“Oh. Ok well do you want to go to Dan’s house?”

“Mom, don’t get me wrong Dan’s really cool, but I really think I should stay here with you.” “No I’m fine; really I am.”

“Dan?” Mize asked as he walked into the small apartment.

“In here!” Dan yelled from the living room. “So” he continued. “She’s cut herself off won’t eat or sleep. All she does is sit in the bathroom and wait while her body shuts down.”

As Mize walked into the living room he could see a relatively older man sitting on the couch listening to Dan rant.

“Mize this is Dr. Connor. He is a psychiatrist. I asked him to come over to talk about your mom.”

“So doc what do you think is wrong with her?”

“I’m not sure. I believe that she’s suffering from a form of psychosis.”

“No duh” Mize replied.

“Mizell, Dr. Connor is just trying to help. What Kind of psychosis doctor?”

“From what you have told me it sounds as though she is suffering from Post traumatic stress disorder resulting from the car accident that claimed her daughter.”

“How do we fix it?” Dan asked in a hopeful tone.

“You can’t ‘fix it’ but we can try therapy; Lots and lots of therapy.”

Years past and Mizell visited his mother and father every day. Hannah began to get better and made many improvements. She no longer had to be force feed, and was moved from her nice padded room to a normal one in the psych ward. It had been 4 years and 17-year-old

Mizell was getting ready to move his mother back home from the hospital. 2 more years past and Mize was going to go off to college. Just 3 months after Mizell arrived in Maine he received a phone call from Dan.

“Hey buddy.” Dan said solemnly.

“What happened? What’d she do?”

“No, it’s... um. It’s your dad bud.”

All the color drained from Mizell’s face. Dan could feel that chill threw the phone.

“You need to come home. Your dad... Passed away, about an hour ago.”

Tears streamed down Mize’s face.

“How?” “He went into cardiac arrest. We did everything we...”

“Don’t. Just don’t, I’ll be on the next flight out.”

“Good. Oh and buddy, your mom she; She doesn’t know.” Both paused

“Don’t tell her.”

“I won’t.” Dan replied.

When Mizell arrived home Hannah was cooking diner.

“Mize! Your home! Why?”

“Oh I just missed you.”

“You’re a liar.”

“Mom you need to sit down.” Hannah sat down obediently.

“Mom. I have bad news.”

“Ok.”

“It’s about dad”

“Alright” She said seeming to be handling things well so far.

“This morning at about 6, Dad went into cardiac arrest.”

Hannah just nodded.

“He died Mom.”

Hannah just sat there cold and motionless.

“Mom?”

“I’m okay.” She replied unconvincingly.

Slowly the smell of burning chicken began to fill the living room.

“Okay. I’m going to go turn off the stove you just sit here alright?”

Hannah slowly nodded. Mizell rose and went into the kitchen turned off the stove, and called Dan.

“She took it well.”

“Well like how?”

“She just sat there and nodded, she didn’t even cry. She was just...”

“Frozen?” Dan interrupted.

“Yeah.”

“Mize go check on her I have a feeling she’s going to do something stupid.”

“Like what?”

“Just go check on her.”

Mizell put the phone down and went back into the living room. Hannah was lying on the floor bleeding profusely with a sharp pair of scissors still stuck in her arm.

“MOM!!!” Mizell ran back to the kitchen and yelled into the phone “Call an ambulance!”

Mize was pacing in the waiting room. Thinking. Only Thinking. So many times before Mizell had waited in that room. It had almost become comforting. Almost. As Mize began to drift off to sleep in his chair Dan came over and touched Mizell’s shoulder.

“Buddy?”

“Is she alive?”

“Mize.”

“Is, She, Alive?”

“Yes. But she... We had to strap her down, she wouldn’t quit trying to take out her IV’s.”

Mize dropped his head and began to cry. Dan tried to comfort him as best he could.

“You can go and see her now if you’d like.”

“Dan I’m going to need a minute.” Dan left and Mizell just sat there.

An hour past, and another, and another. All Mize could do was stare.

“Hon. Come on Mize we have to go home Daddy needs his rest.”

“No Mom I wanna stay. He needs me. He’s all alone.”

“No baby Daddy’s sleeping he doesn’t know you’re here.”

“Then why are we here every day?”

“Because, it helps Daddy to hear our voices.”

“Then why can’t I stay with him?”

“Mizell... We have to go home.”

“Mizell? Mizell, wake up. Hey Buddy you got to go.”

“Oh sorry I was; I was thinkin’ about her.”

“Did you go in?”

“No”

“Look you can stay at my place tonight if home is too much to bear.”

“Thanks but I think I’ll be good.” Mize tried to crack a smile and left.

When Mize arrived at Hannah’s house he couldn’t bring himself to go inside. An hour passed and Dan parked across the street got out and walked up to Mize’s truck window.

“The home of my youth and I can’t go in. It’s 2 o’clock in the morning and I can’t even go in my own house. My sister’s dead, my father’s dead, and my mother is already dead on the inside. What’s there left for me? Am I already dead? Tell me Dan, am I? Am I dead?”

“No Mizell you’re not dead. You’re just human. Come on, the neighbor’s called me said someone was staking out the place, why don’t you just get a hotel or come over to my place somewhere that doesn’t remind you of what you’ve lost. At least not till tomorrow. Mizell don’t let your mother’s inability to cope ruin your life.”

“Take it, sell it, do whatever it is that you do. I don’t care.”

“Right on.” The voice on the other line answered.

Mizell hung up his cell phone and tossed it to the passenger seat.

“Who was that?” Dan asked walking up to Mizell’s truck.

“Nobody.”

“Mize.”

“I’m selling everything; I went through and picked out everything that I can stand to keep. You want anything I recommend you take it cause when my friend Eddie gets down there everything in that house and the house itself goes.”

“That’s it?”

“Yeah Dan It’s been a year she’s not getting any better I don’t want it. Do you?”

“No I don’t think that I could handle it.”

“I’m heading up there in about an hour I’m going to visit her do you wanna come?”

“No; you need some mother son time.”

“Don’t you mean Mirror son time?”

“Mize...”

“I know, Well I have to go and do real work and I bet you do too, Doctor Dan, I’ll see you later.”

“Ok bye.” Dan and Mize hugged and Dan left.

When Mizell arrived at the mental facility he was lead to a padded room. He could see his mother in a straight jacket sitting on the floor in front of a mirror.

“Why is she in there with a nice, shiny, very breakable mirror? I thought I told you people...”

“Look, it was the only way we could find to get her to stop slamming her head against the walls.”

“They’re padded.”

“Underneath the pads there are brick walls, which should tell you just how hard she was doing it.”

“Alright... can I go in?”

“Yes.” The doctor opened the cell door and Mizell went in and sat down next to his mother. “Hey mom.” She grunted.

Mizell gave a look to the doctor who then held up a pad of paper that had the word “Thorazine” written on it. Mizell began to get irritated.

“They’re drugging you and they still gave you a mirror?” He asked rhetorically trying to mask his growing anger.

“Soror.” Hannah whispered rubbing her head against the mirror.

“Mom?”

“She’s gone. And I’m waiting.”

“What are you talking about mom?”

“Millie, she always told me that the only way she’d go away was if I went away. That if I was in trouble she was in trouble. If I could see a mirror, she would be in it...” Hannah paused and looked up at Mizell; Hannah was in tears.

“She lied.”

Mizell rose; He knew there was nothing he could do for his mother. As he began to walk out of the room Hannah said solemnly:

“Be glad you knew your sister; be glad she’s not haunting you.”

Mizell put his head against the door and as he was exiting he whispered,

“Who said she isn’t.”