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## A Reflection

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## **A Reflection**

*Alisha Rosenthal*

Daddy with his full beard and mustache holding me between two over-sized couch pillows running from room to room stopping at every mirror to ask me, "Who's that baby in the mirror?" or telling me, "Get that baby."

Mother, curling iron in one hand, cigarette in the other, squinting her eyes at my reflection as she listens patiently to what happened at school yesterday—for the third time—before asking me, "Is that a hickey on your neck?"

My little sister putting on her bike helmet and knee pads getting ready for the "Cassie Olympics 1992." This is where she puts a crutch, stack of books, an ice chest, and a stool in a line across the living room to hurdle them. She says, "Everybody watch!"

Myself, as I cry for Mother to help me fix my hair for the first day of high school, homecoming, prom, cheerleading tryouts, dances, talent shows, scholarship interviews, asking (when I was finally ready), "Do I look stupid?"

The girls' basketball team and all of the cheerleaders as we stand in front of the locker room mirror primping for the game, discussing all of the "fine guys" we saw walking in the gym—"Can I borrow your lipstick?" "Will you curl the ends of my hair?"

My two best friends, Kari and Sara, one on each side of me in their bridesmaid dresses, all of us holding back tears as they help me fit my veil on my Shirley Temple curls. "Something old, something new..."

Mother stepping in to make sure we're ok with a look on her face that says, "I wish I could smoke right now." And Daddy coming in to tell my reflection how beautiful it is. Without looking him in the eyes (because I can't), I say, "Thank you Daddy."

My husband peeking around the corner this morning to see what I'm doing as I stand in front of the mirror looking. On his face I see a look of anxiety, nervousness, and question. I smile at his reflection and say, "Not this time."