

Her eyes glance up from the sink and look into me. She pulls a strand of her long, dark hair from her face with her little finger as she reaches for her left eyelid with her middle fingers. She places a small, clear dome resting comfortably on top of her pointer finger in her left eye. She blinks a few times and brings her hands down, the dome now resting on her blue iris. Her eyes return to their natural squint, the one I have grown to admire and cherish. Her bangs fall back a little into her face as she looks back down at the sink. I hear the closing of a plastic container and the running of water before she returns her gaze to me. All I see in her is beauty.

Looking at her chest I see her gold necklace catch the light. On the pendant are 2 letters: CH. They stand for Caroline Henrich. She got the necklace when she was six, and has worn it every day for the past 10 years. It has become a part of her and rarely does she take it off. Not that I would ever want her to. Its gold face is almost as beautiful as her own.

I hold my gaze at her chest. It's as small as the rest of her. Its highest point is level with her flat stomach. Sometimes I see her try to push up the lumps of fat that have grown separately around her nipples, as if to recreate the images of the women on the bright yellow posters I see in her room when she leaves the door open. I always laugh when she does that, watching her imitate those women who never do anything but sit there with chest lumps the size of their faces. But she doesn't laugh. Her beautiful mouth turns down and her squint becomes more intense, sometimes opening a bit wider. I can't understand why she would be sad about her own joke, particularly one that she reenacts over and over.

Her hands start to move along her body as I admire it. They stop at her sides, a little below the slight lumps on her chest. She presses tightly in on her ribs and pushes up a little. As she presses, her skin turns a paler yellow. She takes a deep breath and holds it in, pressing the small amount of fat that she has into her chest, accomplishing nothing but revealing more bone. Though her bones are no less beautiful than the rest of her, I find them to hold a different type of beauty, one that does not mesh with that of the rest of her body. She releases her breath in a silent gasp and all of the fat falls out of her lumps.

She then places her hands around her lower hips. She slides her legs slightly apart on the carpet, separating her thighs. She struggles to push her legs beyond their limits by holding her hips and trying to push her inner thighs apart while keeping her legs straight. I want to laugh at how funny she looks playing with her limbs almost to the point of

breaking. But just as it was funny, it was equally frightening. Watching her body contort itself in ways I know that it shouldn't makes me worry for her safety. What if she were to slip and break her leg? Who would be able to help her then? As much as I wish, I cannot force a voice out of my mirrored surface. No ability to cry for help. She would sit there in pain on the red carpet below her until someone came to look for her hours later.

Her eyes start to catch water around the corners, as they often do after placing those clear domes inside them. She quickly wipes them with a towel before walking through the door into her bedroom.

She closes the door lightly behind her and leaves me to stare at the clock in front of me as she gets changed. She is very fast at changing. It is one of the beautiful things about her. She can so smoothly and efficiently place complex arrangements of cloth on herself, as if she were made to do that. Though recently, it's taken her longer. When she was 15 she could put on an average set of clothing in less than 10 minutes. Lately, however, she takes sometimes over a half an hour to put on her clothing.

As I wait, I try to imagine what she could possibly be doing. On the few occasions that she has left the door open enough for me to see through, I have seen her spend her extra minutes sifting through clothing, piecing together tops and bottoms and discarding them at a rapid rate, only to put them on and then take them off again just to put on another set of clothing she had already discarded. But that is boring. I prefer to imagine, in the times that she closes the door to her room, that she spends her extra minutes struggling with a thread and needle. I imagine her creating her clothing from scratch. A beautiful project that produces an even more beautiful result. I imagine she sews carefully yet quickly, finishing a shirt in five minutes and creating a pair of pants in ten. I imagine her preparing a beautiful outfit that flows around her like the ocean, yet clings well enough to show off the beautiful shape of her body. It is a beautiful thought, and in my mind it is the only explanation. When she returns through the door I see her wearing a long, purple sweater. Beneath its low hanging neckline is a yellow tank top. Examining her legs, I see black leggings. Her clothes are dark. They almost make it hard to see the beauty that is beneath them. She tugs down on her leggings, obscuring even more of the shape of her lower half. She carefully rolls up the sleeves of her sweater, making sure not to rub the red lines that she has created along her arms. She paints her arms like this almost every day

now, ever since her dad died a year and a half ago.

His name was Ewell Henrich. He had short, dark hair, hazel eyes, and a small nose that looked like his daughter's. He used to climb into bed with her every night. Ever since she was six, her father would come into her room at night, talk softly to her, get undressed, get under her covers, and then talk more. Usually it would result in her making loud noises and her dad trying to comfort her and quiet her down. They had a strong connection that I found to be beautiful, but not many people got to see it. During the day I would hear yelling come from around the house. Threats of divorce came between him and Caroline's mother. Sounds of violence came from just outside Caroline's room.

