
**THE
MULBERRY
DOOR**

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SANCHEZ

THE MULBERRY
DOOR

FOR DYLAN,

FOR LAURA,

MAKE YOUR DREAMS YOUR REALITY 

CONTENT WARNING

Dear readers,

A short but necessary trigger warning before you enter Jenny's world.

The book contains references to depression, suicidal thoughts and psychological pain. Take breaks when you need to, skip parts if necessary. Take care of yourself. If you need it, seek help, you are not alone, never. There is always someone who will listen.

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*“PRETENDING YOU’RE FINE
IS SO MUCH EASIER THAN EXPLAINING
WHY THINGS AREN’T GOING WELL. . . “*

ANONYMOUS

CHAPTER 1



THESE days there are only a few things that stand out in my day, only a few things that I look forward to, only a few things that are worth getting out of bed for.

That's a lot less than before, in fact, before I just lived every day carefree, and now, now I had to tell myself these few things to even feel like going on, to not end it all.

'I, Jenny Margon, have to get up today because Nana expects to see me' I say my full name because it sounds more solemn, it makes the sentence more important, so I have to follow it, right?

The second and last thing is a visit to the lake. Yes, I told you it was just a few things.

The lake is close to Nana's house, but not too close, and it is also far enough from the village that I won't run into anyone, especially not my old circle of friends.

Every time I see them at school, in the village, or wherever, they look at me with such a pitiful look, a look that lately is even harder to bear. They have given up hope of getting the old Jenny back, and so they don't even bother talking to me anymore.

But when they look at me, with their pitiful looks, I can almost hear their thoughts:

'Look, there she is, she looks even paler than yesterday' or:

'Look, she's back. I would never get out of bed if my mother had died'.

The lake is situated in a clearing of the forest, only here the trees seem to have grown closer together. It almost gives you a feeling of security. The clearing is just big enough for a strip of grass that surrounds the deep lake, big enough for me and my towel.

The grass is interrupted by a mountain with a not too high waterfall coming out of it. The rest of the mountain seems to have been swallowed up by the forest.

I come here, at the end of my day, to let all the tears fall, and I cry until there are no more tears left for the rest of the day.

I cry because my mother died, I cry because she never got around to telling me who my father is, and I cry more and more because I know I hurt Nana, just with my

looks. A look that tells her I can't take it anymore, and I don't know how, but still she tries her best every day to bring me back to life. To keep me alive. To be honest, my spirit died with my mother, only my body stayed here behind on earth. . .



Nana sits, staring out the window, thinking about her daughter, about that stupid car accident, an accident that changed her life in an instant.

She also thinks of all the times the three of them would go into the woods to gather herbs, or just walk around, and then stop at that remote lake to rest.

Out of nowhere, the conversations she had a few times with her come flooding back to her. Questions about who Jenny's father was, where they had lived when Jenny was just a baby, and the reason she had come back to live in the village when Jenny was just 4 years old.

In retrospect, she should have demanded to find out the identity of the father, because that would have been very useful now, she would not stand alone now, she would

have had someone who could help her bring Jenny back to reality.

Sometimes she really thought that Jenny would give up one day, and she wouldn't be able to survive that. She couldn't lose both of her girls, she just couldn't.

Every day she still hopes that today will be the day that Jenny will come home with a smile on her face, but every day her hope fades away.

But that's what hope is all about, isn't it? No matter what your head says, no matter what your mind tells you it's the truth, your heart won't let go. And so, Nana awakens every day with the hope that her dear granddaughter will find her joy again.

But hope alone won't do it, that's what she realized this morning when she saw the pitiful, empty shell of a now young woman leave the house for the umpteenth time. She's been making a list all day that she wants to discuss with Jenny when she gets home, so now she's just waiting for her, with a mixture of tension and excitement.

She also realizes that this is probably her last chance, because she feels a pit in her stomach, one that tells her that Jenny cannot be saved anymore. That she does not want to be saved.



I take a short dip in the wonderful cold water of the lake. It is still spring, but even in summer, with the constant exposure to the sun, the water of the lake remains cold, I think it must be because of its depth.

I swim towards the waterfall, I find it a wonderful feeling to stay with my head directly under the curtain of water, even though I am constantly pushed down by its force, or maybe that's the reason.

