

Karmic Reflection

By Victor Waite

A poodle woman irritates the wrong shop keeper, who allows the forces of karma to take their course

Content Warning: This story is intended for Mature readers and contains a Female Poodle, a Female Kitsune, Poor Customer Practices, Mild Hypnosis, Soft Oral Vore, Unwilling Prey, a Monster, and Endosoma.

The poodle slammed on her breaks, scattering the contents of her car across its floorboards. A shrill squeal rang between the buildings lining the small-town street, drawing the pensive gazes of everyone on the sidewalks. The parrot in the crosswalk dropped his bag and futility braced himself against impending impact, but luckily, fate smiled upon him. The abrasive screech diminished as the car slid across the road, tires locked, bleeding away just enough energy to stop short of the bird. The sporty car lurched as its suspension snapped to rest, shaking the pocket mirror in the driver's hand free and shattering it against the floor. Both the parrot and the dog sat frozen in the moment as panic subsided, and rage blazed in the poodle's eyes. She rolled down her window and leaned out, then unleashed an unholy string of obscenities. A multi-minute rant poured from her wrathful lips as she attacked the unlucky pedestrian, drawing looks of disgust from everyone in earshot. A few bystanders rushed to the avian's aid as the verbal assault continued, and others shouted back and cut off the vile tide pouring from the canine's mouth. She clammed up as the situation backfired, then turned her nose up and drove off in a huff. It was only after she reached the next traffic signal she realized she'd broken her favorite mirror, and the bitterness within welled up once more. Disgust etched itself across her muzzle while she figured out how to replace it, which noticeably faded when a sign caught her eye. She parked in front of Endra's Web with a groan of resignation, then gathered her things and walked inside.

The distinct scent of ancient books and restored metals engulfed her as she closed the door, and she scanned the shop floor for employees. A cursory glance found none, so she approached the counter and tapped her foot with impatience. The percussive clicks failed to attract help, and in the absence of a bell to ring, she simply called out for service. A faint rustle toward the back of the odd shop rose in response, but not fast enough. She shouted a second time, louder than the first, and her brow furrowed in indignation when she went unheeded again. The middle-aged canine took in a breath to announce herself a third time, until a series of clicks drew her attention. She nearly jumped out of her skin when she turned and found a kitsune standing behind the counter, almost as annoyed as her.

"Can I help you," Endra asked flatly.

The poodle attempted to hide just how much she startled her, but failed. "I'm not sure, *can* you?"

Her quintet of tails swayed with obvious irritation. "As manager and owner, I should hope so."

"Good," the poodle pointedly replied. "I'm in need of a new mirror, and I hoped that you might have one that suits my tastes."

"Let me see what I got."

Endra sauntered back into the depths of her store, swaying her broad hips as she did

so. The poodle buried her face in her paw and questioned why thought stopping in a hole-in-the-wall would pay off. The shop was dank and brimming with gods know what from gods know where, giving the vibe of a creepy cursed store from a movie. Her disdain grew when she examined the overflowing shelves from a safe distance. There was no clear rhyme or reason to their presentation, and she wondered how anyone found anything in such disorder. She started to cut her perceived loss and walk out, but the sound of the kitsune's return stayed her feet. The poodle watched with sharp disinterest as Endra placed a wooden crate on the counter, then spread its content out. A collection of small hand mirrors covered the surface by the time she finished, and to the poodle's surprise, a few looked appealing. None stood out from the others,, however, and she bluntly told the kitsune so.

"This is all there is," Endra sighed. "If you don't see something you like, you're welcome to search elsewhere."

The poodle's nose wrinkled at her tone, and she called upon the vileness within to unleash another verbal lashing, until something still in the box caught her eye. "This isn't all of them," she accused. "There's still one more in the box. Let me see it!"

Endra closed her eyes, breathed in, and opened them again as she realized her mistake. "That one is part of this collection, and it's not for sale. It's-"

The poodle practically shrieked. "If you have it here, you must intend to sell it. It's my right as a master consumer to see *all* of your wares so that *I* can make an informed decision."

"Believe me, I want to, but I can't. It wouldn't be ethical-"

"I don't care!" she screeched.

Endra stared at her blankly, the wheels turning in her head, then relented. "Fine, since you asked so *nicely* for it."

The kitsune's dripping sarcasm was lost on the poodle. She simply wanted her demands met.

