

The Shadow On Brimstone Lane

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FADE IN:

EXT. DURNING STREET - NIGHT

We float down a dark street. The dirty tail light on rusty pickup truck cuts into view. It's wheels turn lazily, propelling the truck down the street in silence.

The vehicle stops.

A pair of unwashed jeans step out of the truck. The figure quietly moves to the end of a lane.

A plastic bottle is dropped amongst the trash and recycling.

The man steps back into his truck and moves further down the street. Another bottle is dropped, hidden in the recycling of another house.

The truck moves past a well lit house. A few children's toys lie scattered on the porch. The truck drives off as the house looms larger. Only the living room light is on.

INT. CHUNG HOUSE

ALLISON CRANE sits in the living room couch, a single light shines on her. The house is quiet. She relaxes as she surfs the internet for apartments.

THUNK!

Allison's head jerks at the sound. She stares at the hallway near the stairs. Silence.

She steps into the hall, slowly, cautiously. Allison looks down. A book lies on the floor in the hall, next to a book-case. Alert, she moves toward the book. The TICK of a clock in the kitchen grows louder.

Allison reaches for the book and places it back on the shelf. She stares at the entrance to the kitchen. It looks ominous, as if someone is there waiting for her.

Moving closer, Allison unconsciously raises her hands in front of her.

The ticking grows louder.

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Allison gives the kitchen a good look over, but it is empty.

RING!

Allison jumps at the sound. Annoyed, she answers the phone.

MUFFLED VOICE

Have you checked the children?

ALLISON

Very funny, Laura!

LAURA (V.O.)

(laughs)

Hey, how's it going?

Allison relaxes against the wall.

ALLISON

Fine. Just a bit jumpy that's all.

LAURA (V.O.)

Don't worry, we're on our way home, I just wanted to check in and see if you're okay. Did Jacob behave?

ALLISON

No trouble, I told him I was going to read him an ethics textbook if he didn't get to bed.

LAURA (V.O.)

(Laughs)

Nice! I've gotta go, Adam is feeling neglected. We'll see you in a few minutes. Bye!

ALLISON

Bye.

She hangs up the phone and walks back to the living room and snuggles back up to her tablet.

The quiet is broken by the long, slow GROAN of a door opening upstairs. Allison ignores the sound at first, but her attention is caught by the silence. She looks at the stairway leading up. Nothing.

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The light of her tablet blinks out when the power saver turns on, casting her face in darkness.

Allison slowly shuffles over to the bottom of the stairs. She looks up into the dark void upstairs.

Quiet.

Allison places a hand on the railing, but stops herself from ascending the steps.

A light scraping drifts from the blackness.

Allison steps back.

From out of the darkness, a cat happily trots down the stairs and gives Allison a friendly chirp as it passes her.

Allison marches back to the living room.

ALLISON

God, damn it!

INT. CHUNG HOUSE - NIGHT

The front door opens and LAURA and ADAM CHUNG walk in. Allison rises from the couch and smiles.

LAURA

We're back!

ADAM

Hey!

ALLISON

How was date night?

LAURA

Great, but I don't remember it being so tiring!

ALLISON

You have a kid now!

Allison packs up her stuff.

ADAM

I think I ate too much.

Laura playfully pats Adam's belly.

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LAURA

It's going to grow into such a
cute little baby!

ADAM

A food baby.

LAURA

Don't be gross.

ADAM

You brought it up.

Allison joins them at the door. Laura turns and gives
her friend a long hug.

LAURA

How are you hanging in there?

ALLISON

I'm managing.

LAURA

You know you can crash here if you
want?

ALLISON

It's okay, Duane's staying at the
bitches place for the weekend.

LAURA

So you've found a new place?

ALLISON

Not yet. Everything costs too
much.

LAURA

What about that house sitting job?

ADAM

Mrs. Kwan.

LAURA

Yeah! She still needs someone to
feed her cat and water the plants
while she's away!

ADAM

You'll have the whole house to
yourself.

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CONTINUED: (2)

LAURA

And it'll give you time to find a new apartment!

ALLISON

Where is it again?

LAURA

A couple blocks away, on Brimstone.

ALLISON

Hmm... What do you know of her?

LAURA

Mrs. Kwan's great. She acts tough, but she's a total marshmallow once you get to know her.

ALLISON

Well, maybe I'll look into it. Where is it?

ADAM

320 Brimstone Lane.

ALLISON

Cool. Well I'm gonna head. It's late and I've got a lot to do tomorrow.

LAURA

Okay, but call me okay?

Laura gives Allison another hug.

ALLISON

Definitely.

Adam steps in and gives the two women a hug.

ADAM

Duane's an idiot. You deserve better.

ALLISON

Thanks guys, and good night.

ADAM

You too.

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LAURA

Bye!

Allison leaves.

ADAM

Let's get to bed, I have a baby to think of.

Adam cradles his belly. Laura GIGGLES. They quietly start up the stairs.

EXT. BRIMSTONE LANE

The BRIMSTONE LANE street sign is nearly hidden by the overgrowth of leaves. It is an old part of the neighborhood, where bushes and trees conceal houses and secrets.

Allison surveys the rows of old brick houses, and doesn't stray from the streetlights.

With her gaze rapt on the houses, she nearly trips on the garbage at the curb.

ALLISON

Shit!

She moves on for a couple of blocks and comes to a stop.

320 Brimstone Lane is a simple, small and welcoming mound of brick. The lot is well maintained, and despite the abundance of growth, it does not overwhelm.

Allison smiles. After a deep breath, she nods and starts off again. Glancing down at the recycling, she stops.

There is a strange dirty plastic bottle clearly full of something toxic thrown in with the paper. She leans in closer and recoils at the stench.

ALLISON

What the hell!?

Allison crouches and inspects the bottle that seems stained in chemical waste. She reaches to pick it up, but the smell is too strong, and she waves off the thought of touching it.

There is a CLANK of a bottle nearby.

Allison turns.

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A SHADOW crouches near the trash at the end of a lane two blocks away. It digs through the recycling and carefully selects various beer and wine bottles and places them into a shopping cart.

Allison looks on angrily.

ALLISON

Hey!

The Shadow rises defensively.

ALLISON

What are you doing?

The Shadow pulls the cart in front of him and starts to step away.

Allison stands.

ALLISON

Did you put this crap in here?

The Shadow moves out of view.

ALLISON

Hey! Stop! You can't dump toxic chemicals in the trash, you idiot!

Allison trots after the man, but he has disappeared around the corner. She crosses the street to look around the bend, but he is nowhere to be seen. There is only an ominous cave of darkness

A car lazily glides down the street. It's lights illuminate the void of Brimstone Lane, and for a second the cave opens up. Allison's eyes widen in anticipation, but the light only reveals leaves and branches.

Allison stops. She looks down the next street for the strange man. We see a woman walking her dog.

She looks the other way behind her. A man and woman kiss each other good night.

With a slouch, Allison circles back the way she came, taking care to stay under the streetlights.

The Shadow steps into view, and watches Allison's small figure move into the distance.