

Duo But Not A Duo

BRE - 6:30 am

Bre stared at herself in the mirror; everything looked perfect. Her hair, her makeup, her outfit, everything was placed for perfection. Yet, even though she looked perfect, she felt the opposite. She didn't know if it were because of all the comments her parents would make or if it were the truth. She was perfect to everyone she didn't care about, but the people cared about didn't see her as perfect. She was a body of flaws. She wanted to see what everyone else saw but couldn't.

Bre was lost in her thoughts until she was snapped back into reality by the buzzing from her alarm clock. She checked her phone and it was time for school. She quickly grabbed her stuff and ran out of her room. She ran down the stairs, and when she hit the first floor, she looked around, and a rush of disappointment hit her. She didn't know why she expected today to be different. It never is. She looked around her empty house. It looked ready to be in a magazine, perfect without a flaw. But Bre didn't want that. She wanted to see her parents downstairs, the house looking like people lived there. She wanted to smell food cooking and be greeted with smiles. They promised, she thought to herself. Bre almost let out a tear but quickly wiped it away and left the house.

She went to her car and drove to her best friend's house, Ria. Ria knows Bre better than anyone else, but still, Bre can't seem to drop the perfect act around Ria. Even Ria sees Bre as perfect. Bre won't let her see the flaws. She doesn't want Ria to leave her, so if she has to act

perfect, she will. When Bre pulls up to Ria's house, she quickly checks herself in the mirror. She made sure there wasn't a hair out of place before she honked her car horn and opened the window to yell out at her friend.

Slowly she sees her friend come out of the house and turn around to lock the house. Once Ria turns back around, Bre can't help but notice how Ria doesn't have to try to be perfect. Ria has a loving family and can act however she wants, and nobody would judge. Of course, Bre was jealous that Ria had the life she wanted, but Bre couldn't show that, so she put a smile on her face and unlocked the door so her friend could get in.

"Heyyy," Bre said, flashing her smile at her friend.

Ria throws her bag in the back of the car and then sits down. Bre couldn't help but notice how tired her friend looked. While Ria did her seat belt, a wave of worry rushed through Bre.

"Hey, are you okay," Bre says, concerned.

"Yeah, sorry, just really tired. I stayed up late last night.

"Are you sure that is it?"

RIA - 6:50 a.m.

Bre never would understand what Ria was going through. Ria had to pick up extra shifts at the market and any side jobs she could. On top of that, keep straight As for school. Bre doesn't have to do that. Bre's parents can throw money at any problem, and everything would be okay. Ria looked out of the window and let her head rest on it. She was so tired.

"Yeah, I'm sure" She could see her friend's concerned face glancing over at her while trying to keep her eyes on the road.

Ria felt bad about lying, but she couldn't tell Bre. Bre would look at Ria differently, and that's the last thing she wants. Everyone looks at Ria like a sad case. The school counselor, when they are talking about colleges; Her dad tells Ria that she doesn't need more jobs and will handle them. Ria didn't want Bre to look at her like she needed help. So Ria didn't say how her family needed more money to support her or even get into college. Ria let her mind slip from her head as she watched the houses and trees go by in the window.

3:05

"Can you work from 6 - 11 today? We need you."

"Yeah, sure," I text back.

Ria felt relieved that she could have extra hours working but was also stressed. Today was a long day, and she was supposed to spend the rest of the day at Bre's house. Ria and Bre have not been spending much time together as they used to. Ria has been too busy to even hang out with her friend. So when Bre asked to hang out today after she found out, she didn't have work today. Bre was so excited and made a plan and kept talking about it. Ria felt bad she had to cancel but had to work too, and if she didn't show up, what if her boss didn't give her any more extra hours?

"Hey Bre"

"Yeah???" Ria just had to rip off the band-aid and say it

"I can't hang out with you today," She said super fast

"What"

"I said I can't hang out with you today" Suddenly, the car stops, and everyone jerks forward.

"WHAT? But we promised."

"I know, but I need to work tonight."

