

Mirror & Shatter



Giselda's View



Alexander's View

Mirror

By: [Zahilara-Bennett](#) Published: Jul 29, 2013

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It was just a simple, unadorned, mirror that Alexander has had in his room for as long as he could remember. He remembered the times he used to sit in front of it for hours, talking to a person only he could see. He remembered the happy hours, lying before it, playing games, and telling stories without ever saying a word. He remembered venting to it, when his classmates made fun of him for getting braces, and he remembered crying the day he saw it shatter.

Alexander was perhaps four years old when he first became entranced by the mirror. It was right after his friend's birthday party. He came home, was exhausted, and planned on going to sleep before his mother could make him brush his teeth. But then he noticed a face staring back at him in the mirror, and the face certainly wasn't his own.

It was a girl around his age, with beautiful hair, very pale skin, and the oddest expression on her face. Alexander stared for a moment and then walked closer to the mirror. The girl stayed where she was, still staring at him in a strange manner. She was wearing very strange clothes, like those he'd seen in his older sister's history books. The girl wore a green dress, bunched and tied around her waist and trailing down to her feet, it looked very uncomfortable, she also wore a crown of flowers in her hair.



Giselda, as Alexander saw her in the present.

For many moments, the two simply stared at each other. Then, one day, Alexander slowly stretched out his hand and lightly touched the glass. The girl flinched, but didn't move back. Then she, too, reached out and placed her hand against his. What shocked him was not that there existed a world beyond his reality, a world which he could only glimpse through the mirror; but the realization that he couldn't feel her hand on his.

Alexander learned to communicate with the girl; first using signs and words on a chalkboard and then by expressions and gestures. Her name was Giselda, and she was the daughter of an earl. She loved to read and write but hated attending banquets and parties. Alexander, in turn, told her he was the son of a dentist; that he liked soccer, but hated gym classes.

He didn't have many clear memories of her after that; no particular instance jumps out at him which was more vivid than any other. He simply knew that he lived his entire life with her, he grew up with her. Every day he would sit in front of that silly mirror for hours and talk to her. And as he grew, so did she; from a stubborn little girl into a stubborn young woman, graceful and wise beyond her years, as most people were in her time. He learned to love history because of her, and learned to make fun of history books because she told him exactly how wrong they were in their recounting.



Giselda's view of Alexander in his past, her present.

Alexander remembered her thirteenth birthday well; it was just a few months after his. He came home from school one day, and she was sobbing. She told him, she was being forced to get married and though he didn't understand why, he was very upset. He liked Giselda and realized that she knew his mind like no other being alive, not even his mother. And he knew that before long she was going to leave him.

Alexander tried to make her stay. He begged her to stay, but she had no choice in the matter. Her father had made the decision, she told him, and she was betrothed to a baron, an eldest son of another earl. But she was only thirteen! It was the only argument he could formulate, but it was of no use, Giselda was not just miles away, or on the other side of the world; she lived in a different time, a different era, she was part of an entirely different world!

The two still continued to see each other over the next few weeks, she told him about the preparations for her wedding, and he tried to reconcile the feelings he didn't know he had for her. The night before her wedding, he stayed up all night talking to Giselda. He told her not to cry, and she told him the same thing. Then they made a mistake.

The two risked talking to one another the morning of her wedding. They were saying their final goodbyes when a man walked into Giselda's room. His eyes locked on Alexander's and then twisted in confusion at the sight of a strange man, in a mirror, in his daughter's room. Then, in a single motion, he stepped forward and knocked the mirror backwards, breaking Giselda's mirror into a million pieces.



Alexander's reflection, in the present, after the mirror broke in the past.

In the present, Alexander rose with a shout, but already he could see the cracks forming. He put his hands over them, trying to hold the mirror together but he could only feel smooth, clean glass, for some reason his mirror was not physically broken. After that he saw only his own reflection, nothing else. Alexander sat on the floor of his room, staring at his own reflection and feeling as if he has just lost something truly precious to him.

