

As I peered into the ancient mirror, a face stared back at me, one that was hauntingly familiar, yet utterly foreign. The mirror stood tall in the corner of my grandmother's attic, its silver frame twisted like vines that had grown wild and free. The glass was speckled with age, but the moment I looked into it, I felt pulled in, like the mirror had been waiting just for me. The face in the reflection blinked when I did, tilted its head the same way, but something about it was wrong. It was like staring at a photograph that had been left out in the rain, warped, smudged, and changed.

The attic was silent, thick with dust and secrets. Forgotten conversations clung to the mirror, as though the words of those who once stood before it had never truly gone away. I could almost hear voices, soft and scratchy, like leaves blowing across stone. As I leaned closer, the mirror beckoned me inwards. My reflection began to shift. The eyes grew darker, the smile too wide, like someone pretending to be me but not knowing how. My heart thudded like a drum in a deep cave.

Then I saw flashes in the mirror, not of me, but of places I didn't remember visiting and people I didn't know. A forest lit by a purple sky. A hallway lined with doors that had no handles. A girl with my face but bruises on her arms. Echoes of your reflection emerged, distorted, sliding across the glass like fog over a frozen lake. I couldn't look away. The mirror seemed to breathe, and I found myself stepping closer and closer until my nose almost touched the surface.

The attic around me faded as the glass rippled. I felt cold fingers brushing against mine, though no one was there. A voice whispered from deep inside the mirror, low and tired, "You left me." I wanted to run, but my feet were stuck to the ground, heavy as stone. The words from my after-class notes floated into my mind: "Nothing haunts us like the things we don't say." My throat tightened. I didn't know what I had left unsaid, but something inside me did. The mirror had found it.

I reached out and touched the glass. My fingers sank through it like water. The face in the mirror grinned and reached back. I felt a jolt, like lightning zipping through my arm, and everything turned dark for a moment. When my eyes opened again, the attic looked the same, but I didn't feel like me anymore. The air was too still, and I couldn't hear my own breath. I tried to step back, but my feet wouldn't move.

"Your reflection is not just what you see, it's what you hide," another quote had said. As I stood frozen before the mirror, watching someone else walk away in my body, I finally understood. The mirror hadn't just shown me my reflection, it had taken it. And now, I was the one behind the glass.