



The Third Knock

Horror Craze



A fierce storm batters the old Victorian house on Elm Street, making the heavy windows rattle in their frames. Inside the dimly lit living room, the only light comes from the flickering television screen and sudden flashes of lightning that illuminate the dark, dusty corners.



Elara, a twenty-year-old babysitter, sits near young Leo, who is huddled on the sofa clutching a soft blue blanket. His large eyes are wide with terror as he looks away from the TV, whispering that the sounds outside aren't just the wind, but someone knocking at the back door.



A sharp, heavy thud echoes from the rear of the house, distinct and deliberate against the howling wind and rain. Elara and Leo both freeze in place, their eyes locked on the long, dark gallery that leads into the shadows of the kitchen as the TV continues to drone in the background.



Trying to hide her own growing fear, Elara stands up and begins to walk slowly toward the back of the house to investigate. The storm outside causes distorted shadows of tree branches to dance like ghosts across the old, patterned wallpaper of the narrow hallway.



Another loud knock vibrates through the wooden floorboards, closer and more forceful than the first one. From the living room, Leo's trembling voice follows her, counting the second knock as the tension in the silent house reaches a breaking point.



Elara reaches the heavy wooden back door and peers through the small glass pane into the swirling darkness and rain. Outside, the porch is a blur of gray water, and the wind chimes clash violently together in a frantic, metallic rhythm that sounds like a warning.



She musters her courage, unlocks the door, and pulls it open to find the porch completely deserted and empty. However, her blood runs cold when she notices a perfectly dry, person-sized patch on the wet floorboards, indicating that someone was standing there just moments ago.



A sudden burst of loud static erupts from the television in the other room, followed by Leo's sharp, terrified scream of Elara's name. The scream is cut short with haunting suddenness, sending a surge of panic through Elara as she turns and sprints back toward the living room.



The living room is now chillingly silent, with the blue blanket discarded on the floor and the front door standing wide open to the storm. The cold night air and the scent of damp earth fill the house, and Elara realizes with horror that Leo is gone.



Elara stands paralyzed in the center of the room, staring at the open front door and the empty space where the boy once sat. As she whispers to herself that there was never a third knock, a final, heavy thud echoes from the back door behind her, sealing her fate in the darkness.