Alexander didn't know what to do, how could he even attempt to fix a broken mirror that wasn't broken? All he could think about was Giselda, and how he wanted to be with her, but how? How could he be with a girl from the past, there must be a way, and he was determined to find it!

Shatter

(The other side of the Mirror)

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Giselda sat on her bed looking at the mess strewn out on the floor before her, a hollow feeling in her chest. The magic mirror lay shattered before her. She forbade any of her maids from even touching it even though they had protested, saying she might cut her feet to ribbons on the broken glass.

Idly, she debated doing just that. After all, she couldn't get married if she was incapable of walking down the aisle on her father's arm. Thinking of her father made her eyes darken with anger; how dare he? He had no right to hurt her the way he had just done. He hadn't waited for any explanation of what he was seeing. He only recognized that what he was witnessing was beyond his immediate understand. And on those grounds, he had rejected the object of her happiness.

No, not just rejected it; destroyed it! He had broken Giselda's magic mirror, shattered her only connection to a fascinating, captivating world of the future, and to Alexander. Alexander, even thinking his name sent a bolt of pain through her chest, her longtime friend, supporter, and her only confidante. He truly was worlds away now!

A part of Giselda had understood her father's reaction; after all, such a thing was not possible; at least not by any normal standards. When she'd seen Alexander in that mirror for the first time and she placed her hand over his yet felt only cool, smooth glass, she knew that any sort of relation with him was doomed. They lived in entirely different worlds, connected only by a delicate piece of glass. And yet, she had plowed on nonetheless, too intrigued and happy with the boy's company to wish that she had never met him.

Now, hours away from her forced wedding ceremony, with the mirror shattered, she cursed herself for indulging in such a fragile and futile fantasy. She had known all along, known from the very start, how it would end. She had known she would end up hurt; she would damage herself to a point where she would never recover fully.

A maid tiptoed into the room and Giselda snapped, "Go away, Maid!" The maid responded timidly, "Your father wishes for your company, my lady! It's time for your wedding." For a moment, Giselda considered refusing, but what was the point? It wouldn't soothe the ache in her heart, nor fix the mirror lying broken at her feet. Nothing she could do now would bring Alexander back.

"I'm coming," she replied at last, the maid nodded, curtsied, and left. Still, Giselda couldn't just leave the mirror lying there. It was a memory she cherished too much to lose, everything she had learned, all the joy that it had brought to her sleepless nights. Stooping down, she carefully picked up a small piece of the broken mirror, small enough to fit comfortably in the palm of her hand.

Then she turned away from the shattered mirror for the last time. Move forward, she told herself. The past is past! It hurts, but you can either punish yourself with the pain, or learn from your experience so you won't hurt again. Then Giselda walked out of her room.

She kept her eyes lowered beneath her thin white veil the entire time, staring at the carpeted floor. She still held in one hand her piece of the mirror, and since no one had even noticed, she kept it. She barely paid attention as her father left her at the altar, standing by the man who would soon be her husband. She barely paid attention to what anyone was saying and whispered her vows, with her eyes on her husband's shoes throughout the ceremony. Then her new husband stepped forward and lifted her veil; leaving her no choice, she looked up, and gasped, "Alexander?"

He looked slightly older, but it was definitely him, of that there was no doubt. He had the same clear, penetrating eyes, the same stubborn jaw. Giselda felt her own jaw drop as she stared, hundreds of questions sitting on the tip of her tongue. How had he gotten here? Why wasn't he in his time, in a different world? Where was his mirror? But at the same time, his being here, with his hands on her shoulders, made perfect sense. If such an incredible person could exist in another world, he could definitely exist in hers.

Giselda found herself both staring in awe and in joy at her new husband before remembering where she was, and blushing. The baron, Alexander, raised his brows at her expression, looking both confused and amused. Then he murmured, leaning in close, "Yes, it's me! It's a pleasure to meet you in person, at last, Giselda!" She closed her eyes as she kissed him, feeling her heart mend, her pain evaporate, her grief shatter, and be replaced with sheer joy.

The End