

The Midnight Knock

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In the quiet town of Ravenwood, a strict golden rule governs every household: never answer the front door after midnight. Local superstition warns of something sinister that roams the dark streets looking for a welcoming invitation. Fifteen-year-old Leo always dismissed these warnings as mere ghost stories told to frighten children. That was until the clock struck twelve on a stormy Tuesday night while he was home entirely alone.



At exactly 12:07 AM, the eerie silence of the house was shattered by three heavy, deliberate knocks on the front door. Leo froze in the living room, his heart pounding wildly against his ribs as the terrifying legend flashed through his mind. He tiptoed across the dark hallway, his breathing shallow and trembling with dread. Hesitantly, he pressed his eye against the cold brass peephole to see who was outside in the shadows.



To his utter shock, the porch light illuminated the familiar face of his father standing right on the doorstep. Panic mixed with confusion because his father was supposed to be hundreds of miles away on a crucial business trip. Leo frantically pulled out his smartphone with shaking fingers and dialed his dad's number. He held his breath as the phone rang into the empty night air, watching through the peephole as the figure outside raised a phone to its ear.



The call connected instantly, and Leo heard the soft, familiar murmur of his father's voice through the receiver. With a quivering voice, Leo whispered through the phone asking why he was standing outside in the freezing dark. The figure on the porch stared blankly ahead, mirroring the confusion while listening to the mobile device. A chilling silence stretched between them, heavier than the midnight fog pressing against the windows.



Then, a sentence came through the phone that made Leo's blood run completely cold. His father calmly stated that he wasn't outside at all and was still resting safely in his distant hotel room. Leo's eyes widened in horror as he stared through the peephole at the man claiming to be his dad. If his father was miles away, then the figure standing inches from the front door was someone else entirely.



Before Leo could process the impossible truth, the figure on the porch lowered its phone and began to speak aloud. The voice that echoed through the heavy wooden door was no longer that of an older man. It was the exact, undeniable voice of Leo himself speaking from the dark porch. The copycat whispered an eerie threat, demanding that Leo unlock the door because it knew he was hiding inside.



Overwhelmed by absolute terror, Leo spun around and sprinted up the wooden staircase, stumbling in the dark. He burst into his bedroom and slammed the heavy door shut, twisting the brass lock with shaking hands. He backed away into the corner of the room, his chest heaving as he tried to process the impossible nightmare. Just as he caught his breath, the screen of his phone lit up brightly in the dark room.



It was a frantic text message sent directly from his father's phone number, glowing ominously in the shadows. Leo grabbed the device with trembling fingers and stared at the short, warning message displayed on the screen. The text read simply and urgently to ignore whatever sounds echoed from downstairs next. The warning hung in the air like a death sentence as the old house creaked around him.



Before Leo could even reply or scream, a sudden blood-curdling shriek echoed up from the dark downstairs hallway. It was the unmistakable voice of his father crying out in pure, agonizing terror and begging to be let inside. The desperate pleas bounced off the walls downstairs, scratching at the bottom of the staircase like sharp claws. Leo clapped his hands over his ears, paralyzed by the sheer horror of the unfolding nightmare.



The frantic pounding on the front door resumed with twice the fury, shaking the entire foundation of the house. Leo curled into a tight ball on his bedroom floor as the sounds of struggle and weeping overlapped below. He realized with chilling certainty that the entity outside had finally brought his actual father to the porch. The clock glowed 12:08 AM in the dark bedroom, leaving Leo trapped in a nightmare where help was impossible to find.