

## Dee

### Lillie Hughes Youth Short Story

I have a friend called Dee. She is quiet and often hides behind me when we meet new people. Although she is lonely and deadly silent, she has a loud, cruel mouth when we're alone and she often makes me hide my face from the public. It's okay, don't worry. She only does it out of love.

I have a friend called Dee. She forces me to stare at my meals until I feel sick, purely because she thinks I've had enough to eat when I'm starving. She has good qualities too, like how she makes me feel incredibly guilty when I stay in bed all day instead of seeing my friends and family. It's okay, though. She's only looking out for me.

I have a friend called Dee. She sometimes twists my words and often, she manipulates me and makes me think everyone hates me and no one cares. She hits me often, with her black, slimy hands. She looms over me and watches over my shoulder. It's okay, though. She just wants me to be safe.

I have a friend called Dee. She talks about herself all the time and degrades me when I open

my mouth. Her black eyes pierce into my skull until I'm screaming, but no one can hear me. She says I have to stay quiet or I'll start annoying everyone and they'll all hate me. It's okay, though. She only does it so I don't get hurt - she told me so.

I have a friend called Dee. She follows me all the time, notifies me when I mess up and do

something wrong. She yells in my ear when I say the wrong words. It's difficult. No one else can hear her but me. She must be lonely, and that's why she projects it onto me. It's okay, though. She's just being loyal to me.

Dee sometimes consumes me. She says I'm becoming her. She says I'm cruel and selfish. She plants that black seed in my mind and watches her creation grow into a tree. Its roots prevent me from speaking, from moving, from doing anything at all. Staying in bed all day to avoid the construct of reality. Its thorns and branches suffocate me, until I am craving that noose around my neck and that chair to fall. Its vines trap my body so no one can find it, they twist my friendships. That tree hurts me, incinerates every sweet thought until it's all ash.

Dee sometimes gives me a break. Dee leaves me alone for a few hours but then she can come back stronger. I'm not sure where she goes, but she's a huge, black mass with no definition or beauty when she visits again. She orders me around, telling me to write my miseries and forcing me to cry every night, numb myself, ignore the world.

Dee isn't my shadow. Dee is me and I am her. She brings me down like we were never friends. She makes me do things I don't want to and she blinds me, she watches as I stumble and scream in the sudden abyss. She smirks, she laughs, she pushes me further down that hole. I don't want to be here, it's dark, cold and so so lonely.

Dee traps me. She places me into a cage and clips my wings. She makes me recite

lines into my veins until my own blood drains me. She keeps my imagination running, she forces death and destruction into my brain. She pins me down and stabs me again and again with her words, her knives.

Dee threatens to be the end of me.

Sometimes, Dee goes away. She lets me take my medication every day and smile before I go to sleep. On rare occasions, I can proudly state that I am happy at the end of a day. I can dream of the city lights and the iridescent glow of a beautiful fire instead of that frayed noose around my neck.

Dee is gone, she is gone for now.

Dee is dead, but I am alive.

Dee is me. And I am Dee. I am proud to say Dee is happy and safe.

Dee is my friend. She is going to be okay.