Endra reached into the crate, retrieved the mirror, and inspected it. A sheet of paper taped to its front protected the reflective surface, but the rest of it was exposed. She passed it to the poodle and started to explain that the paper was not to be removed just yet, but the sound of tearing interrupted her. The kitsune squeezed her brow and let the canine gaze into it without argument. Based on how quickly it enraptured her, Endra thought a lecture would do her little good anyway. The poodle held the mirror to the light and reveled in its beauty, running her fingers over the braided silverwork that comprised its frame. It looked to be a jeweler's mastercraft, and she struggled to figure out how she survived up to that point without such beauty in her life. She couldn't tear her eyes or her hands away from it, but she addressed Endra regardless.

"How much?"

"Not for sale," the kitsune answered flatly. "It's not a money thing, it's a saf-"

"I'll give you twenty for it."

"Please, it's worth more than that in scrap alone."

"Not twenty, twenty thousand."

That gave Endra pause. "Look, I can't. It's not about the money."

The poodle finally broke her gaze with the mirror and locked eyes with the kitsune.

The fur on the back of Endra's neck when her eyes darted about the room, then widened with action. The poodle reached into her purse and hurled a canister of powder makeup at Endra, catching her by surprise despite her intuition. The impact opened the container on her muzzle and covered her face, bringing her to her knees in a coughing fit. The canine sprinted out of the store as the kitsune rubbed her face, and the squall of tires announced her hasty departure. Endra's eyes blazed with arcane light once she recovered, and the powder lifted from her pelt in hundreds of tiny beads. She rose and considered giving chase, but ultimately decided against it. There was no one else in the shop, and leaving it unattended was as dangerous as it was irresponsible. She shrugged and levitated the remaining mirrors from her counter, then delicately guided them back into the box. The thought of chasing after the woman to at least warn her bubbled up in her mind, but she brushed that aside too. There was no reason for the poodle to start listening to her now, and she had a feeling she'd be learning a lesson soon anyway.

The poodle's heart pounded as she burst into her house and slammed the door behind her. She turned and latched a bevy of locks, then leaned back against the door and slumped down against it. Her mind cleared and her pulse calmed, and the weight of her actions finally sank in. The poodle clutched her prize to her chest while she drove herself mad wondering if she'd been pursued, but those racing thoughts faded away when she looked down and beheld the mirror. She found a previously unknown pattern etched into its twisting bands, a detailed invisible in the dingy shop's poor light. The canine assured herself she did the kitsune a favor by liberating the trinket to be appreciated, and she picked up and wandered into her bedroom. The seed of her self-feeding confidence bloomed as she dwelt on her rationalizations, and it wasn't long before she blamed Endra for turning her into a thief. The canine glanced into its reflective surface and subconsciously tightened her grip. She knew it wasn't possible, but her reflection looked even more gorgeous than usual in it. She posed before her wall-mounted mirror to test her theory, and it seemed to hold true. The small accessory showed her in a far more flattering light despite being in the same room, and she took a moment to revel in her own radiance before finally

setting it down and leaving. Her stairs creaked under her feet as she walked to her kitchen, where she prepared a pot of warm tea to help her relax yet more.

The water seemed to take ages to boil, and she filled the time by browsing the internet on her tablet. The poodle idly thumbed through article after article, wandering in search of something that remotely interested her. Boredom eventually overtook even that desire, however, and she settled on a piece discussing the latest fashion trends. She skimmed it for anything she could use herself, and her mind gradually drifted back to her ill-gotten trinket. The canine soon caved and dashed up to her bedroom and back with the mirror, then swiped through to an article that discussed facial exercises. The canine was not to the point she needed to fight off wrinkles, but it never hurt to get an early start, and she'd take any excuses to admire her glorious visage. All manner of expressions crossed her muzzle as she tested the author's regimen, but she quickly lost interest and returned to basking in her own beauty. The dark centers of her eyes glittered like the night sky, and the rest of her features neared a perfection her peers couldn't conceive. She traced the curve of her muzzle and stuck her tongue out, gladly feeding her ego as she further quantified her flawlessness. She only fell from her trance when the tea maker's alarm went off, and she struggled to pull herself away to address it. The canine poured herself a cup as if nothing happened, then leaned back and enjoyed her afternoon.

