

CATEGORY: FICTION
TITLE: SPRING FORWARD

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Katherine, the television weather lady, talked about the time change. Her goal was to remind all of her watchers of the twice yearly event.

“Spring Forward,” she said cheerfully as the camera faded and the news anchor popped up on the screen,

I grumbled and walked to the wall clock in the living room then on to the kitchen to change the time on the clock on the wall. With those two set ahead, all I had left was my bedroom clock next to my bed.

I hated the time change. Those who made the decisions just needed to set it ahead and leave it there. This back and forth business was for the birds. Time flies, ha-ha, But, my opinion doesn't count, does it?

I hustled around feeding the cat, giving her water to get her through the night. She was an old girl that demanded a lot of attention.

Finally, I headed toward my bedroom looking forward to crawling between the sheets and drifting off to sleep.

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I laid down on the bed and then I glanced at the clock.

“Darn, darn,” I mumbled as I grabbed the digital alarm clock on my bedside table. I pressed the button that advanced the hour, placed it back on the table, and then I settled into the sheets for the night.

When I awoke I rubbed at my eyes trying to clear away the fog of sleep. I rubbed and rubbed but they didn’t seem to clear up.

I rolled over to get to the other side of the bed so I could get up. Rolling over seemed to be difficult because I had aches and pains in places that had not been bothering me when I crawled between the sheets. I scooted myself over to the side of the bed and reached for the lamp on the bedside table.

I flicked the switch.

Nothing looked the same as it was when I went to bed. Everything was different from the color of the walls to the covers on the bed. I continued to look around the room as I pondered all of the changes I was seeing. Even the window was in the wrong place. How did that happen?

I looked at my hands and saw the hands of an old lady. My hands didn’t look like that when I went to bed. How could that have happened?

I pushed my legs out in front of me and saw varicose veins and what looked like bruises all over them. The skin on my legs was loose and the color was faded to a sickly white except where the spider veins were shining through.

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I needed desperately to find out where I was and what had happened to make me old. This was not normal.

I climbed from the bed to stand up with wobbly legs. When I finally had myself steady enough, I walked to my bedroom door to open it. I turned the knob only to discover it was locked from the other side. I turned the door knob again to double check that it was actually locked.

“Help?” I shouted to anyone on the other side.

No one came to the door. No one was going to open it so I could see what was happening and why I was locked inside.

I jiggled the door knob hoping the mechanism would pop open and allow me to open the door.

I decided I would pound on the door to see if I could get someone’s – anyone’s – attention.

I pounded on the door until I couldn’t do it anymore because of the pain it was causing in my hands.

“Please, please, open the door. Let me out of here! Please, please, open the door,” I shouted again and again until I was hoarse from the effort.

I gave up and wobbled back to the bed. I needed to lie down again. I was so tired. Sleep was trying to take over and I didn’t want that to happen.

“No, no, Ellen, don’t go to sleep,” I mumbled. “You need to get that door open.”

I heard a noise. I heard the key turning in the lock. Someone was opening my door.

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“Ellen, how are you?” asked a cheerful voice and a professionally dressed lady entered the room.

“Who are you?” I asked. “Why are you locking the door?”

“Don’t you remember me?” asked the startled, formerly cheerful, lady.

“I wouldn’t have asked you who you were if I remembered you,” I said as I stared at her. I was trying so hard to place her in my mind. “No, no, I don’t know you. Why is my door locked?” I said in an accusatory tone.

“Ellen, I’m Emily, your twin sister.”

“No, no, Emily is much younger. You can’t possibly be Emily,” I snarled. “Why are you lying to me? Why do you keep my door locked?”

“Don’t get upset, Ellen. We are only doing this for your own good. You know that, don’t you?” asked Emily.

“All I know is that you keep locking my door. Why?” I pleaded.

“Well, I’ve got to go now, Ellen. I will come back to see you tomorrow,” said Emily as she slammed the door. She must have been angry with me but that didn’t matter because I didn’t know who she was and why she was telling me she was my sister.

I heard the lock click and I knew I was in this Godforsaken room for the night.

I stretched out on my bed and made myself comfortable. I knew I was not getting out of here, not tonight and I definitely was not getting answers from anyone.

My eyes closed and I was off to dreamland again.

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I saw myself as a little girl and I was playing with my twin sister and then I had a little brother who joined us when we were having fun. I was so happy.

When I awoke I realized why my door was locked. No matter how much I screamed and pounded on the door, it wasn't going to open on its own.

I had Alzheimer's. I didn't hold onto that thought for long. I couldn't remember what Alzheimer's was.