

# Mirror Mirror

*by lady\_rhian*

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

“Do you believe people can change? How are we all supposed to heal if we can't change?”

There was a gap between them, a space brimming with the desire to say things they couldn't. Wouldn't. They passed each other in the corridors of the psychology department at King's College with barely a nod.

Barely.

“I'm not a traitor.”

“Feels like it. Working on some project with *him*.”

“Do you believe people can change, Ron? How are we all supposed to heal if we can't change?”

“Still, I can't believe you're working with the Ferrett.”

“Just *stop*, Harry.”

She took a class on trauma and poured herself into case studies, desperate to escape the grinding specificity of her own experience. The studies turned into mirrors.

Mirrors hurt.

He was in the class, too. She hoped he felt the same.

“Can I interview you?”

“I will not be interrogated by my own son.”

“We're doing case studies for our dissertation. It's anonymous.”

“Your mother said you were planning to adapt your academic work into a memoir for our world.”

“It'd be better than what's out there.”

“...True.”

They watched a film in the trauma class. He sat in the back of the lecture hall, gnawing on his nails, his eyes too full to see the screen.

He didn't see her approach, but he knew her presence, had become accustomed to how she wove in and out of his life. She'd never come this close.

He resented it. Resented that she knew him as he knew her, that she was close enough to see his face. She moved closer still and put her hand in his, and he knew disgust.

It wasn't until after class that he realized she may have needed the comfort more than he did.

The next day, he asked her to dinner.

She was worried that their relationship, their proximity to their subjects, would taint the work. So they made a decision: he would write about the Light, she about the Dark. Then they'd switch. There was an academically acceptable mean somewhere, she was sure. At the very least, it was an improvement on the vitriol of Skeeter's unauthorized *Histories of the Great War*.

"Hermione, this is..."

"Brilliant?"

"Not going to go over well."

"It's academically sound, Harry. Emotionally distant. In short, better than everything else that's been published. "

"People aren't ready for this."

"But they'll eagerly devour whatever sugar-dipped bullshit the latest memoir offers, whether it's Skeeter's *Histories*—"

"Which no one takes seriously—"

"—or Mrs. Zabini's romance novels or your mother-in-law's conduct books. It's all polemic, and it keeps us divided."

"Your book hurts."

"We have to hurt before we heal."

*Through a Glass Darkly: A Study in Surviving* was a success, enough to secure job offers at universities.

*Mirror Mirror: Reflections on the Great War* was received with anger and defensiveness, pride and prejudice. There were debates at the Leaky and at Fortescue's, in the halls of Hogwarts and the Ministry.

But people talked—and began to listen.

The Granger-Malfoys were satisfied.

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Prompt: Someone takes creative liberties when writing their memoirs, royally ticking off the other "characters" in the story.