

Switched- A tale of
two girls- two lives

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Sarah stood in silence, gazing at the crowd in the market while brushing her silky blonde hair.” These people had everything a person could ask for – parents who loved them and bought them everything they wanted, good food, good clothes and the money to celebrate festivals but still they cry ,why? . They don’t even understand the meaning of hunger. How it haunts you every time! They have never felt the fear that people like me go through every day! “. She thought. She shuffled inside her polybag and took out the box which contained her collection of buttons – It was the only thing that she was proud of. It was Christmas Eve and most of the children in the town were pestering their parents, asking them to buy beautiful decorations for their Christmas trees. Sarah did not decorate her Christmas tree for she had none. She wiped her tears after crying for almost an hour. She left for home. As soon as she reached her home (a small cottage in a forest), she saw her only family, her aunt, lying on the bed. Her mother had died when she was 3 years old. She could feel the agony of her aunt. “What happened, Aunt Nancy?” Sarah asked. “Don’t you see, I am ill. “She replied. “Should I call the doctor, Aunt?” “Who will give us the money to pay him?” Her aunt replied angrily. Sarah knew soon the disease would take her only family away from her. “If I sell my collection of buttons, I can save my aunt. “ She thought. She went back home, took her collection, went to the shopkeeper and sold it. She got only 4\$ for the entire collection. She thought that this would at least help her in paying the doctor’s fees. She called the doctor and went to church to pray. “ Dear Jesus , I know that festivals are not meant for people like me .I’ve never asked you to give me anything because you already sent your angel (My aunt) to take care of me .But today I’ll ask for a thing . Please don’t take my aunt away from me. I’ll repay it.

Please send me your address, I 'all work for you and in return you just have to keep my aunt happy. But Jesus, I'll just ask you one question today, do we not have the right to celebrate festivals? Is Santa Claus only a dream for us? Is a luxurious life only possible for children who have rich parents? Amen "She finished her prayer and returned home. Her aunt was sleeping so she did not wake her up. She slept on her side of the bed. When she woke up she found her aunt in good health. They thanked Jesus. Suddenly, Sarah noticed the box which contained her collection. She opened it and was surprised to see her collection safe in her hands.

It Happened That Night

"Nancy, go and get my Baby Princess for the party. I want her first look to be in front of all our guests. "Stella Donahue told her daughter's nurse "But ma'am you should see the baby princess first." Nancy replied. "If you do not bring my daughter for the party in 20 seconds,

you're fired!" Nancy entered the Nursery She looked at her disliked client's precious, beautiful and perfect daughter. "Wow! You're very pretty. That cruel mother of yours does not deserve a girl so pretty.

Your parents haven't seen you yet. How about we give my niece to them? Saying that she is the Baby Princess. At least my niece would be brought up in a huge house with lots of servants to take care of her.

One day, she would be the princess of Rome". Nancy picked up her niece. She had a dark complexion and was a brunette. Nancy went to the party which was being held at a hotel near the hospital. She told Stella Donahue that the Baby Princess was not very beautiful. Stella was upset for a while but she cheered up and accepted her daughter not knowing that the real princess would be brought up in a house which would face financial crisis. So, the girls were exchanged. While Sarah was brought up in the home of Anne Martin, a widow who didn't earn much, Rachael was brought up in a huge house .It was made sure all her wishes came true.Rachael grew up to be a brand conscious , pampered girl who didn't realize the importance of hunger, Sarah grew up to be a caring, hungry girl for whom Anne Martin was everything.

Rachael Donahue- 10 Months Later

"Mom! It's Christmas today and I have already selected my gifts at Duncan's toy chest. I used my Credit Card but I forgot to sign the bill. Send somebody to sign it" Rachael Donahue shouted from her room. "Okay, honey". Her mother replied. "Nora, send Princess Rachael's new secretary to pay the bill". Catherine Montgomery was Rachael's new secretary. She took the credit card and went to Duncan's Toy Chest.

“Excuse me; I’m here to pay the bill for Rachael Donahue. How much would that be?” She asked the Clerk.

“That would be \$5000 only”. The Clerk replied. “That girl spent \$5,000 on toys! Such a spoiled girl.”She thought. She returned to Donahue Palace with all the toys. When she reached the Palace, she heard whispers coming from the Queen’s room. “And very soon Rachael will be the queen of this country. I am thinking of hiring a poor child to come and play with her. Of course, the child would be cleaned and given a dress before entering my palace. Do you know a child who can play with Rachael?”Stella said. “Your Highness, do you remember Baby Princess’ old Nurse?”Nora said. “Nancy? I do remember her but she would be too old for the job.” “Ma’am, Nancy has a niece who is as old as Baby Princess; she needs a job for Nancy is ill. I’ve heard that she is an honest little girl.” “Very well, Nora but I want Rachael to perform with her new friend on her birthday. It would be a great occasion for some charity. You will prepare the performance and teach them” “Ma’am, but it is 25th October already. I only have 32 days. Baby Princess’ birthday is on 27th November!” “If I get even one complaint from Rachael, you’re fired!” Ella went back home after the conversation.

A Sneak Peek into Old Nancy’s Mind

Nancy lay on the bed. The disease was killing her from inside. She knew that she would die very soon. It was essential to do a good deed. No better deed than giving back Stella Donahue her daughter. But, if she would do this then her darling niece would be sent back to live in this house. "The good deed should be one that makes people happy. Let my niece be happy for I can't give her the happiness that Stella Donahue can." She thought. "Where is that annoying child now? Sarah, get in here right now!" Nancy shouted. "Yes, aunty." Sarah replied. "I am not well and look at you, enjoying yourself in the town. What have you been doing all day? How much money did you earn today?" Nancy asked with rage. Her face was bright red. "I went to a Construction Site. They needed labor there. I worked for today and earned \$5." Sarah replied. "Don't act as if you're doing a favor for me by working. I took care of you when your mother died. If it had not been for me, you wouldn't have had a house to live in .Be thankful to me. Now make some dinner and serve it to me" Nancy was pleased with herself. She had made such a good servant of the Baby Princess. She didn't care how badly Sarah cried that night.

Old Nancy Speaks

I am Nancy and I just came to tell you that don't believe whatever the book tells you. I treated that stupid (sorry, wonderful) Sarah with lots of love. I am going to exchange the new prince of Iowa –Charles Bartowski with my nephew Pierre. I need help in doing so. Anybody who helps me will get a free picture with Rachael Donahue. I did a good thing by making my niece the Irish Princess. Sarah didn't deserve to be brought up in a house like that. I want to see Stella Donahue's face when she realizes that she has been raising her maid's (my sister's) daughter. It would be a slap on her face. I'll wait till Rachael gets the throne. As soon as she becomes the queen, I'll tell Rachael and kick Stella out of the house. That would be fun. People say I am like the Evil Queen in Snow white and I'm proud of it. Thank God, there is no prince in this story. Or is there? You won't know unless you read the whole book. So keep reading.

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