

Behind the Closet Door

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From behind the closet door was a place where she could be herself. In the world she was currently lived, she felt alone. No one would talk to her and they would make fun of her because she was different. She looked normal on the outside -- she had short brown hair, freckles and dark green eyes and wire rim glasses. She wore a green sweater, worn overalls and muddy boots. People made fun of her not because she looked different; they made fun of her because she was different socially. She couldn't control her disability, but she tried. Every day after school, she would lock her bedroom door and then sit inside her closet. To a normal person, it would just be an ordinary closet -- a few feet deep with clothes hanging on racks. However, when she would walk into the closet, a different world lay before her. She called it Limbo. Her closet door was in the side of a mature tree with a tire swing, slowly moving in the wind. The grass was a rich green, peppered with

small wildflowers. Rolling green hills surrounded this haven. A few feet from the tree was a small cottage with a waterwheel. The water was a deep blue and the waterwheel slowly churned the water. The cottage had small intricately carved shutters and doors with its walls covered with vines of grapes and flowers. Inside was a miniature fireplace with a snug bed in one corner of the room. The ceiling was covered in plump grapes, hanging effortlessly from their vines. A chiseled dresser was next to the bed, a candle on top of the table along with an assortment of aging books. One of the books was open, a quill from a peacock and a vile of ink sat beside the yellow pages. The girl sat down on the bed and took the journal. She carefully opened the vile of ink, dipped the quill, removed the excess ink and began to write:

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They made fun of me again today. They always use me for their jokes. It hurts on the inside. Feels like I have so many scars. So many mental scars that no one can see. No one can see the world the way I see it; they're too busy looking at their phones and not enjoying the little

things in life. I'm wondering if the day will come and I will fit in and be accepted for who I am on the inside. Everyone knows me for being the "Weird Autistic Girl" and I don't want them to know me for that. I know that one in every 55 children are born with Autism each year... why must I be the one that is constantly picked on? The teachers say I won't need my Special Education classes anymore; which is nice. However, I don't think I'm ready to be on my own yet... I don't know how people will treat me from now on. All I can say is that I'm scared, but I hope for the best.

She blew on the ink so it would dry quicker, closed the ink vial, set down the quill onto the pages as she grabbed a bunch of grapes, eating them one by one. The bittersweet juices ran down her throat. She walked out of the cottage, shut the door and sat down by the lonely river. The waterwheel creaked every so often. Lily pads were scattered across the surface with colorful water lilies. Chubby Koi fish swam in circles and the occasional frog jumped into the clear water from a rock. She took off her boots and soaked her feet in the cool water. She looked into the

distance and saw a rickety windmill, its blades moving ever so slowly in the summer breeze. The sky was slowly turning from a brilliant blue to deep shades of orange and pink. The clouds were so puffy, they would continuously change shape. Soon, it was night and the sky was swarming with millions upon millions of stars and distant planets. The river reflected these constellations as if the water was glass. The girl put her boots back on and climbed the tree with the door leading back to her world. She gazed up into the heavens of her paradise. The inky night sky was covered in rainbow stars. Many of these stars fell from the sky, granting the girl one wish each time she came here.

“Let tomorrow be better than today. That’s what I want.” she said. A star shot across the sky and disappeared, granting the girl’s wish. She sighed and the tree extended its branch to her, offering her a golden apple. She took the apple and took a bite. It was sweeter than honey itself. The girl climbed down the winding tree and swung on the tire swing. Back and forth, back and forth. She closed her eyes, listening to the world around her. She felt like she was flying. Flying away from her

problems, away from everything disappointing in life. When she opened her eyes, she jumped off the swing and ran into the flower filled fields. Fireflies danced around the flowers, letting her see into the night. Then, she fell and started to roll down the hill, laughing. The flowers bent their heads and looked at her. Soon, they uprooted themselves from the ground and wove themselves into a flower crown for her to wear. The girl sat up and looked around. She rolled all the way down to the windmill. She walked inside, floorboards creaking. There was a hole in the ceiling, moonlight pouring into the man-made structure. Spiders hung from spiderwebs and a nest of baby birds chirped for their mother to bring them food. In one corner of the room, lived a small family of mice. The girl looked down at her half-eaten apple and gave some of it to the mice and some to the baby birds in their nest. The blades of the weathered windmill squeaked as it moved around and around as the wind blew. There was barrel of water near some decrepit stairs. She took off her boots and washed them in the water, turning the water a murky brown. Suddenly, the water changed and became clear again. Her boots were good as new and she dried them off with the sleeve of her sweater.

Then, she realized something very important that night. You can't lock yourself in a closet and wish upon stars to see if your life can change. You have to actually act and face your problems head on to fix them. She wasn't going to let her Autism define who she was anymore. Autism was part of her, but there was more to her than that. She was funny, kind and smart. She loved doing theater, despite being scared of singing in front of people and she was a talented artist. She was going to try to show people who she really was on the inside. She wasn't going to take their insults, their jokes or their teasing anymore. She was going to stand up for herself and other people just like her. She walked out of the windmill, across the flower fields to the tree. She opened the door; which lead her back to her closet. She walked inside and shut the door behind her and she never returned to Limbo again.