

NARCISSA

LOGLINE: Placed in total isolation on her college campus after testing positive for COVID-19, a young woman struggles with dissociation as she comes to terms with her sexuality and falls in love with an unexpected partner: herself.

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ACT I. THE DIAGNOSIS

INT. INSIDE EMPTY DORMITORY ROOM ON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS. ROOM CONTAINS A SINGULAR BED, DESK, CHAIR, MIRROR, AND SINK.

MASON enters and sets several duffel bags and a backpack down on the floor beside the bed. She begins unpacking her things, setting a number of prescription pill bottles on the sink countertop in front of the mirror before retrieving a laptop from her backpack.

MASON sits on the bed and opens her laptop as the camera pans to its screen. A flurry of text messages appear at once, revealing that MASON's boyfriend, JEREMY, has broken up with her. A simultaneous email confirms MASON's positive COVID-19 diagnosis. MASON quickly closes both her messaging application and her email tab. She pauses for a moment before typing something new into an internet searchbar: "How do you know if you're a lesbian?" MASON takes an online quiz, and the "results" come back positive as well.

MASON

(sighing and setting aside her laptop)

That was stupid. I'm not gay.

UNKNOWN VOICE

Well you certainly aren't straight.

MASON is startled and jumps to her feet. She immediately crouches down beside the bedroom desk in panic.

MASON

(breathing heavily)

Who's there?

The room remains silent for several seconds before MASON stands up slowly, phone in hand, and inches toward the bedroom door.

MASON

I'm calling campus police. Come out, I swear to God. Where are you? Are you hiding?

No one responds. MASON continues to trek around the empty room, finally reaching the bathroom and snatching aside the shower curtain. It too is empty.

UNKNOWN VOICE
(laughing)
I'm not in there.

MASON
(shrieking at once)
Jesus Christ!

MASON whips her body around to see the room is still empty. Placing her palm against her chest, MASON begins to exit the shower stall, only to see her reflection in the bathroom mirror laughing hysterically, though MASON herself does not laugh.

MASON
(deadpanning)
This isn't real.

REFLECTION
Technically, you're not wrong. But you are bi. So we can either unpack all of this...
(gesturing to herself)
...or we can unpack that.

The REFLECTION gestures toward MASON, whose eyes are glued to the mirror. MASON does not respond, instead moving her body slowly to the left, right, up, and down to see if her actions are mirrored by the REFLECTION. They are not; rather, her REFLECTION stands motionless with her arms crossed, an amused smile creeping up the right side of her face.

MASON
(slowly)
What are you?

REFLECTION
(leaning in toward MASON)
I'm you, babe.

Scene cuts to black as MASON curses, interrupting her exclamation of "f***".

ACT II. THE SYMPTOMS

INT. INSIDE ISOLATION DORM ROOM.

Camera pans from bedroom desk, where MASON's phone is lighting up with text messages, to the bathroom countertop, where it focuses on MASON's pill bottles before moving to show MASON and her REFLECTION engaged in conversation. Both are sitting in chairs, opposite one another.

MASON

I just can't believe Jeremy broke up with me. Honestly, I can't even see where it all went wrong.

REFLECTION

Do you think it was your lack of communication or the cheating?

MASON

(looking down)
Jeremy didn't know about that.

REFLECTION

Why'd you do it? If you loved him.

MASON

You know why.

REFLECTION

(getting up and walking around in the mirror)
I don't get it with you, or me, or whatever. This is not healthy. What you've been doing to yourself, Mason, it's not healthy.

MASON

(tears welling up in her eyes)
I'm not... healthy, right now. Really, I'm not. I'm not okay.

REFLECTION

Yeah, but that's not because of Jeremy, and you know that. And it's not because you got sick, Mason. Think about how we got COVID in the first place.

MASON
(laughing sarcastically to herself
in an attempt not to cry)
Searching for love?

REFLECTION
(gagging)
In all the wrong places.

MASON
What? You mean to say I'm not going to
find the love of my life on Tinder?
Wow. Shocker.

REFLECTION
Tell me about her.

MASON
You know just as well as I do that
there is no "her." Just sorority girls
with daddy issues I hookup with at
frat parties. It's not my fault that
the one time I meet up with a girl and
actually stay the night at her
apartment, she has COVID and a
boyfriend.

REFLECTION
Babe, that's depressing as hell.

MASON
You said it.

MASON and her REFLECTION both laugh.

REFLECTION
At least tell me why you keep doing
it.

MASON
It's a long story.

REFLECTION
Good thing we've got plenty of time.

MASON
Screw you.

MASON and her REFLECTION laugh again as music begins to play
and the camera pans away and around the room to MASON's
phone, which continues to buzz with notifications. The

phone's screen reveals that the day has changed.

The camera continues to move around the dorm room, from the desk to the sink countertop to the bathroom mirror, where MASON and her REFLECTION remain engaged in lively conversation. The passage of time is marked by MASON's phone, boxes of food piling up on the bathroom countertop, and the unopened pill bottles still in front of the mirror, unmoved. Finally, MASON's phone has died (as indicated by a red battery displaying on its screen), and the camera settles on MASON and her REFLECTION once again.

