

The Rift

Know the saying ‘just one of those days’? I wish it were true for me.

You ever experience the feeling of not recognizing yourself?

I didn’t think so.

Two weeks ago I woke up, looked in the mirror, and didn’t know who was looking back. I don’t mean I suddenly realized I’d aged since high school, or I’d done some horrible thing the day before and I couldn’t face myself. No, I mean it wasn’t me in the mirror. I was standing there, staring at myself in a panic, looking for *anything* that was familiar.

There was nothing. Not even a wrinkle or mole I could ID.

Just stop for a moment and think about that. Really think about it.

I found myself pulling at my face to see if it was legit. I tugged at my hair, even checked down my pants.

I wasn’t me.

Faced with one of those bizarre situations only seen in movies, I tried to think of what I could do next. I scoured my apartment – at least it was still my apartment – looking for anything that could explain what was going on. At that point it was past being an elaborate practical joke, but I still held out hope that there was a simple explanation for what was happening.

I opened drawers and closets and checked tabletops for any photographs, and when I finally found one, I wished I hadn’t.

My girlfriend was holding a guy and smiling. It wasn’t me in the photograph, but the guy from the mirror.

What the hell was going on? I’m still not really sure, but I can tell you what happened from that point on.

I decided to call the one person I could trust.

Not my mom stupid, my girlfriend.

She could tell right away that something was wrong, and agreed to come right over.

I didn’t know how to show her what had happened without scaring her, but I tried to make it so it would be, well, not such a freaking shock to her system.

I hung some sheets between the curtain rod on my windows and a bookshelf on the other side of the apartment doorway. By the time she knocked I had been sitting on the floor behind the curtain, waiting and thinking for fifteen minutes. I reached through the sheet and opened the door a bit so she could come in. I could hear her asking something before pushing the door open. It sounded like she said a name or something, but I just said ‘yes, come in’.

She got freaked out when she saw the sheet around the doorway, and asked what the hell was going on. I told her that I didn’t want her to be scared, but I had to show her a few things. Without waiting for me to brace her for what she was about to see, she just pushed through the curtain and told me to stop playing games. I tried covering my face with my hands, knowing full well that when she saw that my hair wasn’t even blond anymore she would probably scream.

I yelled at her to wait a second, that I had no idea what was going on, but I knew she was probably going to freak when she saw me.

She just walked over, ripped my hands down from my face, stared at me for a second, and told me to stop being an idiot.

Man, I remember thinking that the shock of what I had seen in the mirror was nowhere near as bad as my girlfriend looking at a *different* face and thinking she was still looking at her boyfriend. A feeling of it all being a joke crept back in, but I guess when you're in a desperate situation you tend to fantasize and hope for something like that.

She yelled at me to stop goofing around, but I could barely hear or see her. I felt like my head was going to snap. I just wanted to figure out what the hell was going on, and make it stop.

I always like to think things through and not rely on anyone else to help me, but with something like this I had no other ideas about what I could do. I asked her if she was joking about me not looking like a different person to her, and *then* she finally looked at me like I had been expecting all along. Like I wasn't who she thought I was.

She walked up to me and slapped me, slapped me real hard. She looked scared, so I told her what had happened to try to explain things. She just listened silently and wouldn't make eye contact with me. I remember thinking she looked like a scarecrow the way she seemed to be trying to stand perfectly still. When I finished she remained quiet, but I could see she had some tears in her eyes.

Asking her what was wrong seemed like a pretty ridiculous question at that point, so I tried to stay focused by finding out if she remembered anything weird about the last few nights. She just stayed quiet and started to cry a bit more. I could see her shoulders quiver a bit from it, so I approached to give her a hug. When she saw me coming at her she held up her hands like I was going to hurt her and turned to run out.

Now I asked her what was wrong but she was already running for the door like I was going to actually do something to hurt her. She ran around the edge of the sheet and I tried to follow, but got hung up on the sheet and fell. That damned bookcase just missed my, well *whoever's*, head when it fell over. By the time I got up and out of the apartment Julie was already driving away in her little red hatchback.

What the hell was I supposed to do next?

The only things I could think to do were talk to the police, or find Julie, and it didn't look like my girlfriend would be of much use if she couldn't even stick around and help.

I was starting to feel pretty alone – a stranger even to myself. It was like I still ran like a Corvette, but with the exterior of a Topaz.

Not being too crazy about the police, I found myself thinking again about who could help me. For some reason I kept thinking I should call my mom, but we hadn't spoken in over six years. She wouldn't be able to help anyhow. All she ever did was bitch at me for *anything* I did.

One time after Dad died, and I was real little, I made her a really good dinner for just the two of us. It had as many courses as fingers on a hand. Every dish I made was one of her favourites. When she got home from work I could tell right away she'd had a bad day or something. She looked at the spread of food and asked if that was the whole week's groceries. I told her how some of it was, but I'd used some of the allowance Dad used to give me. Her face just went so red, and I knew that I'd pissed her off, but had no freakin' idea why.

