

JESSICA'S WINDOW

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. ATTIC - DAY

The attic is dusty and barren. A shaft of sunlight from a lone window illuminates a corner. In the corner rests a large trunk.

Footsteps SCUFF across the dull wood floor. A person's shadow passes over the trunk as it crosses the room.

Now, in front of the window stands JESSICA CAMPELL (13). Her sad eyes stare at a U-Haul parked across the street.

She puts her hand to the window. Her fingertips lightly touch the glass. A tear rolls down her cheek.

SARAH (O.S.)

Don't be sad Jessica.

Seated on the floor is SARAH MYERS (11), waif of a girl with stringy long hair in a soiled pink dress.

Sarah's vacant eyes stare at the Barbie she holds. She robotically brushes the doll's hair.

SARAH

You'll get used to it here. We can be best friends.

Jessica studies Sarah for a moment then looks back out the window. She watches as MARK CAMPBELL (35), loads a box into the U-Haul.

JESSICA

(quietly)
Dad.

Tears stream down Jessica's face. She SLAPS her hands repeatedly on the window.

JESSICA

DAD!!

Unaffected by Jessica's outburst, Sarah continues to brush her Barbie's hair.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Mark, unshaven, dark circles under his eyes, stares at the contents of the U-Haul parked in front of a cute yellow house.

Next to the truck, furniture and boxes line the curb. He listlessly grabs another box and places it inside.

Out of the house next door walks SHERRY BROWN (45). With a concerned look on her face she approaches Mark.

SHERRY

Hey Mark.

She gently places her hand on his shoulder.

With painstaking effort he looks up, forces a smile.

SHERRY

How's Laura?

INT. U-HAUL - CONTINUOUS

LAURA CAMPBELL (33), hair messy, clothes wrinkled, sits in the passenger seat.

Her red, swollen eyes focused on a framed photo she holds. Her fingers tremble as they run over the face of Jessica.

MARK (O.S.)

She's not doing well. I need to get her out of here.

Laura brings the photo to her chest. She embraces it as she weeps.

INT. ATTIC - LATER

Still at the window, Jessica watches Mark get into the driver's seat of the U-Haul.

She pounds on the window with glass shattering force. It doesn't even crack.

She screams.

JESSICA

DAD!

Sarah stares at her Barbie, speaks calmly.

SARAH

They can't hear you.

INT. U-HAUL - CONTINUOUS

Mark looks at Laura, her face void of expression.

He puts the keys in the ignition then freezes for a moment. His face suddenly turns bitter as he looks out his window at the unkempt blue house across the street.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Dozens of police vehicles are parked in front of the blue house. Yellow caution tape cordons off the yard busy with police and crime scene investigators.

Mark drives away, turns around at the cul-de-sac and heads back up the street.

Laura slowly looks up, her eyes pulled toward the scene.

Police remove articles from the house.

Two investigators walk out the front door, each hold a side of the trunk from the attic.

Suddenly Laura panics. She claws at the window like she's desperately reaching for something.

LAURA

JESSICA!!

INT. ATTIC - CONTINUOUS

Jessica helplessly watches her mother's despair.

JESSICA

MOM!

She watches as Mark stares blankly ahead and drives away, leaving their life behind.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

A police officer moves a barricade and allows the U-Haul to drive through.

Parked beyond the barricades are several news vans with gigantic satellites.

Reporter, LISA JENKINS (30), holds a microphone and faces a camera labeled "FOX 5".

The CAMERAMAN (40), gives Lisa the thumbs up to begin.

THROUGH CAMERA

LISA

Two days ago the morbid discovery of thirteen year old Jessica Campbell shocked this once quiet neighborhood.

Behind Lisa a CROWD gawks at the scene, watching police activity as well as workers excavating the back yard.

LISA

Yesterday police discovered another body. That of Sarah Lewis, the little girl who went missing last April from Harbortown, just ten miles from here.

BACK TO SCENE

Behind the barricades, Sherry stands next to MARLA (35).

They casually sip from coffee cups like they're watching this from their living room.

SHERRY

He was such a quiet man. I just can't believe this.

MARLA

He lived here twenty years. You think you know somebody.

An investigator bags a piece of evidence.

LISA (O.S.)

(reporting)

TED MORGAN has been described by his neighbors as a quiet man. We know now he was a quiet man hiding a horrible secret. Were there only two?

A WORKER (50), in soiled clothes, walks through the yard with a shovel.

LISA (O.S.) (cont'd)

(reporting)

Investigators are searching the property now, hoping of course, they don't find anyone else.

The women shake their heads in disgust then go back to casually sipping their coffee.

A light shines from the attic window.

INT. ATTIC - CONTINUOUS

Jessica stands at the window, her expression now vacant.

SARAH

Come on Jessica. You're gonna like it here. We'll be best friends.

Sarah stands, reaches out her hand. Jessica takes it.

They walk away from the window toward the now empty corner.

Dust outlines a perfect rectangle where the trunk once sat.

SARAH

We're all best friends here.

From out of the darkness walk SIX YOUNG GIRLS, all in tattered clothes, all with vacant eyes.

FADE OUT