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## Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

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## Escape

Haley E. Foster

**Faster, that was the only coherent thought in the girl's mind as she stumbled blindly in the dark. Faster, her body ached, and the pain in her face was blinding.** Faster, a dull ache filled her shin, and she

realized with mixed horror and relief that she had finally reached the stairs leading up from the hellish place behind her. Faster, crawling up the stairs on numb hands and bruised knees, the too-large T and baggy sweatpants, stained with splashes of her own blood, hung loosely from her body, padding the sounds of her flesh connecting with the splintering wood beneath her. The clothes were not hers; she was in them when she woke up in this place, tied up and bleeding profusely from lashes on her abdomen. And they obviously did not belong to her sadistic captor; this fact only served to make her even more frightened. She was not the first. The boards groaned beneath her weight, making far more noise than she was comfortable with, though in that moment she couldn't bring herself to care. Faster, she felt her hands press against the rough wood of the door as she finally reached the top of the staircase, more adrenaline surging through her body. Feeling her way up the face of the door, she felt the cool metal handle sting at her hands; she grasped tightly to the doorknob and pushed. Nothing.

She pushed again, nothing. She pushed and pulled and beat at the door until her hands were bruised, hoping against hope that even in her weakened state the old wood would give. Nothing happened. She had been so close, after what must have been days down in the dark; she was so close. So close to a breath of fresh air and the sight of the sky, even if it was only for a moment.



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