She said I was so fat that I better eat all the food to keep my disgusting body the same size. I think those were maybe her exact words. Told me never to touch the groceries she brought home again unless she gave me permission. Then she stood behind me and made me eat every bit of food I had made. I almost made it through it all too, but after all the other food, that last steak was just too much. I threw up all over the table from being so full.

Mom got even madder at that. The rest I remember, but I don't want to say what happened next. I just had to clean it *all* up, if you know what I mean.

Sometimes she was really nice to me, but mostly she was just mean. I learned to appreciate when she wasn't yelling at me, or giving me spankings for the thousands of things I did wrong.

Did I tell you I lost my virginity real young? I was like ten or something. My girlfriend was older and she knew what she was doing. I just let her take over. I don't think I even felt anything from it, good or bad but I still bragged like crazy about it to my friends. They all thought girls were gross and stuff, so when we all got older I had to teach them how it worked.

Anyhow, there was no way I was going to call my mom for help, she'd tell me I got what I deserved or something.

I figured my only choice was to go see the police. I hadn't been in a police station voluntarily since...well, probably ever.

I started walking for the bus stop, and for some reason I felt a little scared to even be outside. I almost turned right around and went back to cower in my apartment and wait for help, but I was able to talk myself out of that and continued on.

Before I even reached the bus stop I saw a young boy across the street, maybe about eleven, calling out a pet's name over and over and crying. I asked him what was wrong over the traffic and he told me he'd lost his dog. He was just standing on the edge of the other side of the street, staring down an alley and calling for it. I decided to cross and try to help him, but when I finally got over there he had disappeared into the alleys behind the storefronts.

I couldn't see the little boy anymore, but I did spot Julie again. She was in her car in a parking lot just thirty feet away from me, crying and talking on her mobile phone. I walked over, and was suddenly feeling really angry with her.

I tried to stay calm enough to open her car door, and I asked her why she ran off. She practically screamed when she saw me though. Said she was calling help for me. I told her not to bother since I was heading to the police station anyhow, but she didn't answer. She just sat there staring forward like I was a god damned bear and she was trying to play dead.

I asked her if she knew what was going on. She just said I was sick and I needed help. *That* was a shock. She had been acting weird, like she thought I was psycho or something, but when she actually said it, and I knew she wasn't joking, it finally hit home. When someone tells you you're sick and you feel completely normal inside your head, the first thing you want to do is prove them wrong. I told her again what happened but she just kept shaking her head. Before I knew it I had pulled her up out of the car and was screaming at her. The only thing I could think of was that she was screwing around with me for some reason but I had no idea why.

She finally just looked at me calmly and got me to stop yelling. She said it wasn't my fault, she understood why, and that she was sorry that she hadn't had the courage to help me when I needed it. She started to cry again and said something about her mom getting what she deserved finally and I lost it.

Totally saw red.

I needed answers, not some cryptic BS about her past. Before I knew it I just, uh, hit her. Hard.

She fell down on the pavement and it almost looked like a shot glass full of blood had been in her hand covering her face, cause I saw a lot of red around her head and on the ground.

Next thing I know the police have me over her car in handcuffs, I get transferred around to a few precincts, and end up in this hospital talking to you. Recording all of my damned thoughts, studying me and wondering what is going on with me when all I need to know is how the hell I can wake up one day and not see the same guy in the mirror.

Of course you don't have the answers. I didn't expect 'em anyhow.

Yea great, thanks for all your "help". See you tomorrow. Bastard.

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Patient Session Transcript

Case #: I43577

Name: Leon Fellowes Age: 28 Gender: Male

Date: June 4, 2001

Notes:

Mr. Fellowes suffered an apparent indefinite lapse into a distinct and separate ego state apart from his normal mode of being. It is fairly certain that it is a case of Multiple Personality Disorder, however it had not been detected until this point in time. With MPD having a typical onset in childhood, it appears that this may have gone unnoticed for almost twenty years.

Mr. Fellowes has an extensive history of mental illness including depression and social anxiety, which has manifested itself as an extreme case of agoraphobia. He has been essentially bound to his apartment for the last four years as an outpatient.

This current episode seems to have been prompted by the recent passing of his mother (Jane Fellowes, Age 49). His sister, Julie Montgomery (nee Fellowes, Age 31) has been interviewed in this case, explaining that sexual assault of the patient at a very young age by his widowed mother occurred repeatedly over the course of 2-4 years. A likely possibility is that that is when the personality split first occurred, and his current bold and aggressive alter remained undetected for the last twenty years. What is most interesting about this case is the extent of the division between the two egos (at least the two that we know of so far), with the current alter not even physically recognizing himself in a mirror.

Dr. Emron Rizpah

The End

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