

ONE OF THEM

COMMISSION STORY

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“This is the first city I’ve come across in like *forever*. They better have good food here.”

After her stint on Penacony inevitably ended, Sparkle eventually departed the planet as she awaited her next mission of one of Aha’s Masked Fools. She was a young woman that liked to sew the seeds of chaos, a competent agent that wandered the known universe when she didn’t have something specific to do in the pursuit of something, *anything* that she might find even the slightest bit entertaining.

The twenty-year-old woman was young but competent. Despite her younger age compared to most of those that aligned with the Fool’s, she was *more* than capable of taking care of herself. There was no threat that her powers couldn’t allow her to flee from, if not outright defeat with ease. That was why there were no limitations to *where* she would go. A war-ravaged planet was no different to her than one at peace. No one could lay a finger on her.

Even so, she was still fortunate that this planet wasn’t in the *former* camp. It was at relative peace, and the planet’s technological level wasn’t too advanced, but it also wasn’t lacking when it came to its tech either. Skyscrapers towered high above her, while the people walking about wore glasses and used cellular devices. If anything, it was a technological level comparable to the world that one Nameless had come from. The old man with the glasses? Whatever his name was. She couldn’t even remember where he’d come from, but she remembered the intel about it that had been shared with her.

It was already late in the evening and *both* of the suns in the sky had set. The paved city streets were basically vacant aside from the odd passing, three wheeled vehicle – as it seemed to be the standard for vehicles on that planet. Restaurants were open and there *were* customers in them when she peeked through the windows, but nothing had really caught her eye. Nothing was really *speaking* to her when it came to food.



“Maybe I should find an inn to rent first instead?” Those were Sparkle’s stated intentions, but that wasn’t *actually* how things would pan out. She’d gaze meaningfully into the eyes of whichever poor clerk had been dealt the hand of having to deal with her, then use her powers to manipulate them into giving her a room for free. No one would be any wiser, and that was for the best. She wasn’t carrying *any* local currency after all.

As she walked past yet another open business, she peered inside without showing any interest. Even Sparkle wasn’t certain of where this disinterest was coming from at first. She was usually so eager to involve herself in the affairs of the people wherever she went, but here? She just couldn’t seem to drum up the interest. **“It’s almost as if the people...”** The people? Just say that aloud seemed to startle her eyes wider as she stumbled upon a realization.

“The people. That’s it!” The young woman doubled back the few steps she had taken past the most recent window to peer inside once more. This time she examined the people themselves much more closely, rather than fixating simply on just *what* they were doing. **“I get it now. Why does everyone in this city look like that?”** To you or me, that still sounded like a very cryptic question.

But it made perfect sense to Sparkle herself. She had visited many different planets, and while on average there were plenty of people that didn’t look particularly exceptional, there were always still more *interesting* folks mixed in with the crowd. But everywhere she had looked in this city had just been *boring*. The people all dressed in boring clothes, had boring faces, and even had boring *bodies*. Where were the stacked ladies? The funny looking playboys? Were there not even any *Pathstriders*?

This didn’t sound like a real problem on its head, and maybe it really *was* nothing. But the more the woman thought about it, the more

bothered she became. **“Hm. Whatever. Maybe I’ll some more interesting people in the morning?”** It wasn’t enough to make her *worry* at least, and so she continued on her way, cutting through a nearby alleyway that led in the direction of a large INN sign that she could see overtop a shorter building.

