

## The Scary Game

Penelope and her family had just moved.

This time they had moved to a small town, with no more than 600 people. It was located a long way from any other towns, and wasn't on any of the maps her small family owned. Even though Penelope had felt uneasy, her mom had promised everything would be okay.

"Don't worry honey, after Dad gets back from the military, we'll be able to change towns. It's only a short stay."

The first day at their house Penelope met a few of their neighbors.

One guy named Jimmy lived right next to them. He had offered to show her around at school. Penelope said yes, even though the school was so small she would have been able to find her way on her own.

"On the way home there's something you should see too," he added, and something in his voice made Penelope wonder just what it was.

The next day Penelope couldn't help but feeling curious, none of the other towns she had been to had had anything interesting in them. They had all had normal people, normal schools... But still she couldn't help feeling that something about this town was different.

The next day at school Jimmy came up to her during lunch.

"Hey, after school meet me by the bike rack," he explained. "I'll show you the coolest part of our town then." Without another word Jimmy left.

For the rest of the day all Penelope could think about was the thing Jimmy planned to show her.

At the end of the day Penelope went down to the bike rack.

"Are you ready?" Jimmy inquired.

"Yes," replied Penelope, excitement mounting inside her.

Jimmy turned and led Penelope down the sidewalk, the autumn leaves falling and landing trembling on the cement. It was really quite pretty, until she saw their destination, a massive ugly manor, with tons of boarded up windows.

"This is a haunted house," said Jimmy, stopping in front of it. "Well at least it's supposed to be. But anyway, everyone in this town is too scared to go in. I'll give you 50 dollars if you spend the night. But just wait," Jimmy added, seeing the look on Penelope's face. "You won't have to do it alone. I'll go in five minutes ahead of time, and hide somewhere in the house. If

you find me, you can go out early and still get the 50 dollars. If you don't find me and still go out before the night is up, you don't get the money. If you want the money but don't want to look for me, then you have to spend the whole night. So, do you want to try for the 50? No one else has been brave enough to try."

Penelope was trapped between wanting the money and wanting to stay out of that house. She had never been the brave type, but her family was poor and had never been able to give her much pocket money...

"I guess I'll do it," Penelope said.

The next night Penelope showed up outside the house, carrying a blanket in case there weren't any beds in the house and she couldn't find Jimmy. She didn't want to have to stay up all night.

"Excellent," Jimmy said, spotting Penelope walking toward the house. "I'll go in now, and you use your watch and come in five minutes after me."

"Okay," she agreed, starting to feel apprehensive. Sleeping in an abandoned house wasn't exactly on her bucket list.

Jimmy waved, and with that opened the house door, the only thing that wasn't boarded up and entered the house.

Penelope, suddenly feeling worried, stared at a garden right beside the house. Somehow the plants were still alive.

She checked her watch; it had been five minutes.

Penelope, not wanting to be a wimp, gathered her courage and let herself into the house, and closed the door behind her.

She immediately wished she hadn't. The only light came from dark rays shining through the boarded-up windows. Penelope couldn't see 10 feet in front of her; everything had become completely obscured by the darkness.

Penelope took a few tentative steps forward. The house was undoubtably creepy, and the thought of exploring it suddenly seemed a lot less appealing.

Dropping her things by the door, Penelope, deciding to explore a bit first, started to walk forward. At first, she saw nothing but blackness, then slowly, off to the side, she saw a staircase, set next to a wall covered in peeling wallpaper.

The stairs were wooden, and a pair of forgotten boots lay stranded across the stairs, splattered with the same dark liquid as the carpet.

Penelope slowly started to walk up the stairs, feeling the hairs on the back of her neck prickle. The creaks echoed in the dim hall way, and something about the silence made Penelope uneasy.

At the top of the stairs Penelope entered into a hallway lined with doors. The carpet here appeared to have been torn and was covered in the same dark liquid.

Penelope cautiously eased open a door, hoping that Jimmy might be inside.

The room appeared to have used to be a bedroom, but the bed was chipped and missing a leg, and the bedding was strewn across the floor. The closet across the room was filled with moth-eaten clothes. The closet smelled strongly of neglect, and the corners of the closet were covered in cobwebs.

Penelope, after deciding Jimmy was definitely not in that room crossed the hall to the next door.

The next room was pitch black, and Penelope groped around in the darkness, trying to find something to give her a clue as to where Jimmy might be.

Feeling relieved, Penelope felt her hands slide over the edge of a bedpost. Sliding her hands onto the pillow, she started to feel around for Jimmy.

Penelope's heart raced with excitement as she touched the edge of what felt like a nose. Moving her hands she felt the perfect grooves of a face, except a face much older.

Moving closer she peered closer at the face.

Then she stuffed her fist in her mouth so she wouldn't scream.

The man had empty, soulless eyes, and his skin had a waxy, white texture. He was obviously dead.

In his neck was a bloody hole.

Penelope turned around, she had no wish to be in this house. She knew that someone had to be here, but it wasn't Jimmy.

Not unless he had a really crude sense of humor.

Turning, Penelope fled out into the hall, turning to face the stairs.

Silhouetted against the darkness was a man, standing upright, clutching a bloody knife.

Penelope couldn't help it, she screamed.

At the end of the hall was a dead end.

Penelope turned and opened a door at random.

Inside the room were bones, lots of them.

Penelope tripped and sent the bones skidding.

The murderer was chasing her; she could hear his footsteps.

Struggling, Penelope clambered to her feet and opened another door on the opposite wall. She continued to sprint through various rooms, ignoring the searing pain she felt in her leg as she knocked over a bottle of simmering purple liquid. The house was like a labyrinth. Every door led into another room.

Finally, Penelope saw what appeared to be the back door.

A feeling of desperation pushed her forward, she would make it out, alive.

Without warning, the murderer jumped out from behind the corner.

Penelope bolted, straight out the back door.

But as she did so, his knife grazed the edge of Penelope's neck, leaving a cut she knew would never fully heal.

The last thing she saw was the glint of his knife as the door creaked closed.