

He was watching. She was watching. The house was watching.

When it first happened it had been big news, the flyers were everywhere, detectives made their way to every door, and all anchors could talk about was Micah, the ten year old boy who disappeared on his way to school.

The second time it happened, with Ms. Maddy, suspicions were raised. Not about the people; it was never about the people but about the house. It was the last place anyone had seen either missing person.

Micah according to reports had been last seen staring at the house and telling his friend to go because he, "needed to take care of something." Ms. Maddy was seen by a local shop owner taking off her coat, folding it neatly into her briefcase, tossing it into the road and with the confidence of someone with the world at their feet walked straight on in. The suitcase had later been taken and according to the final police report so had Ms. Maddy. To where? No one would ever know.

The house itself was a classic two story white picket fence type. It was old and abandoned. Someone must have owned it once but no one in town could remember who. The windows had broken shutters framing them and the porch had a large hole where Large Mr. Perty had once stepped. Funnily enough, the doorbell still worked.

After the second disappearance, mothers would tug their children to the other side of the street. It was a known rule that none of the Ginsburg town residents would walk the same street the house was on. No one looks at it; no one talks about it.

It did not work.

The third time it happened it was late and there was a cool breeze in the air. I had forgotten my coat at home, but it was okay. The house loomed on the other side of the street and I didn't care what the rest of the town said; it was beautiful. It was calling me. I could feel it in the way the wind moved, beckoning me to come closer to give it a chance. Because, you see, reader, I was the only one who could complete it. I needed to complete it. I crossed the street, crossed its ripped up yard, up the steps of the broken porch and standing nose to nose with the door I rang the doorbell.

*Come in. Come in. Come in.*

The house was musty and mold seeped through the cracks. I began up the steps.

The broken wood snagged at my clothing and scratched up my arms.

Three more steps and I would be at the top.

One. Two. Three.

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The police, as the story goes, didn't bother to show up the third time. Some too scared others too tired of hearing the same old story.

But it was okay. The house was okay.

Because he was watching. She was watching. I was watching. We were watching.