Ewell died in his daughter's bathroom, staring into me with tears in his eyes. His forehead had become as red as the blood that was trickling down his arms. It took Caroline over a month until she could bring herself back into the bathroom to look at me. I remember the note he taped to my face. Caroline keeps it on the counter below me now.

Caroline begins to reach for the note, her mouth holding open just enough for her to breathe through it. Her hazel eyes stare at the note so loosely focused that they almost looked to be shaking. She picks it up so carefully, as if it could fall apart at any moment. But it's she who begins to fall apart, not the note. Her forehead burns as red as the lines on her arms. She reads it slowly, her eyes fill with water. In the dim light I can hardly read the letters, but I am able to just make out a shaky "I love you" at the end, where her first tear lands.

Watching her eyes flood and her face redden and crease is terrifying. I have seen it happen so often now, more than I used to. I flash back to watching her father cry in front of me practically every day up until he died. Every time she cries I worry that she may decide to do as her father did and slice her wrists just a little bit deeper, never returning to look into my face again. And that thought is what scares me.

She wipes her eyes on the towel behind her and takes in a deep gulp of air. She makes an almost coughing sound, wrinkling her face more as she does. And, though I can see her face stained red and her eyes still stern and shaky, the tears, at least, have stopped falling. She sets the note down on the counter, this time with far less care than when she picked it up.

She looks again at her body, as she did before she was clothed. She pulls up her

sweater and tank top a bit around her left side. She begins to pull at the skin that is beneath her clothes. I see her eyes glance back at the note as she continues to pinch at her sides. Her face becomes a deeper red and her lips begin to quiver. More tears fall, though they feel different. I cannot tell if they are falling harder or more rapidly, but they most definitely are being pushed by a deeper well of emotions than before.

Letting go of her skin, she lets her sweater fall back into place, obscuring her body and hiding the shape of what is beneath it. She stares through me towards the spot where her skin had been showing before. Her mouth begins to open now, nearly smiling in sadness. Still crying, she quickly closes it and swallows deeply. She closes her eyes tightly and cries for almost three minutes before opening them again. As she cries she continues to open and close her mouth.

When she opens her eyes, she begins to slide her left hand up and down her neck. She looks down at her makeup and then back at me. She stares deeply into me with her eyes still full of tears, though her face has become paler and her mouth has begun to press tightly shut.

Slowly she walks to the toilet, crouches down, flips her hair behind her, and sticks her three innermost fingers deep inside her mouth. She makes a coughing sound as a yellowish liquid falls from her lips. She repeats this action, then stares at the toilet for a while before standing back up.

She walks back over to me and wipes her mouth and face on a towel. She grabs a cup and quickly gargles some water in her mouth. The tears have seemingly stopped and now her face looks almost scared. The red in her face has turned to a pale yellow. She stands and stares into me for another minute before turning on the water and rinsing her off face.

She dries her face well before putting her makeup on. She starts with concealer and begins to rub the yellow paste around on her skin. She pulls out a jar of a similar yellow powder and pats it on her face using a large brush she left lying on the sink. Carefully, she sets the jar down and scratches her forehead gently with the back of her hand.

Grabbing for her eyeliner, she looks down, only to look immediately back up at the sound of an alarm. It is coming from her phone, sitting on the counter next to her hand.

"Crap!" she says to herself in what I can only assume is anger. The word sounds crass, but it is far better than some of the other words I have heard her use. "Swear words"

as her mom calls them. I recognize the alarm immediately, as it goes off at exactly 8:00 almost every morning. Usually I hear it coming from other places in the house where the sound is much more faint, or sometimes not at all on the days she has left before it got it's chance to ring, but this is the first time I have heard it from so close. She begins to work faster, trying to finish up so she does not make herself any later for wherever she goes every morning, as her alarm marks when she must leave in order to make it on time.

She rushes the rest of her makeup, skipping her mascara and somehow managing to wing her eyeliner just perfectly around her eye shadow. Her makeup is beautiful, though it replaces the beauty I see in her with something similar again to the posters on her bedroom wall. But Caroline is not a poster hanging crookedly on a wall. She is a beautiful girl, and the only girl I love, as she is the only girl I have ever known. I have watched her grow up, seen the reds and the yellows in her face grow and fade, and hang there on the wall just waiting for the day she will look into me and see the beautiful girl that I see.

She runs out of the bathroom, leaving me behind on the wall as she grabs her backpack and keys. As I watch her walk away, I wish that I could follow her. I imagine jumping off of the wall, my flat, mirrored surface growing limbs so that I may walk as she does. I imagine following her to wherever she goes when she leaves the house. I would tell her she is beautiful, the word that I wish she would call herself. Because through all that I have seen and through all that has been seen through me, her beauty is all that I could ever care about. Her beauty is all that I can see.