The poodle went about the rest of her day tending to household matters, though the mirror never left her side. She constantly took breaks to admire herself and check if her chores diminished her beauty, and each time she was delighted to find the opposite. The years seemed to peel away from her face as the day went on, bringing her expression back to her early twenties. Her cheeks glowed with rosy energy by the time the sun went down, and she felt better than she had in years as she got ready for bed. The sprightly woman changed into her night clothes and sat down on the edge of her mattress, then held the mirror up for another round of facial exercises. She focused long enough to get through a full cycle, but her enthusiasm flagged when the figure in the mirror stopped following her expressions. A lance of panic spiked through her, but she didn't act on it right away. Instead, she angled the mirror around herself, testing just how far the incongruence went. Fear welled in her chest when it went well beyond natural expectations, and she openly screamed when a hand emerged from its other side.

She dropped the mirror and ran when an arm pushed free from the reflected world, and a set of monstrous shoulders followed. The poodle returned with an umbrella and threatened to beat the creature back, until it pulled the last of itself through the narrow portal. "Calm down darling," it rumbled. "You're ugly when you're angry."

She shouldn't have been surprised that a creature from her mirror looked exactly like her, but that didn't make it any less unsettling. "Get back in there, or I'll put you there myself."

The creature's laugh came out bright and metallic at first, then tuned up until it matched hers. "I'd love to see you try."

The poodle hesitated, then set her grip on her improvised weapon and charged. Unfortunately, her lack of fighting experience rapidly revealed itself.

The mirror friend easily side stepped and tripped the poodle, sending her sprawling across the soft carpet. The impact stunned her, and the creature seized its chance. The beast snatched her by the ankles and lifted her up, letting her dangle in its grip. "You have no idea how long I've waited for someone like you to come along and free me."

The poodle struggled and kicked in its grip, but failed to loosen it at all.

"I'm starving."

A chill ran down the poodle's spine and a burst of adrenaline followed. She kicked with all of her strength and caught the beast on its chin, but the blow had little effect. It simply grabbed her other ankle and held them together, then lowered her a few inches to the floor. The canine's cheek rubbed across the carpet as the creature aligned her feet with its mouth, then stuffed her toes into its muzzle. The cold burst of saliva sent another jolt through the poodle, renewing her sense of urgency and granting a second wind. Unfortunately, she lacked the leverage to make use of it. She could only twist in the beast's cold grip as it slurped over her calves and thighs, forming a pronounced bulge in its throat. The mirror fiend simply moved its hold lower and clasped her hips in response, leaving only her arms free. The canine let loose a flurry of blind punches against anything in reach, but again, the strange being's hide was too tough. Her stamina flagged by the time its chilling tongue reached her belt line, and it crammed her hands down along side her to seal her fate. A look of smug satisfaction played across its eyes when it took its next gulp, and a devilish smile curled the corners of its mouth when the poodle apparently accepted her fate. In reality, she simply couldn't process what was happening. Clearly she'd fallen asleep and slipped into some bizarre nightmare.

She clung to her rationalizations as the creature's lips climbed up her chest, staunchly ignoring her fate. It seemed to lament the loss of her fighting spirit, but did nothing to revive it. It didn't savor the flavor of her pelt either, bringing the end of its muzzle to hers in a matter of seconds. Its fang's, her fangs, framed the canine's vision before it closed its mouth, plunging her in silvery darkness. A loud gulp echoed around her and drug her nose to the entrance of its throat, and another sent her sliding into it's churning belly. Little no light filtered through its otherworldly hide, but the dim rays that did reflected all around its reflective interior walls. The creature braced itself against her bed and slumped onto its rear, then relished in its newfound freedom and fullness. One of its hands rubbed along the vast swell of its middle, and its eyes shut in concentration as it peered into its victims memories. Stealing her appearance was simple enough for a creature that does so by nature, but copying behaviors and mannerisms was another task entirely. Disgust played across its muzzle as it browsed her encounters from earlier that day, inviting it to divert its attention to anything else for the moment. The creature had plenty of time to figure out its new role, and it only had to do so long enough to find a more favorable host.

A short distance away, the dropped mirror's surface regained its lost sheen, briefly showing the poodle in the creature's stomach before the room's reflection took its place. The creature sensed the change and it plucked the mirror from the floor, then tucked it away in her night stand and crawled into her bed. It's stomach sloshed and shook with its movements, throwing off its balance until it flopped onto its side and went to sleep. A shimmering aura overtook it shortly after, bending light to conceal the heavy bulge in its middle.

Tomorrow, it would begin impersonating.