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"Daedalus"

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It's morning again. What time is it? All my mornings are like this, waking up, thinking about the time, even when the time here ain't so important or shouldn't be. Why they should care about the time? They do nothing at all through the day, through all the year, through their whole life. But I should wake up before they come, last time I woke up too late it wasn't pleasant for anyone. Not for me, at least. All the room is a dark hole, the curtains hide the outside, what a waste, I didn't even remember closing them last night. I've to walk through the labyrinth that my room has become, but I know it very well, I won't fail one step. I've a recurring dream in which all my books fall down the walls and the room becomes my grave, it'd be a nice death, the headlines would be the best ones: "Killed by Joyce"; or maybe they'd rather choose a more suitable book for a female... "Killed by Austen", yes, Jane can't pervert the mind of anyone, Ha! I pass through Jane and James, which have been waiting for me in one of the stack of books on the floor since last month. Poor things, a wolf has had me for the last weeks and I don't want to be free just yet. But how I missed them when they were gone! Was it two months ago? Or maybe three... But it was fair, we had a deal, if I behave, they'll let me have my companions. They prefer not to fight me and, if I have my friends, why should I fight? But I did, and they took all of them from me. It was a long day while they removed them all, and then it was a long, long month... But they're with me again and I have to jump all over them to make my way to the window.

The sun blinds me when I put the curtains aside; it was so beautiful. It was green all around the mansion; a green that took my breath away. Trees as far as the eye can see, I

would like to see beyond. I begin to hate the curtains when I hear the music again after a long time, two months? Three? I almost start dancing when I see the kids playing cop catches, what an unfair game! They have limitations, even though they have been keeping their energy all winter with dreams of being outside; they are kids, and they can't be very organized. All the game would be won if they talked to each other. Their nannies can't get them for now, but they will. It's the same story over and over again: like a cat playing with a mouse before he eats it. But again, I shouldn't think about this; they're kids, they have the right to play and think they can escape. I was a kid once, and I dreamt about it too. An image of me hitting a boy strikes me. I almost didn't recognize myself in my memories, but yes, I was there, fighting not to be caught by the nannies. It seems I wasn't a great thinker not long ago either.

I have to dress myself, they don't come anymore for that, it's part of the deal too. If I behave, they'll give me my space, even though it's not a good deal, I accepted it. They even sent me a mirror that I loved from my old home for my first birthday here! When I came for the first time to the mansion I didn't dream of having gifts, but it seems that at the end, despite how they hate me and want me out of their lives, I'm important. It doesn't bother me too much anymore even when "behave" was one of the words I hated the most. The mirror sends back an image that I like. Almost like an old romantic painting: long hair slightly touching my hips, red lips because I bite them in dreams where I drink and let myself lie surrounded by the smoke of old opium pipes. I laugh, that can only happen in my dreams, even with the mere memory of the odor of drugs I begin to feel sick. What a poor romantic I'd have been. One last look at the mirror; it's time to go. I like my new clothes here. They didn't let me dress as I want to, too "personal" I guess, but the clothes they gave me ain't that bad. They're a little big and they completely hide my body and that's what I like the most: being able to hide my body as well as my soul. I want to break the mirror, I should do it, but it's better for me to open the door and go for breakfast, or I think so.

Chocolate, I want chocolate, I miss it so much. And ice cream, it was my favorite in the mornings. But here they say it's not very wealthy and less for a woman. I learn not to protest anymore. I took a bowl of cereals and pick a place. I can sit near Frank, or maybe near

Martha, not that it'd mean any change, neither of them will talk to me, nor I to them. I prefer when I had breakfast with the ones downstairs, they were kind and didn't bother what others told about me. They were like me, so it was expected that they treated me well. I look around, regretting instantly. What a simple exchange of glances can tell you! The new employee seems to have pity of me, watching me with those pitiful eyes. I kind of weakness took me every time I saw him watching me, as if what he thinks about me could go through my eyes and trap me if he kept staring at me like that. I prefer Carla, who always gave me a more portion of food. It's not that I needed it, but at least it seems like kindness, even when it's not. Frank's looking at me again, he's trying to see what's under my clothes, or that's what he told me once. He thought I'd like to hear that. Poor thing, now I'm the one showing pity, what a narrow minded Frank is! I should ask for bigger clothes, maybe that will inspire his imagination and let him create a more totally wrong idea about me. As we all seem to be in prison in the mansion, it seems nice to help each other so as to distract ourselves. I should go, I can't eat another bite, Carla wouldn't be pleased but...

I want to wander, not too much, the music is off and the kids will be now fighting somewhere in the mansion for going outside again, and I really don't want to be in their way. The TV is on in the room where some of the nannies have taken refuge after the morning games. I cannot hear more than fragments "...areas of clouds will spread..." "I didn't want to work today, but Lisa was ill." "...rain all over the country..." "Close the door." And that was all. Not that I even care about what they're talking, and regarding the weather, well, I can watch the TV or I can look through the window. Wandering doesn't amuse me anymore, not since I'm not longer a kid looking for hidden places or paths to go out during a rainy day. Should I go back to my room? My feet seem to think for me because I'm opening the door and facing the hill of books that welcome me. Someone has been here: the curtains are

closed again and I can feel my anger growing. Just... breathe, calm down. But we have a deal. They have to let me being myself, they have to let my room alone, the only rule was to behave well and I did! I'm not even talking to anybody anymore just in case I slipped something! I kept so much of life aside and I thought that that would allow me to preserve myself from them. I only kept my books and my long hair! But I want to run, I want to feel the sun. I don't want them to tell me what's outside, I want to feel the rain in my face or the sun burning my skin. The window is hard to open but at last I succeed and the music starts again. The cop catching game will start, but this time I'll win whatever the result. I can only feel the sun embracing my soul, opening my mind. The grass on my feet makes me wanna dance at the rythm of the more and more distant alarms, which makes me remember the sign in the fence of the mansion that I can't wait to leave behind me... "Mental Health Hospital."

Bioprofile of the author: Lorena Maldonado Gómez nació en Móstoles, Madrid. Apasionada de la literatura, actualmente es estudiante del grado en Estudios Ingleses en la Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Durante algunos años colaboró en webs escribiendo relatos de temática variada y fue co-directora de una website sobre una conocida saga literaria. A lo largo de sus estudios pre-universitarios participó en la organización de actividades relacionadas con la literatura y el arte. Escritora en la sombra, no es hasta su entrada en la universidad cuando su estilo e ideas se consolidan y comienza a mostrar sus escritos al público.

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