

WHAT A DIFFERENCE THAT MIRROR MADE TO THEIR LIVES.....

This story starts with an old man. A poor old man who has spent the last few years mourning the death of his wife. She had died suddenly and it had taken him so completely by surprise that he didn't believe it until they had shown him her still, silent, pale body, lying lifelessly on a stretcher, oblivious to the world, gazing blankly at the ceiling.

According to the police force she had committed suicide, stabbing herself with a kitchen knife. They even showed him the neat stab-wound on her chest. It didn't make any sense to him, though- she had always been so happy- why pick now to end it all?

But he had gotten over it after a few years- or so people thought. Anyway, he now lived in a grimy, run-down village in what was, pretty much, the middle of nowhere, slowly dying of grief on the inside. He just got on with his miserable life, thinking more and more each day that he'd rather get on with dying a miserable death. But eventually one of his good friends decided to put a stop to this. He got the old man to clear out all of his wife's old things- leaving nothing behind so that he could move on. However, as the old man was looking through his attic space, he found something strange. A mirror! A full length golden framed one, the frame covered with beautiful scenes carved into it, and the reflective part so shiny standing out against the dust of the attic it seemed to shimmer. This he just couldn't bring himself to throw away. He was just putting it back when suddenly; a hoarse and rattling voice seemed to fill the room.

"Henry Delaine!" it croaked, "Gaze upon me once more! I shall reveal the truth!" It seemed to be coming from the mirror, and when he looked into it, he realised with a gasp that there was a face in it- not his own, well- not really. It was him, but in this picture of him he had a noose around his neck and his face was battered and bruised, his eyes were bloodshot, and he was grinning manically.

"Your wife loathed you. Before she died in all her waking hours she spent her whole time wishing you were dead. Mr Happy, always smiling..." the horrible face gave a horrible laugh. And it went on. It revealed his true nature, how he had bugged her so much that eventually she----- she---- no!

He ran out of the room, the horrible laugh following him.

But each day, he couldn't help it. He couldn't help coming back to the grinning man in the mirror, begging him to reveal more. The sneering, twisted face would laugh and do so with pleasure. It tormented the poor old man day and night, and hour after hour, his wife's hidden thoughts. How could she? How COULD she?!?!

But then, one night, the ghost came. He was thrashing around in his sleep, having a nightmare of dying one of the painful, gruesome deaths his wife had apparently planned for him. She came - a grave, unsmiling spook - taking the form of his wife. His now despised wife.

"Leave me be! I know your thoughts, you.... you....."

"Calm! Don't take on so! It's lies, my love. The mirror haunted me too, telling me terrible thoughts you never had..... and that's why.... I did what I did."

The old man trembled with anger, with hate, with fear. It was that mirror! That cursed mirror!

"I have to warn you my love- believe me, please. It's lies."

He couldn't take it anymore. He shot out of bed with an energy he hadn't had since his youth and went flying into the attic. The grinning mirror-man just kept grinning, grinning, grinning- SMASH. There. Done. No more mirror man. No more grinning, horrible face....

His attention turned to his wife, a gentle smile on her face.

"I'm coming to join you, my love, in heaven!" he said, reaching a trembling hand towards one of the shards of shattered glass lying on the floor.

And he died thinking that they would find him exactly as they found her, lying expressionless on the floor.