

LOOKS CAN BE DECEIVING

The room began to spin, my head becoming heavy, it felt as if it had sunk down into my neck. I couldn't speak, my mouth was open, yet it felt as though it had been glued shut, stapled together. I was stumped, it was one simple question and I couldn't answer it; my mind craving help, yet I couldn't ask. I lower my head, staring at the ground thinking, maybe if I stay this way they'll forget I exist, forget I am here, after all I'm not special.

A hand slams down on the table, making me feel as though it has broken through my skull. All I can hear is the harsh, deafening, abusive voice of the girl in front of me. I lift my head to see her slowly turn into my worst nightmare, my feet become weak, and my heart drops. I have to say something now, the terrifying voice still echoing through my mind, the abusive language burning into my brain as if she has lit a match and thrown it at my mind, my memories. Her hand reaches forward, inching closer to my neck, the flames in her eyes spreading like wild fire.

Then... it stopped, the harsh words disappeared and her hand lowered. She stood there, survey in one hand and I realised, I'd seen her beauty before, her elegant walk down the hallways of my school. The soft sound of her voice came back and the words, "Please, just answer the question?"

I felt safe again; I imagined I was at home in bed, in the dark. With no light, no trouble and nothing to do with society. I open my mouth and a faint mumble comes out, a language unknown to man, but known to me. The anger begins to re-emerge in her eyes and I see my world come crashing down. Her hand is held in a fist, yet I still can't think as to why she is glaring at me? I only think of the way her eyes sparkled in the sunlight, the way her hair blew in the wind and the unbearable fact that I couldn't ever be as good as her.

'SNAP'

A click near my face makes me come back to reality, she's standing there, in front of my face and I'm sat staring at the dimples in her cheeks. One tear, gracefully caresses my cheek like a majestic waterfall. I use the back of my hand to wipe it away, as if my sadness was nothing more than a mere speck of dust floating in the air.

She notices the stream of water gracing my cheek and takes a step backwards. Her question may have been simple but I was the one who wasn't good enough to answer it. I stand up and look her in the eyes. By then she knows; knows my fear, my weakness. Her delicate arms stretch out and embrace my body. At first, I am surprised, this kind of act gives me such a shock but I smile. My worries stop and I like it. For the first time in my life I wasn't afraid and it was all thanks to this one girl. This girl whose smile brightens the dark, this one girl whose eyes are a blue deeper than the ocean; this one girl who I think I'm falling in love with.

We stood, embraced in each other's company for a while, until a long slender arm reached between us, separating our bodies. The safe place I was longing for was gone from my reach. It felt as if she was miles away, even though she was no more than a couple of inches from my petrified, motionless body. Two hands strap across her, as if she's chained away from me. She struggles for a moment, trying to inch closer and then... the struggling stops.

A part of my heart seems to break the moment I see her turn away. The boy who has stolen my love begins to speak, "Do you really think she'd like you back? You're a loser, you don't

even talk. No one likes you.” He pauses as he looks towards her then turns back towards to me. “Are you even going to say anything?”

I can’t explain my fear at this moment in time, but the pain I feel is like a tidal wave, crashing into my heart over and over and

over and over and over UNTIL...

I’ve had enough, the anger running through my body makes my eyes light up with fire. My hands begin to tense and I feel the blood pulsing through the veins in my wrists. Without thinking I lift my fist, raising it closer to the sun; in a matter of seconds, it would all be over, the bullying, the teasing, the pain.

She moves, my fist is still in the air but she moves. I could easily have hit her. She has stood in front of him; why? Why him? She speaks, her angelic voice replaying through my head and my fist lowers. “STOP, don’t do this,” she shouts. Every word sounds like a feather in the wind and I realise she cares, someone in the world cares, I’m not alone. My disability has caused me all this time to be afraid of everyone, to be afraid of myself, and yet... I don’t have to be. Some may not understand my disability but others do, and I don’t have to be frightened. I look her in the eyes and, as she stares back, I see comfort and feel shielded from the fear in her eyes. They never would have believed that I could take back my emotions enough to have the power to frighten someone. My hand unclenches from its struggle, and goes to caress her paper skin face, her tousled hair, and I let my eyes slowly drown in hers. Then I feel her tension ease, and her comfort rise. The fear we both felt has disappeared and now all I feel is power. Finally, I have control of my sentiments and it feels extraordinary.