The sun is beginning to set behind the treetops and I know it's time to go home, and with a wry smile I remind myself it was good of me to survive another day.

It is still warm enough so I just pack my things, put on my sneakers and start the walk back home. The path between the trees is narrow but clear, I think of all the times I walked through this forest with my mother and Nana, as long as I can remember. Something beautiful that will never be repeated.

As I walk, I realize how badly I treat myself, and how negatively I think about my life, but even though I try to make something out of it, where do I even start. I don't know, but I have a growing feeling in my stomach that

my mother is watching from the other side, and that gives me an extra feeling of pressure. I have disappointed her, I have disappointed everyone actually.

The lights shine through the windows onto the little garden in front of the house, such a cute little herb garden, with brightly colored flowers in between.

Nana made the paths that run through it, with broken shells, in the shape of a flower, with a small water fountain in the middle. I remember when I was little I would always come running here, and I would go through all the paths as fast as I could to make the flower in my mind, the flower shape ends at the beautiful mulberry front door of Nana's house.

Now I just walk around it to the front door, still the same mulberry door, but yet different. I have always had good memories of this house.

Everytime I saw this door, my heart started racing and I felt overflowing with excitement. It was always fun to come here.

“Nana, I'm home!” I shout into the room as I put my towel and bag under the wardrobe.

“Finally, I've been waiting for you for a while,” she shouted back from the other room.

“I was at the lake again,” I say as I walk toward the kitchen where her voice comes from.

The kitchen is pleasantly lit, with those old-fashioned yellow light bulbs, just like in the rest of the house. Nana seems happy to see me but there is something in her gaze that I have never noticed before, it almost looks like she is going to give a speech, but I have done nothing wrong, right? I say hello and take a seat across from hers.

The kitchen smells wonderful and feels nice and warm, and when Nana puts a piece of apple pie in front of me I realize that I was hungry after all. She pours us two cups of coffee and sits back down. She doesn't say anything while I greedily devour my pie, partly because I'm hungry, partly because I want to know what she wants to talk about.

“Jenny, I have decided that this can't go on like this, I see day in day out how you throw your life away, and I can't handle it anymore, I just can't.”

“Oh Nana, I'm not doing that on purpose, I . . .”

“I know,” she interrupts me, “you're not doing it on purpose, but that doesn't mean we can't do something about it, together.”

“I just want you to be happy Nana, I try my best every day, the last thing I want is to hurt you.”

Tears involuntarily slid from my eyes down my cheeks, apparently I wasn't done crying for today.

Nana looks at me deeply, her eyes also shining, and with a quick inhale, she proceeds.

“I gave you plenty of time, months even, but now we're going to do something about it, before you, well, before there's no way back.”

“What do you mean? What do you want me to do? Because after all this time, I have no idea how I can get out of this, how we can get out of this, together.”

“I made a list today, a list of activities that we used to enjoy doing together, but also new things to try. Every day after school, we decide what we are going to do that day, based on the weather. Longer activities we'll reserve for the weekends.”

“What do you mean with activities? Go shopping and pretend everything is fine until it feels right?” I ask in a cutting voice that I immediately regret. But she doesn't react to that, she continues like I said nothing.

“I think we both know that nothing will ever be the same again, but we have to start a new life together. To be honest, it will be good for me too. I've made a long list that should keep us busy for a while.”

I try to think about what it all means, what she's trying to achieve, and before I can formulate an answer I hear her say:

“And we’ll start tomorrow.”

She hands me the handwritten list as she gets up and leaves the kitchen. I hear her walking up the stairs and I am left alone in the kitchen, still a little perplexed by what just happened.

I finally decide I may just as well go upstairs, there’s nothing I want more than to lie down in my bed, especially now.

Nana’s list is just ridiculous, she really has come up with an activity, or rather occupation, for every day. What makes matters even worse, she has made demands.

The worst part is that I have to do a new thing, by myself, every week. An activity, a sport, even a craft, she said, but something I’ve never done before. Like I have the energy.

I just don’t have the strength to think about it all. I have just enough strength to get through my day, let alone strength to come up with new things to do. It’s just crazy.