

Reflections

by Doomspark

AU

A post-war look at a witch's life.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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They don't understand what it is to be ugly. Not just unattractive. Ugly. It doesn't matter quite as much for men; some women are attracted to that 'rugged' look. But it's a disaster for a woman. I know at one level that it's nothing I did that made me end up with a face like a bulldog, tits like a boy's, and legs like tree stumps. But deep down inside, there was always a little voice that told me that if I'd ONLY done something different, I'd be prettier.

Even my name is ugly: Millicent Wilhelmina Bulstrode. And oh, the nicknames that spawned! The nicest was "Milly willy". I suppose my parents didn't know any better. With names like Ignatius Horatio and Anastasia Eunice... well, I suppose it might have been much worse.

I spent most of my school years reading up on Charms and Glamours, hoping to find one that would work. I would've settled for being plain, even. But Charms wear off, and Glamours fade. The amount of maintenance they require is phenomenal. You have to refresh them six or seven times a day. They aren't a practical solution.

With the defeat of Voldemort early in my seventh year, Slytherin House was split. Some, like Malfoy, quietly vanished, choosing exile over imprisonment. Some, like me, learned to adapt to the new ways. For six years, I'd had to play stupid as well as ugly – no Slytherin would dare best Malfoy academically. Now I was free to shine, and I finished second over-all – right behind Hermione Granger.

There's another harsh truth about being ugly. It is hard to find any sort of decent work. People think that ugly equals stupid; I was only offered the most menial of jobs, though I was qualified for far more. Finally I'd had my fill of it, and when my mother died (father died in the War), I turned my back on the wizarding world.

Or at least, mostly.

Muggles are so amusing – the uglier you are, the better a witch you must be. I have no idea where they get that. But it's true. I bought a little house on the edge of this small Muggle village, and learned to cackle. The Muggles come to me at night, asking for love philters, or wanting a neighbor hexed. Little things. Easy enough for a real witch. They pay me well for my charms and potions, and they are pleased that they work. Sometimes I forget that I am ugly.

Then I return to the wizarding world for a few hours to get supplies, or have a sundae at Fortescue's, or to buy a new book. And I get the looks again. The double-takes. The stares.

I have no mirrors in my little cottage.