



The Last
Light
in Blackwood
Hall

Grace
Barnard

chandeliers drooped from the cracked ceiling, and a thick blanket of silence pressed heavily against her ears. Beneath her feet, the once-polished marble floor was now smeared with dirt and scattered with fallen plaster.

Suddenly, the heavy wooden door slammed shut behind her. She froze. From somewhere above, a floorboard creaked.

Carefully, she began to climb the spiralling staircase, gripping the splintered wooden banister that curved upwards into darkness. With every cautious step, her heartbeat thudded louder and louder and louder inside her chest. The flickering tower light, which had guided her this far, shimmered weakly at the top of the stairs. Then, without warning, it went out.

Problem

Darkness swallowed everything.

Not a single sound.

Not even her breath.

And then - from directly above her - came the slow, deliberate sound of footsteps.

One step.

Another.

Closer.

Something was waiting in the tower room.

She froze in terror, her ~~her~~ heart thudding on her ribs like a trapped butterfly begging to be set free. Who asked her to be there, and why? She asked herself, her hands trembling like an earthquake. Then, another step came from the living room... Tap tap...tap - "Hello? Is anyone there?" she yelled, her clearly scared voice wobbling. Creak went the floorboards as Eliza carefully stepped onto the carpet covered stairs. The fluffy carpet brushed her shaking ankles.

A large drop of sweat threw itself on the dark oak floor. Everything dropped silent again except for the tick tick of the ridgeway grandfather clock. The clock had thick oak horns, Eliza remembered this clock... this was her old clock from when she was 7. It even had her name etched on it 'Eliza Hart, 7'. She took a step back slowly. Her heart playing drums faster than should be physically possible. ~~And~~ suddenly, she tripped over a toy, her childhood toy. It was a brown, fluffy dog with green eyes that shined like the stars. Eliza stared at it blankly with a robotically uneasy look on her face. Then, she blacked out. Hundreds of memories danced through her scrambled mind, was she dead? Well, she didn't know what was happening, or why it was happening. Then unexpectedly, she woke up surrounded by her friends "uhm... surprise?" They yelled in a whisper-like way. "Why... Did... you... DO THIS" Eliza yelled, they all apologized in unison. Eliza couldn't hold it in, she burst out crying-laughing and the others joined in. "Wait how did you even get my old stuff?" Eliza asked, "Your grandpa was in on it" a girl said while laughing "OH YOU-" Eliza said but was cut off by a footstep upstairs, this wasn't a prank anymore...