It must have rained shortly before she arrived, because she had to be careful to avoid relatively large puddles here and there that were illuminated by neon lights. She hadn’t really been making a point to look *down* at those puddles, and yet for some reason? She felt compelled to stop and look down at one in particular once she was deep enough in the alleyway where no one would find her without looking for her. **“Hm?”**

Her reflection looked back at her... *right?* **“Who the hell is that? That’s not me...”** The girl in the puddle mirrored her movements, but she wasn’t wrong to think that. Her reflection only had a vague resemblance to what she was *supposed* to look like, with short and messy hair, a plain face with glasses, a lackluster figure, and she was even dressed in a boring T-shirt, jacket, and shorts combo that looked *very* unkempt. Like whoever was looking back at her didn’t even take care of herself. **“Who...?”**

Rather than continue examining the puddle itself, Sparkle looked up and around at the walls of the alleyway. She was looking for something like a *projector*, something that could emit visuals down onto the ground to create that effect. On the other hand? It could have simply been the powers of a Pathstrider like herself, but was she being *targeted* by someone’s power or was she simply getting caught up in it unconsciously?

“Well, I guess if it’s just my *reflection* it doesn’t really matter! Seems like someone’s trying to play a prank on me!” It was at that point that she went to push up the glasses on the bridge of her nose. **“...Eh? *Glasses?*”** Something that too a moment to occur to the young woman. She didn’t *wear* glasses, at least not these days. And yet? She could feel their frame sitting on the bridge of her nose, and upon grabbing them and pulling them off? Her vision became *extremely* blurry – to the point that she could only make out that the frames were both rectangular and *red*.

Sparkle squinted with a look of disgust plain on her face as she put the glasses back on her face as if it was the most natural thing in the world. Her vision was restored back to a falsified 20/20, but even *she* hadn’t noticed how the red irises and white pupils of her eyes had gradually been shifting from ‘unique’ and ‘uncanny’ to ‘utterly plain’. Her irises

were brown now, and her irises were the small, black dots that they were supposed to be.

And those pupils *dilated* as her attention fell back on the puddle once more. “**Didn’t I see glasses like that in— Erm...?**” When she leaned over the puddle to examine her reflection in it again? She ended up stepping back after realizing that the girl in the reflection wasn’t simply *not* wearing glasses anymore. But the eyes of that girl were the same, unique shapes and colors that her eyes *should* have been. “**I-I get it! Someone is playing a *really* huge prank on me, *right!*?**”

The woman definitely didn’t like the sound of that *voice crack*, but her attention was locked on the puddle. She watched the eyelids of that girl narrow, and at the same time? Her own eyes were rounding, gradually making it seem more and more like was a woman of *Caucasian* descent instead of Asian. These subtle changes gradually bled throughout her face’s *entirety*. Not only did her lips thin and her nose shrink, but that face eventually looked *exceptionally* plain – not to mention oily, with a sprinkling of acne popping up.

All while the face her reflection became just as pretty and attractive as Sparkle’s face *had* been before.

It wasn’t until the hair of the girl in the reflection began to grow fuller and pulled into twin tails that the Pathstrider of Elation thought to touch her own hair. “**C-Crap!?**” Sparkle had *attempted* to pull one of her twin tails over her shoulder but quickly found that they had been undone. The ribbons were just *gone*, whereas they had appeared in the hair of the puddle. Not only that, but the hair that she *had* grabbed was slightly lighter in color, shorter, and far more unkempt than usual. It felt like it hadn’t been washed in a while, with split ends that barely reached her shoulder.

“**This... i-isn’t my hair...?**” But it was quickly occurring to her that her problems were compiling. That voice crack from earlier had made it so that her words were a little flatter in tone, and honestly pretty nasally in how they sounded. She was likewise speaking *without* her usual confidence. The real Sparkle would have used her powers to try and counter whatever was happening, but she felt too *anxious*. In fact, even if she *tried*, she wouldn’t have remembered how to use them... if they were even still present at all. “**Is this puddle... taking me?**”

She cautiously leaned over to see her reflection once more. But it was becoming harder for her to figure out if the girl in the reflection was how she was *supposed* to look, or if it was some sort of ideal that a *plain girl like her* would never be able to reach. *I don’t have any special powers. I don’t even like going outside.* Two thoughts that ran contrary to how

Sparkle usually operated in general. But she'd more or less still identified what was happening, even if reality was being affected in a way that made her incapable of doing a single thing about it.

