

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR

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FADE IN:

EXT. SURBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

A modest two-story house. Wind SCATTERS leaves across the well-manicured lawn. A DOG BARKS in the distance.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A LITTLE GIRL lays on the floor in front of the TV, a coloring book in front of her.

This is KATE (9). She looks to the side, sees --

THE FIREPLACE. On it is a PICTURE of a YOUNG MAN smiling. Next to his picture is funeral program -- "IN LOVING MEMORY OF JAKE THOMAS (2005-2022).

Kate sighs, looks back toward her book.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Kate? Have you finished your homework?

KATE

Yes ma'am!

FOOTSTEPS approach. In walks --

BETH (mid 30s). She looks as if she hasn't slept in days.

BETH

Thirty minutes, and then it's time to get ready for bed.

KATE

Why can't I stay up a little later?

BETH

Because its a school night.

KATE

But Mom --

BETH

Kate, please don't argue with me tonight. I'm not in the mood.

Kate lets out a loud sigh, nods. Beth turns to walk out --

KATE

Mom?

Beth stops.

BETH
Yeah?

KATE
Can I tell you something?

BETH
Anything, kiddo. What's going on?

KATE
I don't want to make you sad.

BETH
What is it?

Kate pauses, not sure if she should say it. Finally --

KATE
Something happened today at school.

Beth furrows her brow, kneels next to Kate.

BETH
What happened?

KATE
I saw --
(pauses)
I-I saw Jake at school. He talked
to me. He wanted to say he was
sorry --

Beth shakes her head, doesn't want to hear it.

BETH
Kate, that's not possible. Jake is
in Heaven now. You know that.

KATE
But I saw him!

BETH
(irritated)
Jake's not here anymore, okay
sweetie. He's with Grandma now.
(beat)
I know you miss him. I do too. But -
-

Beth notices the pamphlet on the fireplace. It's now laying
face down on the ledge.

BETH (CONT'D)
(cut)
Thirty minutes.

She quickly leaves the room.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Beth heads down the hallway, laundry basket in her arms. She notices --

One of the bedroom doors ajar.

INT. BEDROOM

Jake's room. Surprisingly neat for a teen boy. Posters of rock bands adorn the walls.

Beth slowly enters. She looks around, lips trembling. She seems to be on the verge of tears.

She heads to the closet door, grabs a basketball jersey hanging from the door. Beth holds it tight against her chest.

Behind her --

The bedroom door closes. Beth turns --

BETH
Kate?

Silence.

Beth heads for the door. She tries to open it, but the door doesn't budge.

BETH (CONT'D)
(louder)
Kate?

No answer.

Beth struggles with the door, but it's not moving. She pulls on the knob, kicks the door --

It finally gives way, opens to reveal --

An empty hallway.

INT. HALLWAY

Beth peers out, looks both ways. Doesn't see anything. She turns back --

KATE

Mom?

Beth jumps, turns back around to see --

KATE.

BETH

Shit!

(corrects herself)

Shoot! You scared me, Kate.

Kate stares at her blankly.

KATE

There's someone at the door.

BETH

Who?

A moment passes. Then --

KATE

It's Jake.

Beth frowns.

BETH

That's not funny, Kate.

KATE

I'm not lying, Mommy. Jake's at the front door.

BETH

(frustrated)

Kate, Jake is --

KNOCK. KNOCK.

Both of them turn at the sound.

Kate smiles.

KATE

I told you Mommy.

Beth looks concerned. She pulls Kate into the room.

BETH
Stay here.

INT. LIVING ROOM

KNOCK. KNOCK. It's louder than before.

Beth creeps into the room, eyes trained on the front door.

BETH
Who is it?

KNOCK. KNOCK. The only reply.

She reaches over, grabs a fireplace poker from its stand.

BETH (CONT'D)
(louder)
Who is it?

The knocking continues.

She heads to the door, peers through the peep hole.

HER POV -- Nothing. The front porch is clear.

Beth takes a deep breath, her hands tremble. She grabs the doorknob, unlocks it --

She swings open the door --

No one at the door.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Beth steps out on to the porch, looks around. Doesn't see anything.

INT. LIVING ROOM

She steps back inside, closes the door. Beth inches back from the door, not sure what to do.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Mom?

Beth freezes. She knows the voice. She closes her eyes, shaking her head.

BETH
 (shaky)
 No...no...no.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
 Why won't you look at me?

Beth opens her eyes, turns around to see --

JAKE. Dressed in his funeral attire. His skin is ghoulishly gray. Eyes are pure white.

Beth gasps, covers her mouth in shock.

JAKE
 I've missed you, Mom.

BETH
 No.
 (pause)
 Stay away from me.

JAKE
 What did I do?

BETH
 You're not my son!

Beth runs past him, towards the staircase --

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Beth runs toward Jake's bedroom.

BETH
 KATE!

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM

Kate is nowhere in sight.

BETH
 Kate?!

JAKE (O.S.)
 Mom?

Beth slams the door closed. She locks it.

BETH
 GO AWAY! You're not my son!

The doorknob rattles. The door shakes.

JAKE (O.S.)
Mom? Please let me in.

Tears stream down Beth's face. She places all of her body weight against the door.

BETH
Leave me alone! My son is dead!

The rattling stops. Everything goes quiet.

Beth falls to the floor, sobbing. A moment passes, then --

A SCREAM is heard. Kate's.

Beth jumps up, swings the bedroom door open.

INT. HALLWAY

Beth comes, fire-poker raised and ready to strike.

KATE (O.S.)
MOMMY?!

It's coming from downstairs.

BETH
KATE!

Beth heads for the staircase.

INT. LIVING ROOM

She stops dead in her tracks. Her face goes pale. Sees --

Kate standing in the doorway. She holds hands with Jake.

BETH
K-Kate, come here.

KATE
Jake said I have to go with him
now.

BETH
Baby, please. Come here. That's not
your brother.

JAKE
I'm sorry, Mom.

Jake turns to walk away.

BETH
Get away from her!

Beth springs forward, attempts to run after him, but --

THE FRONT DOOR SLAMS CLOSED.

Beth hits the door, tries to open it. The door refuses to open.

BETH (CONT'D)
(panics)
KATE! Leave her alone!

She continues to struggle with the door. The door doesn't move an inch.

Her screams turn to cries.

BETH (CONT'D)
KATE! KATE!

She kicks the door.

BETH (CONT'D)
Leave my baby alone!

WOMAN (O.S.)
Beth?

Beth freezes. She recognizes that voice too.

BETH
(whisper)
Oh, God.

She chances a look behind her, sees --

AN OLDER WOMAN. Mid 70s. Frail looking. Pale skin. Dressed in a hospital gown. Eyes are pure white.

Beth stares in disbelief.

BETH (CONT'D)
M-mom?

The older woman flashes a creepy smile.

OLDER WOMAN
(low)
I had to see you one last time.

The woman reaches out to Beth.

Beth lets out a nerve-shattering SCREAM.

BLACK.