

Reflections

By

Andre Rabbit

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## Reflections - Prologue

*I miss you.* A lone fur stood out under a wilted oak tree, gazing at a pair of carved stones emerging from the ground; or perhaps not at them, but past them. After several minutes of watching, the old fur broke his gaze and looked around at his surroundings. It is mid-October, and most of the leaves had fallen off the trees and the temperature had already begun to change.

He turned to look at the car and the two occupants it held. His mate and his closest friend waited patiently for him, giving the privacy they knew he needed. *I miss you so much. I wish you could see me now.* Again, he regarded two stone markers, reading the names off of them for one more countless time. *Andre Reeves Church* and *Daniel Eric Banks*. The two furs that meant more to him than any other, more than his friend, more than his mate. The two who had been with him at the hospital when got the final news.

The two had already been in old age when it happened. Coryn could scarcely believe that it had been fifteen years already. Fifteen years since the incident that had brought down one of the nations largest leaders of the Knights of Purity. Fifteen years since the incident that had cost the lives of his parents, plus those of so many others.

Coryn had been almost 22 at the time. He had been at a gay rights rally with his fathers and had just left to get them lunch when he heard the blast and was knocked down by a multitude of panicking bodies. He looked up in time to see a large cloud of black smoke rise from the place near to where his parents had been standing. Coryn could hear nothing save for the rush of blood in his ears and could feel nothing but the pounding of his heart and his own breath. He began to push his way forward through the panicking throng until he reached the blast area.

Several mangled bodies lay strewn across the ground, some were only barely recognizable body parts. Two of the very few survivors, if they could be called that, were lying close to each other, trying to grasp each other's paws. Each of them lying in a puddle of their own blood as the puddles slowly mingled together. The Doberman's paws flew to his muzzle as he tried unsuccessfully to hold back his emotions, though all he succeeded in doing was creating more. He rushed to them, speaking to them, trying to get them to respond but they wouldn't. Or rather, they couldn't.

Coryn could tell that their wounds were very serious, from the things he had learned from Elijah Khan, a close family friend and doctor. Coryn didn't respond when he felt a paw grip his shoulder and forcefully move him out of the way. It had been Elijah. He had been in another part of the rally when it had happened. Another fur moved Coryn away from the scene and spoke softly to him, trying to calm the young fur down. That had been Beaumont, Andre's close friend and Coryn's godfather.

Coryn came back to reality now, feeling a single tear fall down his cheek. The loss had devastated him at the time. Later he would learn what good had come of the

deaths and that gave him some peace. Coryn turned and walked back to the car, slowly, though, and hardly noticed when he sat inside and a pair of arms held him. “Thank you, Tabitha.” He said in a quite monotone, sniffing his nose as it warmed from the cold outside. Coryn’s mate John drove while Tabitha and Coryn sat in the back seat. They were silent through most of the drive back to Coryn and John’s flat.

Finally, Tabitha spoke up, breaking the silence. “Are you going to be okay Coryn?” she said, sounding like the concerned friend that she was. Coryn replied in the affirmative and walked off to the restroom, leaving John and Tabitha alone for a moment. “Coryn certainly seems to be doing better now. I don’t even think he needs the medications any more.” She said speaking of the anti-depressants he had been on.

Most of the time Coryn could handle his emotions, but at times he would slip and go into a depression. The meds had made it barely bearable, up until recently. Coryn came back and motioned for Tabitha to sit. “Can you stay a while? You want something to drink?” he asked politely.

Tabitha shook her head. “I can’t. I promised Terl that I would spend the evening with him tonight, instead of at the lab.” She quickly checked her chronometer, causing everyone else to do the same. It was getting late, and all three furs had to work in the morning. They all said their goodbyes and Tabitha left.

Later that night Coryn sat at his terminal writing. Or rather, trying to write. He had recently taken on the task of writing down all the stories that his parents had told him. He hadn’t actually started writing yet. He was having trouble figuring where to start. *Ah well*, he thought, *might as well start at the beginning*.

- End -

## Chapter 1

Coryn watched the traffic go by on the street outside his apartment. Of all the things that had changed over the years: instantaneous internet, genetic restructuring, even flying cars. One thing always remained the same, traffic everywhere. It seemed that despite gasoline prices soaring to record highs year after year, people still flocked to the gas stations to fill up.

*People are so stupid.* He'd been in a depression swing again, and the meds he'd been given weren't having much of an effect. He hadn't made a suicide attempt, yet. It didn't happen *every* time he was depressed, even though there had been two since the beginning of the year. What did happen usually was a fatalistic funk that he couldn't shake. And a simple anger at most things that didn't normally bother him. He sat at the window for a few more minutes before he got up. Depression or no he had things to do today. Bills had to be paid. The world kept spinning while his world crumbled again.

He picked up the phone, punching in a few numbers. "Hey Tabby? Yeah, yeah it's me. I'm okay, I guess. I've got some errands to run today, do you think you could meet me for a coffee or something? Yeah, it has been a while since we last saw each other. I'll tell you about it if and when you meet me. Okay. Okay, bye hun." He hung up the phone then took his keys.

"I can't live for free." he muttered to himself as he left for the main office.

A short while later he sat in the coffee shop watching a white car pull up. Coryn perked his ears, then they dropped again when he watched Risi climb out of the car. He was probably coming in to work today. Coryn hid himself behind his newspaper hoping not to be noticed, the only person he wanted to see today was Tabitha. He sat reading for a few more minutes until a pair of eyes peeked over the top of the paper. Typical Tabitha.

"Heya, pup." she said, giving him a bright smile. One of the few things that she knew of that could make Coryn feel better. "Where have you been these last few weeks, huh?"

"Hiding. Writing my book, thinking dark thoughts, you know, the norm." he said back, giving her a look and trying to seem somewhat cheerful. Tabitha was eight years his senior, so she looked after him with a kind of big sister mindset.

"I still miss them, Tabby. Terribly. Sometimes I dream of them, and the dreams seem so real."

It had been over a year since he had stood in front of the grave of his parents. His grief still felt just as potent as it had the day after. "Tabby, how long did it take for you to get past Sabrina?"

She frowned and looked away. Even the mention of her sister still stung. "It's hard. Really, really hard. I guess I just got to a point where I realized that no amount of sadness could bring her back." She looked away again, as though hiding something. Coryn understood, sometimes it is easier to let out some feelings while keeping some of them secret.

Coryn decided to change the subject. "How is Terl these days?"

"Oh, he's fine, just his usual somewhat dorky self."

Coryn yawned, "I'd better get going." he got up and slid his chair underneath the table. Tabby stood as well and hugged him close. "Don't worry, you'll be okay." she said.

He left a peck on her cheek, then left to head back home to sleep some more.