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2nd edition

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| A **Killer's** Reflection

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By

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People like to say that the conflict is between good and evil. The real conflict is between truth and lies.
~ Don Miguel Ruiz

Prologue

“Huhhhhhh, huhhhhhh, huhhhhhh, huhhhhhh!”

The small boy breathed heavily, trying to catch his breath. His back pressed up against the metal fence alongside the alleyway so hard that he knew he would have diamond imprints on his back when he arrived home.

He had done something bad again, and his adrenaline was racing. Spots of blood still stained his small hands. Yet, he was smiling.

There was something exhilarating about getting away with murder, so to speak. He was sure the small dog would be okay. Anyway, he had been provoked, he had to defend himself, and there was no choice. There was never any other choice.

He wondered if his mother was home and what she was making for dinner. He would rush into the bathroom before she could see him and wash up. “Have to be clean and handsome for mama!” he murmured. He knew he was her favorite. Her straight ‘A’ Honor student with his father’s good looks, so she says. Not to mention, the ability to neva do any wrong. He was her joy, her love, and most importantly, invincible. The boy smiled again before taking off for home.



Chapter One - Childhood Drama

11-year-old Douglass Randall Coleman Jr. walked up to the 12-story brown brick building that he called his home with a spring in his step and a smile on his face. His hands were still bloodstained, so he kept them in his pockets. He noticed his brother out front on the basketball courts and yelled his name. His older brother, Charles, now 16, gave him a nod and a 'Sup!?'.

Douglass continued up the walkway to what society named 'the projects of the inner city,' better known as the "Boogie Down Bronx." As he approached the front entrance, he flashed his ever-so-charming smile to the young girls on the step. They blushed and giggled in return.

Stepping into the elevator, he held his breath from the stench of urine as he waited until it delivered him to the 7th floor. *Lucky number seven*, he thought. *And as usual, I'm just as lucky.* His mama was in the kitchen making dinner, and he could slip into the bathroom before she noticed how dirty he was. He yelled out, "Hey mama!" and quickly ran down the narrow hallway.

Before Sandra Louise could turn around, Douglass was gone. She wanted to scoop him up and squeeze him tightly as soon as he came home. His report card had come, and he'd made the Honor Roll with six A's and one B unlike his brother Charles, who'd barely passed with five C's, one D and one F. She knew it was wrong to have favorites, but she couldn't help herself. Douglass was the star athlete, the winner of the Science Fair, runner-up in the National Spelling Bee, and so much more. He looked just like his daddy, and that, to her, was his best trait yet. So handsome and charming. When he flashed his winning smile, she always melted. All the girls loved him too, even though he was only eleven.

Doug looked in the mirror and flashed his winning smile...practicing for his mama. There was something in his reflection that made him wonder about his immortality. How much could he get away with undetected? Hmmmmm.

Forcing himself to look away from the mirror, Doug ensured his hands and face were clean and changed his shirt. He was ready to win mama's heart all over again. As soon as he opened the bathroom door, he ran smack into her.

"I was just about to come in there and find out what was takin' my handsome man so long," said his mama.

"Sorry, mama, I had to go to the bathroom really bad," said Douglass. "Dinner ready yet?"

"Not just yet, my handsome man. Give yo' mama some sugar first! I am so proud of you!" she said as she squeezed his thin frame. "You made the Honor Roll again! Did I say how proud I was of you?" she asked as she chuckled and grinned.

"Boy, you look more like yo' daddy every day. He was so charmin' and handsome. Always had on the latest styles with some fancy hat. Ha!" said his mama.

Doug didn't wanna hear about his daddy or about his charm or good looks. *Fuck that nigga!* he thought to himself. *He ain't neva did nothin' for mama or me. Duckin' in once in a while to take me out or sleep with mama, and then runnin' off the next mornin'.*

Doug and his father always had a strained relationship because of the fact that when he wasn't around, it was *bad*; and when he was around, it was *worse*. Just the thought of him made his skin crawl and his fists clench.

"So what's for dinner?" he asked his mama.

"One of your favorites, of course! You know I always make your favorites. You are my special little man. I love you so much," she said, smothering him with kisses and hugs. "Please don't ever leave me. Okay, Douglass?"

“You can count on me, mama,” he replied; but inside his stomach was churning. He wanted to scream and run away from the smothering. And that glassy-eyed look that she gave him when she looked into his eyes made him nauseous. It was the same feeling he got when he thought back to the memories of him and his father, when he was around four.

Charles rushed into the apartment and sat down at the dinner table, asking what was for dinner.

“We are having Douglass' favorite! It's a celebration. He made the Honor Roll again! Now hurry on and wash up,” said his mama.

“Why do we always have to have Douglass' favorite, and why are we always celebrating **him** and how GREAT he is? I'm sick of it!” he yelled as he stormed down the hallway to the bathroom.

“When you do something great, then we'll celebrate you!” yelled Sandra as she stood behind her son's chair, stroking his curly hair.

Charles continued yelling from the bathroom. “I do a lot of great things, but you don't notice! You're too busy doting over Doug! And what about all the trouble HE gets into? You completely overlook it like it doesn't matter!”

Charles' face was red as he re-entered the kitchen. He was about to explode and was tired of having this argument night after night. He was seriously considering going to live with his grandmother...permanently.

“Everyone gets into a little trouble now and then.” said Sandra. “He's a boy. And those were all just misunderstandings. Those people just 'i-deed' the wrong boy. Douglass would never vandalize a property or hurt an animal. He loves animals. Right, Douglass?”

Doug smiled his winning smile and replied “Of course!” to his mama's question. Although he hated to be called Douglass, he responded anyway. He didn't wanna be like his dad, Douglass Sr. In his mind, he was Doug.

Charles' eyes were burning a hole through Doug in contempt. He was not buying it. He would have to work harder to get mama to see the **real** Douglass. In reality, Doug hated animals and could easily rip them apart with his bare hands. When the coldness of hatred ran through his veins, he could destroy anything or anyone. Mama kept a damn zoo in this apartment, from turtles and cats to dogs and hamsters, and he could barely breathe from the smell or keep himself from puking.

Douglass reflected back on his mother's words about loving animals. He thought to himself, “No, I definitely would not use the word *Love*. I'm so sick of that word. Especially from people. No one really means it, yet they use it all the time...Except when it applies to me. Yeah, I...Love...ME.”