



A mysterious figure, cloaked in tattered garments, stumbled upon the small village of Draven, nestled amidst rolling hills and ancient forests. Draven was steeped in peculiar traditions, where time seemed to have a different rhythm. At the heart of the village, looming like a sentinel of forgotten tales, stood a broken mirror. This mirror had been fractured long ago under mysterious circumstances, and its shards had become the most cherished possessions of every villager.

Each shard, once part of the shattered mirror, held a significance far beyond its material form. They were more than mere fragments of glass — they were identities, encapsulating the very essence of each person. The villagers would often be seen gazing into their own shards, believing that the reflections held within would reveal their truest selves. But as they clung to these fractured remnants, an insidious illness began to take hold, spreading slowly and unrelentingly throughout the town, draining life from its very core.

The stranger gazed upon the shattered mirror with deep sorrow etched on his face. He addressed the villagers, his voice filled with conviction and urgency, delivering a message that seemed almost incredulous to their ears: *"The images reflected in these broken shards do not reveal your true selves. They are the source of your slow destruction."*

They stared at him, puzzled and offended. He went on to say, *"I can restore this mirror to its former beauty. If you allow me, you will see your true reflections. I am the only one who can restore it."*

His words stirred fear and anger. Why would they surrender their most valued treasures, their identities, to a mere outsider? "Leave us!" they cried. "We do not want your help!"

Day after day, the mysterious figure stood before the shattered mirror, pouring out his heart to it. He painted vivid pictures of a life where the mirror would be whole again, free from the affliction that had marred its surface. He spoke of how the mirror's reflection would once again reveal its true essence, not in fractured pieces, but in the flawless entirety of its restored form. But his impassioned pleas fell on indifferent ears.

As he continued to speak, the townspeople's animosity swelled. They huddled together, weaving malicious tales about the enigmatic stranger. Some whispered that he coveted their shattered fragments to wield power over them, while others insinuated that he aimed to

obliterate their very identities. Their resentment festered, warped by the dread of losing the only semblance of significance they believed they possessed.

One night, under the cover of darkness, the villagers hatched a plan. They would be rid of him for good.

The next morning, the stranger stood before the mirror once again, speaking softly, "Give me your shards, and I will make you whole."

But instead of listening, the villagers surged forward, each clutching their shard. In a frenzy, they descended upon him, stabbing him with the jagged pieces of mirror. His blood stained the ground as he fell surrounded by the crowd. One by one, each villager stabbed him, their fury consuming them. He never fought back. The stranger died before them, his lifeless body crumpled on the village square.

As the last breath left his body, the town was shrouded in darkness. It was as if the sun had faded. The villagers, filled with a strange mix of triumph and dread, retreated in fear to their homes.

For three days, the village was covered in darkness.

On the third day, as the first light of dawn broke through the clouds, the villagers ventured cautiously back to the town square. They expected to find the stranger's body, but instead, they found something impossible.

The mirror was whole.

The magnificent mirror stood gleaming in the heart of the town, an exquisite sight that had been painstakingly restored to its former glory. Not a single crack or shard marred its surface, and the villagers were rendered speechless as they gazed upon it. One by one, they tentatively approached the mirror and were met with the astonishing sight of their unbroken, undistorted reflections. For the first time, they beheld themselves as they truly appeared.

Some of the villagers were filled with curiosity, drawn in by the mesmerizing display before them. They began to drop their shards, which still held traces of the stranger's dried blood. Others, however, were overcome with fear at the sight of the flawless mirror, turning away and grasping their shards even tighter. A few adamantly refused to even cast a glance at the mirror.

The stranger's body was nowhere to be found. Only the mirror remained.