

The Mirror in Room 103

Everyone at Ridgeway Boarding School knew that she needed to stay away from Room 103. It was the oldest room in the east wing, always locked, with a single dusty window and a strange coldness that crept through the cracks. The teachers said it was used for storage, but the students whispered that something terrible had happened there long ago.

Maya never believed the stories. Ghosts, curses, haunted mirrors, they were just ways for bored kids to scare each other. But on Halloween night, curiosity tugged at her. When the rest of her dorm was at the costume dance, Maya slipped away with a flashlight and the old brass key she had ‘borrowed’ from the janitor’s cart.

The east wing was silent. Her footsteps echoed down the hallway as she reached Room 103. The air felt heavier there, colder too, as if the room itself were holding its breath. Maya hesitated for a moment before sliding the key into the lock.

The door creaked open.

Dust floated in the beam of her flashlight. The room was empty except for a sheet-covered object leaning against the far wall. She tugged the sheet away and gasped. It was a tall antique mirror framed in dark wood, the kind you might see in an old mansion. The glass was spotless despite the dust everywhere else, and it reflected the light too clearly, sharply.

Her reflection stared back at her, but something was wrong. The edges of the mirror shimmered faintly, and her reflection seemed slower. When Maya tilted her head, the girl in the mirror took half a second longer to follow. She frowned and waved her hand. The reflection did the same, delayed, but not the same motion. The fingers moved at a slightly different angle, like they were pretending to be her and not doing a perfect job.

A chill crawled down her arms.

“Okay, creepy,” she muttered, stepping closer.

That was when the lights flickered. Her flashlight blinked once, twice, and went out completely. Darkness swallowed the room. Maya’s heart pounded as she smacked the flashlight until it sputtered weakly back to life, and she froze.

Her reflection was gone.

The mirror still showed the room behind her, but her own face had vanished. Only the faint outline of where she should have been stayed, like fog in glass. She rubbed her eyes and stepped backward, but the mirror image did not change. It just showed the empty room.

Then something moved.

In the reflection, the door behind her swung shut. But in the real room, it stayed open. Maya turned around, staring at the real doorway, then back in the mirror. In the reflection, a dark shape now stood beside the door. It was human sized, but its features were lost in shadow.

Maya's breath came in short bursts. "It is not real," she whispered. "It is just a trick. You are imagining it."

The shadow in the mirror tilted its head, the same way she had earlier. Then it started walking toward her inside the reflection, its movements silent and smooth, like a film running too slowly. Maya stumbled backward, but her body slammed into the cold glass. The mirror was right behind her now, though she had been standing three feet away only seconds ago.

She spun around. The surface rippled like water.

A hand pressed against the other side of the glass. Pale fingers, impossibly long, reached toward her reflection, no, toward her. Maya screamed and tried to run, but the mirror surface pulled like quicksand, sucking her hand in. The cold shot up her arm, freezing her blood. She pulled and kicked, but the glass had turned to liquid metal, clinging to her skin.

The shadow's face appeared next, pushing through the glass. Its features twisted into hers, her eyes, her mouth, but the smile was wrong. Too wide. Too hungry.

And then, everything went still.

The door to Room 103 creaked open two minutes later. The janitor peeked inside, frowning. He saw nothing but an old mirror and a fallen flashlight blinking on the dusty floor. He sighed, muttering about students sneaking where they should not.

He picked up the flashlight and glanced once into the mirror.

The reflection smiled back.

It was not his face smiling.

He froze, breath hitching as the unfamiliar grin widened, stretching impossibly across the glass. For a moment, it felt as if the room itself leaned in, waiting, silent, and heavy. Goosebumps prickled on his arms as he slowly backed away, unable to shake the feeling that something else watched from behind the gleaming surface.