The process seemingly had no problems replacing her clothes and accessories if her glasses and hair ribbons had been any indication. That was why it seemed a little strange that her kimono had yet to be replaced, even though its *contents* were changing now that she looked like an ordinary, anxious, and nerdy girl from the neck up. The rest of her body's skin was taking on that oilier texture that could be seen in her face, while her perfectly trimmed nails became unkempt, with specks of dirt trapped underneath them.

She itched at her own arm, not thinking much of it. If anything, that vague itchiness distracted her from what was happening to her *figure*. Now, Sparkle had never been so delusional as to think that she was *buxom* or anything like that. Her figure was average at best, and that was *fine*! She couldn't imagine the *back problems* women like that Memokeeper woman who'd appeared in Penacony probably had. But still, she was proud of the weight she *did* have.

"Ugh..." Her head felt a little groggy, and honestly? The woman wasn't even sure about *why* anymore, but she continued to look down to check her reflection. The woman she could see had a pair of average sized tits. **"I wish mine were that big. Looks like she had bigger thighs and wider hips too."** These comments were made in lockstep with her own curves bleeding away to supplement those within the puddle. The front of her kimono eventually emptied until she only had a pair of *A-cup* tits at best, while the base of the kimono hung loose around stockier legs, narrowed hips, and a much flatter ass.



The 'Sparkle' in the water seemed to be having difficulties fitting into the tank top, shorts, and cardigan that the girl before had been wearing. One of her boobs was almost slipping out! But honestly? She probably still had it better than the Sparkle of reality. At least her body had *grown*. **"This is stupid, is this some trick of the light?"** The woman looked away for only a moment, but that was enough time. When she looked back at it?

The girl in the puddle was dressed in her kimono. Well, she certainly didn't *see* it as 'her' kimono any longer. The clothes she identified as her

own were the white tank top, black shorts, yellow cardigan, and white shoes that she wore *now*. It was a comfortable fit that simultaneously showed off... how little she had to show off in the first place. Her figure was 'below average' for a woman who was twenty years old, but she had more or less come to terms with it. Maybe if she ate a little better, she'd put weight on where it mattered?

But that wasn't really any of her concern at the time.

The girl in the puddle now looked exactly like Sparkle once had, while Sparkle herself... looked like the messy and plain girl that had once been trapped within. **"Me? A pretty looking girl like that? Pfft."** But the girl herself didn't seem to recognize what had changed. In fact, she stepped onto the puddle's edge with one of her dirty running shoes to prompt some ripples that distorted the image in the puddle, and once those ripples slowed? The girl in the puddle looking back at her was the same boring girl that *Sarah* was in reality.



"See? It was just a trick of the light. I still look like the same old, boring me. Flat as a board, unemployed, barely put together..." Sarah laughed at her own self-depreciative statements while she pushed up her glasses and continued down the alleyway towards the other side. She was hardly a picture-perfect person. She wasn't even a good *daughter*.

When she graduated from school, the young woman elected to stay inside all the time. She seldom went out and instead wasted her days typing on her computer where she was Robin's #1 fan (self-proclaimed) online. She didn't bother to care for herself, and her appearance reflected that. The only reason she had gone out that night was because her mother owned the nearby inn, and as someone who was living in one of those rooms, she had agreed to go on errands when asked. **"Shame I couldn't find what mom wanted me to, though."**

Sarah just shrugged. It was easier without lugging back... *whatever* she had been asked to get. She couldn't really remember what it was for some strange reason. But she didn't really *care* either. She finally reached the other end of the alley and strutted onto the sidewalk opposite her mom's in, but before crossing? She looked back at the dark corridor she had just walked down, thinking of that brief reflection she had deluded herself into thinking she'd seen in the puddle.

"Still... Looking pretty like that? I wish. She was really pretty too. But I've just never been that fortunate."

Like most people, she'd just end up living a completely normal life
without exception.