

The Mirror Rule

Rey Kristoff Suan



In a quiet, shadowy town, every household follows a strict and unbreakable rule: never look into a mirror after the clock strikes midnight. Heavy black sheets are carefully draped over every reflective surface before the day ends to keep the darkness at bay.



As the clock ticks past 11:59 PM, the living room mirrors are shrouded in thick fabric. The townsfolk know the terrifying consequence of breaking this rule, for the things trapped in the glass are waiting for a chance to break free.



The night is dead silent and bitterly cold when Leo wakes up with a parched throat around 2:00 AM. Groggy and half-asleep, he stumbles out of his warm bed and wanders down the dark hallway toward the bathroom, completely forgetting the danger of the hour.



Leo flips the bathroom switch, flooding the small space with harsh, glaring light. That is when a sudden wave of dread washes over him as he realizes the heavy black sheet has slipped completely off the bathroom mirror.



He freezes instantly in his tracks, staring straight ahead into the glass with wide, terrified eyes. To his absolute horror, his reflection does not blink or mirror his stance, but instead stands completely independent of his movements.



The reflection presses both of its hands desperately against the cold glass surface, its mouth opening in a silent, agonizing scream. It waves its arms frantically, acting out a pantomime of pure, unadulterated terror.



Leo's heart pounds violently against his ribs as he tries to process the impossible sight before him. He initially thinks his duplicate is desperately trying to claw its way out into the real world.



Then, a horrifying detail stops him dead in his tracks and freezes the blood in his veins. The reflection is not looking at Leo at all, but is instead staring wildly past him.



Following the line of his reflection's terrified gaze, Leo realizes it is looking directly at the opaque shower curtain hanging right behind his own shoulder. A cold sweat breaks out across his skin as the silence in the room grows suffocatingly heavy.



Without making a sound, the reflection slowly forms words with its lips, mouthing a final, chilling warning that echoes in the quiet room: do not turn around.