

**Title:** Mirror Worlds

**Logline:** After opening and traveling through a gateway between worlds, mother and son team, Penny and Albie navigate the fantastical Mirror Worlds trying to get back home.

**Outline:** Mothers... Who needs them?

Certainly not Albie (12). His mum, Penny (48) does not understand anything. She is this head in the clouds inventor working on the top secret Mirror World project for the Government, but she does not understand important things like, you know, making the perfect tonka bean croissant. So what if she is trying to invent a key for the multiverse, or Mirror Worlds, or whatever she calls it? It doesn't really exist anyway. She is so annoying. The key even looks like a broken old box camera. How is that useless thing going to work?

But, what happens if the Mirror Worlds do exist? And, what happens if Albie trips through a portal in thin air and gets stuck in them, with, of all people, his Mum? What happens if they have no idea how to get home?

On their quest to get back to those they know and love including Albie's Dad, Terry and Sister, Marie, Penny and Albie encounter mind bending worlds like those without *flavour*, *sport*, *money*, or even *sleep*. All the worlds are utterly bizarre. The world without flavour is *greyscale*. The world without sleep exists without *daytime*. Some worlds are like *Coraline* where threats lurk in every corner. Some are like *Monsieur Hulot*, where a laugh is only a moment away.

But what is really going on in all these bonkers worlds? Within each episode Albie and Penny have two interrelated goals. The first is getting out of the Mirror World they are stuck in, hoping to get home. The second is righting the *wrong* of the Mirror World they are in. Just like in *Quantum Leap*, those aims are intertwined. By righting a *wrong* like creating sleep in a world without night-time, or a fantastic croissant in a world without flavour, or inventing football in a world without sport, Penny and Albie can create a gateway out of the Mirror World they are in. The problem is they never know where they are going next.

For Albie, entering the Mirror Worlds gives him the chance to show what he is made of. He revels in the danger, risk taking, challenges and adventure. He and Penny are always running up against versions of his family and friends, but those familiar people are often so different in the Mirror Worlds. Terry, in the world without flavour, calls the police on Albie and Penny because they are so odd, but Marie helps him make the croissants that create the gateway to the next world. They need to find out who is friend and who is foe in every world they visit. Nothing is ever certain.

The Mirror Worlds versions of Penny and Albie can never be in the same world as our Penny and Albie. This means that the pattern of life goes on as normal. School exists and Albie has to go. It's so unfair, but nothing is more likely to attract the authorities than if Albie is a truant. Penny also has to go to work and more often than not, they have to live with the twisted and unfamiliar versions of Terry and Marie.

But, how did they get into the Mirror World in the first place? Albie and Penny had a stinking row and in his fury, Albie accidentally activated the key. They do not know that they are not going to get home until they sort that row out. Penny has always been cold and distant with Albie, which has driven a wedge between them. That needs to end, now.

At the end of Series One, stimulated by the trials and tribulations they have faced together, Penny and Albie do resolve the problems at the core of their relationship. They learn to respect one another and finally return to our world. They are reunited with their friends and family, but they are irrevocably changed. The Mirror Worlds is full of injustice. After witnessing that, how can Penny and Albie ignore it and quietly go back to their old life?

They are going back. This time though, the family are going together. Little do they know, their adventure has only just begun. They have only scratched the surface of the mysteries of the Mirror Worlds. Now, they are going to get some answers.

### **Character breakdown**

Albie Stamp (12): Albie is a precociously talented chef. He loves to take risks when obtaining ingredients, either by foraging or even by obtaining ingredients illegally. This gets him into loads of trouble. He is brave, resourceful and a great friend, but can be reckless. He values himself on what others think of him, particularly his food. The Mirror Worlds compel him to address his value beyond his obsession with cooking, as well as forcing him to address his troubled relationship with his Mum. In Series One, by reaching not only his aims in returning from the Mirror Worlds, but also by solving some of his issues with his Mum, he unlocks his own wider potential. Most likely to say: "When we get home, we will open the best fusion restaurant in the multiverse."

