

*The
Spiral
Steps*

*By
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Prologue

She scrambled desperately toward the light at the top of the tower.

Her breaths came in short gasps, fingers clawing manically at the damp, slimy wall as she struggled to maintain her sanity in her ascent to the top of the stone steps.

The light, she was sure she had seen it, high above her. She must reach it even if it drank the last ounce of strength from her soul.

She cried out “please Lord, help me escape this torment”; terror resonated in her voice, the echoes eerily dancing around her.

She was in Hell and reaching the light her only salvation

THE TALE

She had walked through Warble's Wood, past the ancient stone tower so many times before.

Looked upon it and wondered about it, but only today had her curiosity been aroused sufficiently to make her enter inside.

A strange excitement grew as she slowly pushed open the heavy wooden door barely hanging on a sole rusty hinge. Tentatively she entered into the cool inner chamber. It was 3pm.

The scent of mildew met her, accompanied by a distant dripping sound somewhere above. Rivulets of water trickled down amongst the lush ferns and ivy which had taken root deep within the cracks of the damp inner walls.

Stone steps clung to the walls and spiralled upwards to a shaft of light at the top of the tower, she felt suddenly compelled to reach it.

Placing her foot on the first step she slowly started the climb upwards, the air becoming more frigid with each ascending step.

The dripping sound got louder the higher she climbed yet she thought she also heard faint voices whispering, circling around her. Perhaps the echoes playing tricks she wondered?

Higher and higher she climbed, the light at the top seemingly becoming more hazy and distant, but surely she must be getting nearer with each step.

She glanced at her watch, 3pm, but surely she had been climbing for almost an hour now. Quickly she placed an ear next to the watch face. The time piece ticked, but time itself seemed to have stopped, here deep within the tower.

The voices again, she was sure she could hear them, distant and ghostly. A cold breath brushed her face and silently moved through her hair.

Startled she cried out “is there anyone here?” but only the dripping and the tick ticking sounds answered her.

Cold tendrils of fear slowly took hold within her as she continued the relentless ascent toward the light. Instinctively she knew to reach it was her only escape from the tower.

No longer did she imagine the haunted whispers. They were real and grew in intensity with every step she took.

Icy fingers gripped at her limbs making the struggle to the light so much harder.

Exhaustion and fear fought to take command of her senses. Could she hold on, could she reach the light? She simply must, yet the creeping weariness proved too ruthless a foe to fight. This battle would be her last.

A single tear dropped to form a pool on her watch-face which served to magnify the dials. 3pm - tick tick -whisper whisper.

Trapped in this creation of hell she fell back against the damp merciless wall and slowly slumped down onto the cold step, in final acceptance of her fate.

As she gazed up toward the light her troubled whispers joined forces with the cacophony of many other wretched souls, all sealed here for eternity in this hellish tomb.

Epilogue

Some would wonder but few would know the real fate of the many missing girls whose last walk had taken them along the path through the woods.

Only the ever watchful Tower knew.

The Devil's ancient servant and guardian of unsuspecting souls.

The End