

# REFLECTIONS

by Carl L. Williams

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*A Dramatic Duet*

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**SYNOPSIS:** After the death of their mother, two sisters find themselves cleaning out their family home. One final item remains, a hand mirror. While reflecting upon its value, they come to discover its greater worth.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(2 females)*

ABBY (f) ..... 20's-40's. Older sister, practical minded. *(56 lines)*

CAROL (f)..... 20's-40's. Younger sister, more sentimental. *(57 lines)*

**TIME:** Present day.

**SETTING:** Living room of childhood home.

**SET:** Bare stage with a few large boxes.

## PROPS

- A few large boxes
- An old-fashioned hand mirror

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The sisters truly care about each other, so their squabbles are minor. The simple set allows for flexibility of action as the characters consider the empty house around them. There is a poignancy as they face leaving their childhood home for the last time. The hand mirror reflects not merely an image, but all the memories of their mother and of their own past.

**AT START:** *An empty space with just a few boxes in two different stacks. A hand mirror lies on top of one of the boxes. ABBY and CAROL, sisters, dressed in casual clothes, take a final look around.*

**CAROL:** Okay, now what?

**ABBY:** I think we're done.

**CAROL:** A month ago we thought we'd be done two weeks ago.

**ABBY:** And now we are. Done.

**CAROL:** Somehow it doesn't feel like it.

**ABBY:** Because of all the memories here, in every room and crevice of the house. Those can't be boxed up and carried away.

**CAROL:** It's sad to see the old place this way. Empty and abandoned.

**ABBY:** *(Wry.)* Death will do that.

**CAROL:** That wasn't a joke, was it?

**ABBY:** No, Carol. That wasn't a joke.

**CAROL:** Hard to believe this will be our last visit home.

**ABBY:** If we can still call it home. Which we can't.

**CAROL:** But it was. As long as she was still with us, it was.

**ABBY:** *(Looking around.)* Well... I guess that about takes care of everything.

**CAROL:** Sold, given away, or trashed.

**ABBY:** Or divvied up between us.

**CAROL:** You know I really wanted that Wedgwood china.

**ABBY:** Hey, I offered to split the whole set with you.

**CAROL:** Oh, yeah. One of those Solomon-like offers. Destroy it by dividing it, so I gave it up, like you knew I would.

**ABBY:** You don't entertain as much as I do. And didn't I trade you the sterling silver for it?

**CAROL:** Which I'll have to polish every time I use it.

**ABBY:** Stop complaining or do you really want to go back over what we've already decided?

**CAROL:** No, no, you're right. Lucky it was just the two of us laying claim to things.

**ABBY:** Yes, two squabbling sisters is enough. Think if there'd been four of us.

**CAROL:** Only one thing left to argue over. *(Picks up the hand mirror.)*

**ABBY:** Mother's mirror.

**CAROL:** *(Considers, not wanting it.)* You take it, Abby.

**ABBY:** (*Not wanting it, either.*) No, no—you take it.

**CAROL:** I've got a mirror.

**ABBY:** So do I.

**CAROL:** You should have it.

**ABBY:** Why me?

**CAROL:** Because... because you're the oldest.

**ABBY:** Maybe we could flip a coin. Loser gets it.

**CAROL:** It is a little out of style.

**ABBY:** Like a hundred years out of style.

**CAROL:** Not that old.

**ABBY:** Mother had it for as long as I can remember.

**CAROL:** I wonder when she got it. You think Dad gave it to her or she bought it for herself?

**ABBY:** I vaguely recall she got it from her mother.

**CAROL:** If it's really that old, like an antique, maybe it's worth something.

**ABBY:** Don't get your hopes up. I checked on eBay, and silver plated mirrors range from a few dollars up into the hundreds. Unfortunately, this one is pretty tarnished.

**CAROL:** Maybe we could have it... what do you call it? Rehabbed?

**ABBY:** (*Derisive.*) Sure... send it away to a clinic somewhere.

**CAROL:** You know what I mean. Restored! That's it. Restored.

**ABBY:** Fine. You take it and restore it, which will probably cost more than it's worth.

**CAROL:** Okay, then, before we spend anything on it, first we'll have it... you know, looked at by somebody.

**ABBY:** Appraised.

**CAROL:** Yes. Appraised, and then restored.

**ABBY:** And then sold?

**CAROL:** I suppose so. That way we could split whatever we get for it.

**ABBY:** If only Mother had specified in her will which one of us should have it.

**CAROL:** You know she wouldn't do that. She never played favorites.

**ABBY:** Or in this case it might be a dis-favorite.

**CAROL:** No. Mother loved this mirror.

**ABBY:** Sentimental attachment, I suppose.

**CAROL:** Maybe we're not as sentimental as we should be.

**ABBY:** I don't think "sentimental" is a "should." It's an emotion like any other.

**CAROL:** Not like any other, I don't think. Because to feel sentimental about something, you have to have felt good in the past about whatever you're feeling sentimental about.

**ABBY:** I almost understood that. And I felt really good about our mother, just not about her mirror. Now, do you want it or not?

**CAROL:** (*Sudden idea.*) I know! Why don't we just leave it behind?

**ABBY:** Leave it here? What for?

**CAROL:** The idea of something of hers still in this house, where we all lived for so long.

**ABBY:** Talk about sentimental. And nonsensical. The new owners are bulldozing the place next week.

**CAROL:** Which I still think is crazy. Why go to the trouble of building a brand-new house when they could live in this one?

**ABBY:** You just explained why. It'll be a brand-new house. This one's got too many things wrong with it. Not worth the expense of fixing it up. Needs a new roof, and a paint job, and plumbing work, and of course the cracked foundation from all the settling through the years. (*Notices CAROL staring at herself in the mirror.*) What are you doing?

**CAROL:** Just looking in the mirror.

**ABBY:** I can see that. Checking your makeup? Admiring yourself?

**CAROL:** No.

**ABBY:** What, then?

**CAROL:** Thinking of how many times Mother looked in this mirror. It's somehow... I don't know... like maybe if I looked long enough, and hard enough, and deep enough, I could see her face.

**ABBY:** You've been breathing too much of this dust.

**CAROL:** I mean, think about it. How many thousands of times did this mirror hold her image? When she was young, and every day as she grew older. The image changing and aging.

**ABBY:** So which of those would you want to see if you could see it? The young woman, the middle-aged, or the old?

**CAROL:** I'd want to see her the way she was when we were little. Wouldn't you?

**ABBY:** We have photos. And home movies.

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