

THE REFLECTION ROAD

by

Adrienne King

COPYRIGHT (C) 2025

FADE IN:

EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A torrential Halloween rain batters a dark, lonely two-lane road. The headlights of an old sedan slice through sheets of water.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

CLAIRE (mid 20s), intelligent, tense, sits beside HENRY (60s), genteel, reserved, eyes scanning the road intently.

The windshield wipers thrash back and forth.

CLAIRE

It's coming down harder. You sure this is the right way?

HENRY

Old Route 19 cuts thirty minutes off. Once we pass the ridge, we should be able to make good time.

Thunder CRACKS. Claire stares out the side window. For an instant, her reflection doesn't move with her. It BLINKS, delayed.

She startles.

CLAIRE

Did you see that?

HENRY

See what?

CLAIRE

(shakes her head)

Nothing. Just lightning, I guess.

She forces a smile, uneasy.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

The rain grows violent. The road is empty, a tunnel of darkness.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Claire fidgets.

CLAIRE

Can we pull over soon? I... I need to pee.

HENRY

Now?

(beat)

There's nothing for miles. Can you hold it until we get to a gas station?

CLAIRE

I can't wait. I need to go now.

Henry sighs, nods and begins scanning for a place to pull over.

HENRY

(pointing)

There's an overpass up ahead.

EXT. UNDERPASS - NIGHT

The car idles under the concrete arch. It's oddly quiet without the tumult of rain hitting the sedan. Claire grabs her coat and steps out. Water gushes down the walls and swirls away. Her breath plumes in the cold.

Claire hikes up her skirt and squats down beside the sedan holding on to the door handle. She shivers as she relieves herself.

Then a whisper.

GHOST (O.S.)

Don't... Trust... Henry...

Claire looks up, startled.

CLAIRE

Hello?

Lightning flashes, revealing a hollow, translucent WOMAN standing in the shower of water from the overpass. Soaked, pale, eyes wide. Her hair plastered with rain to her face. Her dress, rain soaked, is also plastered to her body, only there is a gash from her neck to her hip.

CLAIRE

Jesus Christ!

The woman gestures, begging urgently to Claire, but Claire doesn't understand.

The figure vanishes as the lightening flash fades with a crack of thunder.

Claire stands up and drops her skirt. Her eyes widening.

CLAIRE

Wait! Who are you?!

Only the rain answers.

Still holding the door handle, Claire searches with her eyes before flinging open the car door and diving into the passenger seat, trembling.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

HENRY

You okay?

CLAIRE

Just... I thought I saw something out there.

HENRY

Probably a trick of the light. Happens in storms, sometimes. There is no one else out here except the ghost of the dead.

He gives a quick laugh, a half reassuring smile and a pat her on the hand. The smile doesn't reach his eyes.

HENRY

I know you want to get there, badly. I'll get you there.

CLAIRE

Thank you, Henry. I just need to get home.

They pull back onto the road. The rain drives down harder. The THWACK, THWACK, THWACK of the windshield wipers can't clear the rain fast enough.

HENRY

I can't see through this very well.

Henry slows and turns on the hazard lights.

Amid the cacophony of thwacking wipers, clicking hazard lights and thrum of rain on the roof top, like divine intervention, the sedan headlights illuminate a sign.

"PINE REST MOTEL - .5"

HENRY

I know you want to get back tonight, but I think we should pull over.

Slowing the car, Henry looks to Claire.

But Claire is staring straight ahead. Mouth agape, eyes wide, like cherry pies.

CLAIRE

The fuck...?

The WOMAN appears again on the side of the road gesturing urgently.

Claire blinks and the woman is gone.

EXT. ROADSIDE MOTEL - LATER

They pull into the parking lot next to a flickering neon sign: PINE REST MOTEL.

The storm hasn't let up.

HENRY

We can sit here a bit and see if it lets up.

As if on cue, there is a flash of light and a tremendous BOOM that crackles and echos and shakes the sedan. The rain falls even harder.

HENRY

Or, we stay here until it lets up.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Cheap, dated decor. Claire towels off in the small bathroom. The mirror fogs. She wipes it, and her reflection lingers a beat too long.

GHOST (O.S.)

Claire...

The mirror clouds again. Claire gasps.

CLAIRE

What do you want from me?!

GHOST

Stay... Stay...

The ghost's eyes plead, the bathroom light flickers, then the ghost is gone.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Claire emerges, pale. Henry sits up in one of the two beds, reading. A clock and a headlamp sit on the night table.

HENRY

All right there?

She hesitates, looks from one bed to the other then quickly and silently climbs into bed beside him. Claire burrows in next to him, holds on tightly and stares at the bathroom door.

Henry, unfazed, continues reading.

HENRY

Would you like me to read to you?

CLAIRE

Uh, yeah. Sure.

Henry clears his throat and begins to read...

HENRY
"The castle came into view as
Thomac's steed..."

With flash of lighting and a crack of thunder, the lights wink out, and the air system groans to a halt leaving the room dark and still.

Claire clenches but doesn't move. Henry reaches for and dons a headlamp and continues reading...

HENRY
"...Thomac's steed wound its way
up..."

...as Claire drifts off to an uneasy sleep, she still looks toward the bathroom door.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAWN

Soft gray light filters through the curtains. Claire stirs. Henry is already up, looking out the window.

HENRY
You are NOT going to believe this.
Looks like the road's gone. The
whole ridge washed out overnight.

CLAIRE
Gone?

HENRY
If we hadna stopped here... we'd
have been right on it.

Claire sits up slowly. The realization hits.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - MORNING

The storm has passed. The sky is cloudless and blue and perfect. Mud and debris glisten in the sun. They walk toward the sedan. Claire lingers behind, scanning the treeline.

Under a distant oak her ghost stands. Still. Watching. Wearing the prairie dress, now dry and unblemished, Claire was wearing the night before.

Claire meets her gaze. For a heartbeat they are the same woman.

The ghost smiles faintly, turns and begins to dissolve into mist.

CLAIRE
(softly)
Thank you.

The ghost fades leaving a faint, shimmering reflection.

Claire turns toward Henry, who waves for her to hurry.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

They drive off down the glistening road, leaving twin tracks in the wet asphalt. A faint reflection under the oak tree shimmers.

FADE OUT.

THE END.