

Bourne
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Time's Up

by Mari Syrad

Some monsters have snarling teeth, sharp claws, and leave bloody footprints on the earth.

Some monsters have grotesque features, twisted spines, and acrid breath.

Some monsters hide in the shadows, waiting murderously to strike.

Not all monsters, I hear you say.

Some monsters cause towns to live in fear, ordering curfews and building defences to protect the perimeter.

Some monsters cause cities to shut down, demanding face masks, and travel to cease.

Some monsters cause panic across the globe, but only when the privilege of wealth and race cannot save you.

Perhaps some monsters, you say.

And some monsters wear human faces, and human clothes, and have learnt to speak.

And some monsters know tricks and slight of hand, misdirecting the rest so it is you who looks dangerous.

And some monsters grab and take what they want and carry their iniquity all the way to the top of the supreme court.

And we're back to 'not all monsters', you say.

These monsters know how to threaten so you fear for your life; and who would believe you anyway.

These monsters believe they are such a god given prize, there's no way you didn't want it from *them*.

These monsters lurk in basements, they walk the streets, and they rise to exceptional heights of power.

And they get there by feeding on you. They feed on your fear and your flesh.

And though some of the monsters look like me, most of them look like you.

But you won't notice until one day, a reflection in the mirror not your own flashes its teeth and extends its claws, and whispers, 'time's up'. Only then, will you recognise the monster within.