

THE HAND IN THE CLOSET

A bedtime story you won't forget.



The 3:14 AM Recording

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The blue light of Alex's phone was the only thing cutting through the pitch-black silence of the apartment. It was 3:14 AM, and the world outside felt miles away as they scrolled through old memories to pass the time.



While deleting old photos to clear space, Alex's thumb paused over a video thumbnail that didn't look familiar. It was recorded only three minutes ago, a timestamp that sent a sudden, inexplicable chill down their spine.



Heart hammering against their ribs, Alex pressed play and watched as the screen displayed their own bedroom in grainy detail. The footage was shaky, filmed from the height of the nightstand, showing Alex fast asleep and breathing steadily in the dark.



The silence of the video was broken by a faint, rhythmic sound as a hand slowly entered the frame from the shadows. It was pale and gaunt, with fingers that were far too long, the skin stretched tight over the knuckles like wet parchment.



With a terrifying, motherly tenderness, the hand reached out and gently stroked Alex's hair. It moved with a slow, deliberate grace, tucking a stray strand behind their ear as they slept on, completely unaware of the intruder.



A wet, rattling voice whispered from just behind the phone, vibrating through the speaker with a sound like dry leaves. "Still asleep," the voice hissed, the words hanging heavy and cold in the air of the recording.



The video abruptly ended, and the screen went black, turning into a dark, glossy mirror. In the reflection, Alex could see the familiar shapes of their room, now twisted and distorted by the oppressive shadows of the night.



Alex looked up from the phone and realized with a jolt of terror that the bedroom door was wide open. They vividly remembered turning the lock and hearing the click before getting into bed, yet now it swung freely against the wall.



Reaching back with a trembling hand, Alex touched the spot on the pillow right behind their head. The fabric was unnervingly warm, as if someone had been leaning over them and watching them sleep only seconds before.



Frozen in the middle of the bed, Alex stared into the darkness of the open doorway, listening for that rattling breath. The blue light of the phone flickered and dimmed, casting long, dancing shadows that seemed to reach out from the corners of the room.