Penny Stamp (48): Penny is a genius, but her genius ends up endangering her son and splitting up her family. Now, she is always on the go, running from her temporary life to find home. She is clever, but frightened, trying everything to protect her son, but scared of letting him down. By solving some of her issues with her son and escaping the Mirror Worlds, she can forgive herself for not feeling like a good enough mother despite her genius. Most likely to say: "It is only temporary."

Terry Stamp (46): Albie's Dad, Terry is a house husband, who looks after everyone else, but has lost track of himself a long time ago. If he looked in the mirror long enough, he might not recognise himself. He thinks everyone is more important than him. Most likely to say: "Penny's the genius."

Marie Stamp (15): Albie's sister, Marie wants to be a professional footballer. She thinks the rest of her family are not serious enough and it drives her nuts. Why is it so important to create the best dish or solve quantum puzzles? Why can't they all just focus? Most likely to say: "I've got this."

Other characters include, Albie's best-friend, dreamer Ollie, the terrifying perfectionist, Chef Manu and Ollie's dream girl, the super lovely unless you cross her, Sandra Smoffee.

There are deep-rooted similarities between the Mirror World versions of the characters Penny and Albie meet in the Mirror Worlds and those they know from home. Despite this, the superficial differences, noted above, cause tremendous conflict between Penny and Albie and the Mirror Worlds versions of their family and friends.

### **Example Episodes:**

Variants – Full colour, Albie and Penny appear in a greyscale world. Albie holds an electronic key, which is not working. They meet a grey version of Albie’s dad, Terry, who calls the police on the colourful intruders. Albie and Penny flee from the police. After a chase, Penny and Albie are arrested and separated, not before Albie manages to hide the key.

The Perfect Croissant – Albie and Penny are sentenced to *integration into society* within the greyscale world. Albie meets a version of Marie, who cries all the time. Ignoring all rules, Albie manages to retrieve the key, but it’s still not working. Albie needs to eat something good in this world without flavour or he thinks he is going to go mad. Cobbling together the ingredients, Albie makes the perfect croissant with Marie’s help. After Penny and Albie eat the croissant, the key opens a way out of the world. Meanwhile, in the flavourless world Marie eats a croissant. The grey world is suffused with colour.

No Ball Games – Albie and Penny emerge into a world without sport. Everyone fights all the time. Like the wild west, anarchy and mayhem abounds. Penny and Albie have to get safe first and foremost, but once they are safe they need to work out how to get out. What would Marie do? Probably organise a game of football. It’s time for Albie to try and make some friends to organise the big match. Just keep dodging the fists.

Other episodes in Series One: The first series of c. 8 episodes will contain episodes in worlds without *money* (a world with slavery), *sleep* (a world without a sun where people act like machines) and *childcare* (a world where people age backwards and children are left to their own devices) and episodes in the *real* world for the set up and resolution. In general, Penny and Albie will visit one Mirror World per episode, but this is not fixed. Throughout the series, Albie and Penny are forced to deal with their own relationship whilst uncovering the injustices and problems they fight in the Mirror Worlds.

**Introduction to the Extract:** Mad-cap inventor, Penny (48) is subsumed by her work trying to invent the mechanical key to open the multiverse or ‘Mirror Worlds’. Inveterate risk-taker and preternaturally talented chef, Albie (12), meanwhile, is so focussed on the perfect Tonka Bean croissant that he is prepared to do almost anything to get the money together to buy the best ingredients.

Their relationship is a ticking time-bomb, but when Albie and Penny have their first pre-adolescent barney, things go in a direction neither of them thought possible. In the ensuing argument Penny’s Mirror World key is activated, opening the gateway to a parallel existence. Before Penny can stop him, Albie falls through the gateway and emerges full colour into a greyscale playground from thin air. Penny, also full-colour, bursts in a moment after him. The gateway slams shut behind them and, like that, the key stops working. Neither Penny, nor Albie have any idea why.