

The Hourglass of Blood

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Emily walked down the darkened hallway, lost, and started to wonder just where her friends had gone. *I should not even be here*, she thought to herself as she continued to walk down the old, creaking wooden floors. The air was damp, and the smell of mothballs filled her nose. She came across a portrait and brushed off the dust that covered it. Using her phone as a flashlight, she shined the light on the painting to look at what she had thought was going to be an ordinary piece of art that might bring her some comfort or, quite possibly, a laugh.

Instead, staring back at her was a face that belonged to what looked like a young woman, her mouth wide open as if yelling out of pure pain and blood trickling from her eyes. Suddenly the smell of blood filled the air, but as she noticed it, the odor had vanished as quickly as it came making her think if it was nothing more than her imagination. Real or not, it did not stop her from stepping back cautiously as this feeling of dread came slowly over her.

Oh my god, I need to get out of here

As Emily continued heading down the hall, now at a brisk pace, she started to worry about where Rachel was and if she was safe; however, she had also begun to grow annoyed in how it was her fault she was even in this mess to begin with. But a thought sat in the back of her head, that even though the painting looked like it had been there for years untouched, the woman looked a lot like Rachel.

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At the end of the hallway hanged a large rectangular mirror. The frame on it was a simple bronze design, nothing fancy, and although this house had been abandoned for years, it was clear that time had not touched it in the slightest.

Emily cautiously approached the mirror, and could see the dark circles under her eyes, and have even briefly blinded herself with the flashlight. Her mind began to waver, and soon enough, each passing moment felt as if it would be the last one. Emily wanted nothing more than to be home relaxing in bed thinking about what to eat for lunch for the next day, or if she even finished the homework for her Algebra class (she didn't). She sighed, defeated, and slowly turned around until a message caught her eye—a message written in blood.

Shining her light on it revealed a large red messy but legible text that said: “DON’T TURN AROUND OR YOU DIE!” Wondering just how the hell she could’ve missed such a message, she quickly laughed it off and chalked it up to being yet another joke Rachel had left for her since after all this entire trip was her fault.

Turn around and die? What kind of stupid game does she think this is?

She continued to laugh until the faint smell of blood began to hit her once more, and she slowly stopped and stared at the message.

There’s no way that can be blood, right?

Trying to laugh once again, Emily thought to herself that she must really be losing it by this point and leaned in closer to inspect the message. Up close, the smell was stronger than she realized it would be and covered her nose to try and block it out, but it was no use.

Maybe it’s just a really metallic paint?

She knew deep down that it wasn’t, but at this point, she was freaking out, she wanted nothing more than to run away from this place and never return.

“Okay, Rachel,” she said anxiously, “You can stop now!” In response, she heard nothing, and that alone scared her even more. Standing alone, the only thoughts going through her head was about her family and how they didn’t know the danger Emily had gotten herself into. It was more than enough to put her at ease knowing they weren’t freaking out about where she was, and that was all she needed to summon up the courage to turn around and run out the way she came.

I’ll get her back for this later, but I can’t take it anymore. I need to get out of here now!

She glanced at the message on the mirror, took a deep breath to calm herself and focus on the run towards salvation. This was it, she was ready to live! She spun around, but at the same moment came a loud crashing sound.

Wait, what?!

On the floor now among the mirror shards and dust, Emily was confused and trying to piece together what had just happened, when she saw a figure standing down the hall. Emily quickly reached out for the phone that was next to her but winced in pain and retracted her arm. Her right shoulder felt like it was on fire, and it was only getting worse with each passing second. Feeling over with her left hand, she felt a warm liquid and began to panic once again.

Moving her hand carefully to the side revealed that a large shard of the mirror had impaled her from when it shattered outwards. Now she was freaking out, the blood rushing away from her face causing her to gain a ghoul-like appearance.

When you're stabbed, you're supposed to take it out, right? No wait, you leave it in?

As she went back and forth in her mind arguing with herself, a gentle rattle was heard down the hall. Already staring into the abyss that is insanity, she decided to pull out the mirror shard that had made its home in her shoulder, and with that was a painful scream that echoed down the hallway and through the house. It then turned into a whimper accompanied by gasps: she was in pain and had tears running down her face. Unbeknown to her, the shard had cut through a major artery, and now the hourglass of blood had been turned over. Through blurry eyes, she reached for her phone and shined the light down the hallway. At first, Emily thought that she had seen nothing and thought the house was beginning to get to her, but after she wiped her tears, then it was clear she wasn't going crazy. The light reflected off a pair of eyes, which had come closer, and that was more than enough for her to recognize that it was Rachel.

Emily became so relieved she could jump out of joy, but the blood loss was beginning to get to her, so instead, she slowly stood up letting out a deep breath. However, as she tried to focus on Rachel, she wondered how close she was now as she didn't hear any footsteps. In fact, as she paid more attention to "Rachel," there were no footsteps at all. Shining the light down at her feet showed they were not touching the floor, raising the light showed not only the reflection of her eyes but of her entire face. At that moment, Emily lost all hope in escaping the place. She opened her mouth to yell, but all that came out was a small yelp, and her eyes were locked in disbelief at what was approaching her. It was no longer "Rachel," but something else entirely. Tonight, Emily was going to die, and she knew it too.

Emily was shaking almost uncontrollably by this point. She didn't want to shine the light anymore on "Rachel" but was too afraid to lose sight of her. At this point, the blood loss was beginning to get to her as she struggled to even hold her arm up, but "Rachel" was getting closer, and Emily found herself almost in a trance by the disfigured mass that used to be Rachel's face. Adrenaline had come and gone leaving her to only feel cold, which just added to her hopelessness; there was nothing left for her to do but collapse, and so she did just that. "Rachel"

came closer until she was face-to-face with Emily, who, by that point, was barely able to even stay awake. And so with her last moments on this Earth, she shone the phone at what used to be the face of her best friend, hoping she would see some comfort. As the light hit “Rachel,” it began to grin with its skinless lips that exposed razor-sharp teeth and soon opened its jaw past human proportions to envelop Emily’s head. The last thought that went through Emily’s mind wasn’t of her friends or even her family, but of what could’ve been if she had simply said no and instead stayed in bed. Of course, none of that mattered now, as the thought faded away as did her life when “Rachel” chomped off her head.

On this night of October 4th, 2015, Emily Fowler and Rachel Perez died.

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By morning, it was as if nothing had ever happened. The police were dispatched to check it out after the neighbors heard yelling but waited until morning as they simply chalked it up to some mischievous kids. The hallway was still messy, but there were no signs of the girls ever being there or the mirror ever exploding. Their bodies were never to be found, and since then, the police labeled it a cold case. However, on the wall hung the painting which now held two faces, both crying blood and bearing a disturbing similarity to Emily and Rachel, doomed to spend eternity in that hellish place.