

# **DARKNESS**

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FADE IN:

EXT. SURBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

A modest two-story house. A light switches on upstairs.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A pink, youthful room illuminated by a swirling night-light.

A small figure lies in bed, back to the headboard. A young girl, no more than 6. Curly hair, innocent face.

This is TESSA. She clutches a worn, one-eyed teddy-bear against her chest.

A KNOCK on the door. The door opens, in steps KARA. Mid 30s, an older version of Tessa.

KARA

Time for bed, kiddo.

TESSA

Why can't I stay up with you?

KARA

Because little girls like you need their sleep.

Kara bends down, places a kiss on Tessa's cheek.

The night-light flickers. Tessa jumps, holds her bear even tighter.

Kara notices, giggles.

KARA (CONT'D)

I can't believe you still have that thing.

TESSA

He keeps me safe.

KARA

So does Mommy.

Kara fixes the light, looks at Tessa with a smile.

KARA (CONT'D)

Get some sleep.

Kara watches her for a moment. Her eyes glance up, sees --

AN OPEN WINDOW.

Kara furrows her brow, peers out.

BEHIND HER. The door closes. Kara turns just as --

THE WINDOW SLAMS SHUT. Narrowly misses her fingers. Kara jumps, startled.

A moment passes. She throws an embarrassed look at Tessa, chuckles to calm herself down.

KARA (CONT'D)  
Close call.

TESSA  
(flat)  
Uh-huh.

Kara heads back to the door, turns.

KARA  
See you in the morning.

Kara switches off the light, reveals --

A LARGE SHADOW behind her.

She closes the door, leaves it cracked just a little.

Tessa glances around the room. SHADOWS play amongst the wall. Suddenly --

MOVEMENT in the corner of the room.

Tessa whimpers, hides under her blanket.

INT. KARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kara lays in her bed, fast asleep.

CLANG! As if metal hitting the floor.

Kara's eyes pop open. She sits up, sighs.

KARA  
Tessa?

INT. TESSA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door opens, Kara peers inside.

It's dark. The night-light's off.

KARA

Tessa?

Tessa peeks from under the blanket.

TESSA

Y-yeah?

KARA

Why did you turn your night-light  
off?

Kara crosses the room, bends down, fixes the night-light.

TESSA

I didn't.

KARA

Then who did?

Tessa points a shaky finger towards her closet. Kara furrows her brow.

TESSA

There's someone inside my closet.

KARA

I thought we were past this.

Kara moves toward the closet door. She stops, looks back toward Tessa. Sees Tessa's scared expression.

Kara hesitates. She reaches for the door, quickly pulls it open. Finds --

Nothing. Clothes, toys, but nothing else.

Kara flashes Tessa a smile. Assuring.

KARA (CONT'D)

See? No one in your closet.

Tessa's not convinced.

TESSA

Can I keep the light on?

KARA

Tess --

TESSA

Pretty please?

Kara relents, nods.

KARA  
Just until you fall asleep.

Kara heads for the door, switches on the light. She smiles at Tessa.

KARA (CONT'D)  
Get some sleep, little girl.  
(pause)  
I love you.

Kara disappears from the doorway.

Tessa looks back towards the closet door. She watches as --  
The door creaks as it closes.

INT. KARA'S BEDROOM

Kara sits on the edge of the bed, wipes the sleep from her eyes.

TAP.

Kara turns toward the window. She listens for the sound again. On cue --

TAP. TAP.

Kara creeps toward the window. Her eyes fall upon the streetlight. It flickers.

TAP.

This time right behind her.

Kara whirls, finds --

SOMEONE STANDING IN THE DOORWAY!

Kara SCREAMS. Jumps back, knocks her bedlamp to the floor in the process.

She looks again.

The doorway's empty. Then --

Tessa's screams resonate from the next room.

KARA  
Tessa?!

Kara springs into action --

INT. HALLWAY

Kara races down the hall, bursts into --

INT. TESSA'S BEDROOM

Kara spots Tessa on the bed. She looks around the room, half-crazed. No one but Tessa in the room.

KARA  
What's wrong?

Tessa stares past her, right at her bedroom door.

KARA (CONT'D)  
Answer me, Tessa!

Tessa points at something behind Kara.

TESSA  
(low)  
Mommy...

Kara can feel a presence. She slowly turns, comes face to face with --

HER DOPPELGANGER. An absolute perfect imitation of Kara. The doppelganger smiles.

DOPPELGANGER  
Hi.

Kara goes completely pale. Suddenly --

She's thrown to the floor with force. Dragged out of the room. The door slams closed.

Tessa curls up, losing. She cries. She screams.

On the other end of the door --

CRASHING. SMASHING. Glass breaks. Kara's terrifying screams. Absolute chaos.

Books fall from the shelves. Pictures on the wall hit the floor.

Tessa's bed begins to shake.

TESSA  
Stop!

The closet door opens, slams shut. Opens. Slams shut.

TESSA (CONT'D)  
Stop please!

Tessa holds her hands to her eyes, tries hard to drown out her surroundings.

TESSA (CONT'D)  
STOP IT!

Then...silence.

Tessa goes still. What seems to be like an eternity.

TESSA (CONT'D)  
Mommy?

The door opens. CRRREEEAAKKK....It's unnerving.

TESSA (CONT'D)  
Mommy?

Footsteps approach. In steps --

A young girl. TESSA'S DOPPELGANGER. A wide smile plastered on her face. She holds a one-eyed teddybear. Tessa's bear.

Tessa's eyes widen in horror. She looks to her side --

Her teddybear is missing.

TESSA'S DOPPELGANGER  
Wanna play?

As Tessa screams --

HER NIGHT-LIGHT GOES OUT. BLACK.