



The Reflection's Ransom

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Elias discovers a heavy, ornate mirror hidden beneath a moth-eaten shroud in the deepest corner of the attic. The air around the glass feels unnaturally cold, smelling of ancient dust and stagnant water.



As he wipes the grime from the glass, Elias freezes when his reflection remains perfectly still. While he stares in confusion, the mirror-version of himself slowly tilts its head and offers a wide, toothy grin.



That evening, the reflection begins to move on its own, pacing back and forth within the silver frame. It taps rhythmically on the glass from the inside, the sound echoing through the silent, empty house.



Elias notices his favorite book is missing from his nightstand, only to see it lying on the floor inside the mirror's room. Every time he blinks, more of his belongings seem to cross the threshold into the reflected world.



Moonlight spills across the floor, revealing a trail of damp, grey footprints leading from the mirror to the foot of Elias's bed. He is alone in the room, yet he feels the weight of someone sitting on the mattress beside him.



Desperate to escape the gaze, Elias tries to drape a heavy quilt over the mirror, but the fabric is instantly shredded. Long, pale fingers emerge from the glass for a split second, clawing at the air before retreating into the shadows.



A raspy, distorted whisper begins to fill the room, sounding like dry leaves skittering across stone. The reflection calls his name, promising that the swap will be painless if he just stops fighting the inevitable.



During a violent thunderstorm, the mirror's surface ripples like a dark pond disturbed by a stone. The entity inside pushes its head and shoulders out of the glass, its eyes glowing with a predatory, hollow light.



An invisible force drags Elias toward the mirror, his feet sliding helplessly across the wooden floorboards. As his hands touch the glass, they sink into the cold, viscous surface as if it were nothing more than black ink.



The attic falls silent once more as the Elias in the room adjusts his collar and walks toward the stairs with a cold smile. Behind the glass, the true Elias beats his fists against the surface, his screams muffled by the silver veil.