MASON has bags under her eyes, though her reflection does not. She is visibly exhausted, though she is in a particularly amiable mood.

MASON

(cupping her face in between her hands, leaning over the bathroom countertop)

You're a really great listener. I've never said any of these thoughts out loud.

REFLECTION

I know. I'm just happy you've come to terms with your sexuality.

MASON

I wouldn't say I've come to terms with it.

REFLECTION

What do you mean? Of course you have. Watch. "I'm bisexual." See, you just came out.

MASON

No, you just came out. It's not that easy for me out here.

REFLECTION

You are me.

MASON

You aren't me. You're this idealized version of me that's somehow secure in her sexuality and confident and happy and proud of who she is. And I love that for you, and it's nice to imagine, but that's not me. That's not

who I am.

REFLECTION

You aren't giving yourself enough credit. Can't you stop it with the self-hate?

MASON

Hate? I don't hate myself. I hate my situation. And I hate...
(gestures around the room)
...all of this.

REFLECTION

Do you hate me?

MASON hesitates for a few moments.

MASON

I love you. You're everything I aspire to be.

REFLECTION

Then love yourself. Because we are one in the same.

A single tear runs down MASON's face.

MASON

No. We aren't.

MASON slumps onto the floor of the bathroom, fading from the view of her REFLECTION and colliding with the tile in tears as her REFLECTION bangs on the glass of the mirror.

REFLECTION

Mason? Mason? Mason?

Camera pans from the REFLECTION to MASON's face, wet with tears. Picture fades to black as the voice of her REFLECTION grows faint.

ACT III. THE RESOLUTION

INT. BATHROOM FLOOR. IT IS MORNING.

Scene opens on MASON's face as her eyes fly open. A banging on the bedroom door and the repeated shouting of her name jolts MASON upright, and she proceeds to walk toward the noise. MASON is dirty and disheveled.

MASON
 (opening the bedroom door in
 surprise)
 Dr. Swan?

A middle-aged woman stands in the doorframe, masked and dressed in professional clothing. A name tag identifies her as "DR. SWAN, M.D." She is MASON's psychiatrist. DR. SWAN immediately enters the bedroom and proceeds to worriedly embrace her patient with a hug.

MASON
 Dr. Swan, you really shouldn't...

DR. SWAN
 (interrupting her frantically)
 Mason. Are you okay? I know, I know,
 I'm not supposed to be in here. But
 I'm getting calls from your parents.
 I'm getting calls from your teachers.
 You've missed two of our Zoom
 sessions, and I'm hearing you haven't
 responded to anyone or even opened an
 assignment in six days. You look a
 mess.

MASON
 Dr. Swan, I-I'm fine.

Obviously unconvinced, DR. SWAN surveys the room. The camera follows her gaze, ultimately settling on the full bottle of pills on the bathroom sink. MASON and DR. SWAN migrate to the bathroom, where MASON's REFLECTION stands in the mirror, leaning against a wall and listening in on MASON and DR. SWAN's conversation.

DR. SWAN
 (slowly uplifting a pill bottle
 from the sink countertop)
 Oh, Mason... honey...

Camera pans to MASON's face, and she looks down as the scene

fades to black.

INT. INSIDE ISOLATION DORM ROOM.

Scene fades in to reveal MASON standing before her REFLECTION in the mirror, pills in hand. DR. SWAN is no longer in the room. A glass of water sits next to MASON on the sink countertop.

MASON

(staring at the pills but
addressing her reflection)

We both know that once I take these,
you'll be gone. And I'll be alone.

REFLECTION

You won't be alone.

MASON

I'll have to face Jeremy, my
professors, my friends, my parents...
myself.

REFLECTION

Haven't you already?

MASON looks up from her hand to make eye contact with her REFLECTION. She begins to cry.

MASON

(whispering through tears)

Do you think one day I'll be able to
love myself as much as I love you?

REFLECTION

I know that you will. One day -- maybe
soon, maybe not -- because you'll look
into the mirror once again, and you'll
see me staring right back at you. And
on that day, you'll be staring at your
true self. You've found her in here,
Mason.

(pointing to her heart before
gesturing toward MASON)

Now go find her out there in the real
world. And take care of yourself, for
God's sake.

The REFLECTION chuckles lightly before gently pressing her palm to the bathroom mirror. MASON follows suit, pressing her own palm against that of her REFLECTION. She then drops her

hand and slowly begins to take her pills, one by one. The room remains silent for several seconds before MASON finally redirects her attention toward her REFLECTION.

MASON
(breathlessly)
One day.

REFLECTION
(reassuringly)
One day.

Camera abruptly cuts to behind MASON, revealing that her sentient REFLECTION is gone and her normal reflection has returned. MASON gasps, then, hesitantly, she presses her palm against the mirror once more, her reflection mimicking her exactly. Removing her hand and resting it on her cheek, MASON gently wipes away the tears that have begun to dry down her face. She chuckles to herself before making direct eye contact with her reflection and cursing softly under her breath.

MASON
I'm bisexual.

Scene abruptly cuts to black as a smile creeps up MASON's face and she begins to laugh bashfully.

THE END.