"But today was supposed to be your day off, you promised," Bre whined. All of a sudden, a rush of anger fled through Ria. Her hands went clammy, and her vision blurred. It was like time stopped for a second. The trees seemed to slow down, and her once calm demeanor slowly drifted away. All Ria could think about was how Bre would never understand what Ria had to go through. Bre had a perfect life. She would never have to worry about getting a scholarship and money to support her through life. Bre could have terrible grades and probably could still get into a good college. Ria was jealous. But how could Bre ever understand? Ria never said anything, and at that moment, Ria wasn't only mad at Bre but herself. How could she be mad at Bre if she could not tell her why she needed to work?

Bre - 3:15 p.m.

Ria went quiet after that moment. Bre was too disappointed to try to talk this out. So Bre drove in a deadly silence that felt like you could cut it with a knife. When they made it to Ria's house, Bre turned over. She had to fix this somehow.

"I'm sorry that I was upset but can't you just skip work just once."

Suddenly, the air in the car felt colder, and Bre felt a deep regret in her stomach for something she didn't know yet.

"YOU JUST DON'T GET IT YOU HAVE THE PERFECT LIFE DON'T YOU, YOU DONT EVER HAVE TO WORRY"

Bre felt her face go white. She looked at her friend in shock. How could her friend think that? Does her friend believe she has a perfect life? She can't even get her parents to say hi to her in the morning. While Ria had a loving family, Bre would be lucky if she could even get her

parents to look her way. Ria had the life Bre so desperately wanted. Ria has a family to come home to, while Bre walks into her house to see it empty.

"What???" Bre says, confused. With that, she could see the color drain from Ria's face.

"Where is this coming from?" Bre asks.

"Just forget about it."

"No I'm not just gonna forget about it, and move one. Do you really think I have a perfect life" With Ria not answering, Bre knew her answer. "You do, don't you?" Before Ria could even answer, Bre started talking again. "You don't even know what I go through."

"Yeah and what's that"

"I have no one in my life that cares about me. You do! So what if my family has money? That doesn't change the fact I go home, and no one is there to greet me. I had a bad day. No one is there to make it better. So sorry if I'm a little upset that I was finally looking forward to having someone there tonight and then canceled on me" Bre felt like a weight was lifted off her shoulders. Wow, she needed to say that. "I'm sorry," she says quietly.

"No I am. I am just so stressed with having to work and I was jealous that you don't have to work everyday."

"I can't believe we have never sat down and talked about what's happening. How can we be best friends if we don't talk?"

Silence filled the car again. Both girls were deep in thought.

Ria broke the silence. "Do you feel like you have no family?"

"Yeah"

"But we can fix that thought because you have a loving family because I'm right here."

Artist's Statement

In my story, I chose two characters, one name is Bre, and the other name is Ria. Bre seems to live the perfect life, but she feels her family doesn't care about her. While Ria lives with a family who loves her, she has to work on everything in her life. Both girls are jealous of each other because they don't know what the other is facing.

The story faces the essential question of families because the story is about how people could seem like they have a perfect life, but it might not always be that way. You never know what's happening in someone else's family and life. It also hints that people who aren't blood-related can be family or even more family than someone. At the end of the story, Ria tells Bre that she does have a family in Ria.

The Snapshot I chose was when Ria was angry, and she felt this unfamiliar rage go through her. So I decided to slow down her surroundings and let her go into her head and confront her feelings, like why am I feeling this and why am I mad? But in the end, it seems like she held it together, then broke. So I chose this to show how she feels rather than just stating it. The Dramatic Irony is in the way that, through the beginning, Bre and Ria both don't know what each other is dealing with or how they live their lives. We understand how they both feel, but they don't. So when they tell each other stuff that isn't true, the reader is like, "oh, they are gonna regret that," or they will have more feelings and emotions about the situation.

There are thought shots throughout the story, especially when the characters are in their heads. The thought shot often happens at the story's beginning when you get introduced to Bre, and it's just her for a bit. Then, you get into her feelings and understand her more.

The motif in this story is the feeling of jealousy. Both characters experience it against each other. It talks about how they are jealous of other's life. It helps to have more emotion because if they didn't feel jealous, maybe all of these feelings wouldn't happen. Also, I think it's a natural human feeling, and it wouldn't be realistic if they didn't feel this.

I added dialogue when it would naturally come up. Like when Ria came into the car, they would talk. I also added it to show how they lie about their feelings and keep this mask up to keep them safe. If I just said that, you might not fully understand what I'm saying, so I used examples like when Ria acted like everything was fine when she was tired.