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"But why does that lady want to hurt them?" one of the kids asks me.

We are watching *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*.

I think. It's because she wants to remain in control. Because she is afraid for her life. Because people have always been scared of her, and now they barely tremble. Because she has no equal, and this creates a feeling of loss that must be compensated for, or illustrated through the Fauns' and the Dryads' and the Narnia children's misery. Because she is just as entitled to that land as they are. They started it. There has to be a bad guy. She was seduced by power, she's only human after all, or she uses to be, it's complicated.

I look at her and then at them and say, 'Because she's a witch.'

I am tired; I smile at my laziness as she gobbles up my answer. Poor witch. Next time I'll defend you a little better. Everyone's entitled to a defence. But I've been bombarded with questions since the movie started.

I need a break so I go to the bathroom, and lock the door. I look in the mirror, the other me stares back, cold and glassy. Hard as a tile. They haven't noticed I'm gone yet. They're engrossed with the battle. The flash of blood on fur; the turning to stone. The war cries that the boys will gleefully mimic later when the movie is over. I don't need to use the toilet. I smile at the other me. She is slightly disapproving, slower somehow, the smile is too slow. Rueful. She belongs to the bathroom. All the bathrooms. She rules the landscape, and I am included. I am surveyed: skin not looking too good at the moment, papery, thin. Hair ready to nest birds. Dark under the eyes—you are hiding out.

I feel only slightly guilty.

I sit on the edge of the bath. Its coldness reminds me why bathrooms are safe, are able to be used as safe havens. They're uncomfortable. No one stays in them very long. The outside won't intrude because it knows this too. But there is a time limit. Stay in there too long and people will worry that you're doing your self in; or that you've fallen and hit your head on one of the bathroom fixtures; and they'll come looking for you. The little ones, the kids—they just worry you've disappeared altogether. Dematerialised. Through the wardrobe.

This is a kind of closet. A white-tiled, sharp-cornered closet. Mould growing in the grouting, soap scum on the screen. The air disinfected. I turn on the tap; the water feels undrinkable. Toothbrushes—soldiers against plaque—pile around the sink.

You do disappear, she says. This is you alone. I touch the tiles.

There is a garden of bodily evidence here. She looks at it. Long strands of blonde hair settle in root systems, accumulate near the drains, feeling their way towards water. Muddy fingerprints attach themselves to the corners of the sink, and the ends of white towels, looking like germinations of some underwater sponge. Little slithers of fingernail are ready for seeding.

The mirror is smudged with toothpaste spray, flecks of makeup, and by a ritual of morning fogs from shower steam and hands clearing the glass. My eye gets caught on a smudge. I leave the eyes alone. I turn, and she watches me look out the window. Shampoos and conditioners, lotions and bubble bath gather on the sill. You remember making special concoctions when you were younger. 'Special Water'. Water mixed with elements of each of these potions, sometimes flowers would be included, squashed, bottled, and fermented. The bottle would stay in the cupboard, in the dark. You only used it for special occasions, which usually took place because you were delighted to remember it was there—having forgotten about it. When you grew up, you decided, you would go into perfume making. You had grand plans, some of which had already been put into place with the removal of the neighbour's rose heads. Thousands of pink and red rose petals juicing in the sun. Of course this dried them out, and you were left with crinkled odourless potpourri.

Outside, the music has settled down—pensive, slowly rejoicing. A victory. They'll remember you soon, now the action is over. You stand up suddenly and your foot slides on a wet tile.

I steady myself, gripping the cold curve of the sink. I think of bathroom accidents—the twists and slips, contortions, and the cold metal and edges of the fixtures threatening to do bodily harm. They are at the door now. Knocking, jarring the handle up and down, up and down, as if this action will eventually cause it to open. Their palms beat the door. There is a scuffle. The war is over, they want you back.

She looks back at you through the smudges of the mirror. Your time is up you know. I know, I've been caught out—officially registered as missing, and the search party is here gabbling like small animals.

Surprising that this small pursuit of me should cause such adrenaline. I calm myself. I unlock and open the door. They grab and smile at me. They are all eyes and teeth.

'Guess what?' they say.

'What?'

'The witch is dead!'

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Kathryn Ryan.