

For the hundredth time this week, the pale curtain blew, whipping outwardly from the wood floors. The ceiling was already installed when we moved into the home last year, but recently the summer heat had risen to overwhelming conditions, and the fan was never in the off position. Granted, curtains normally move, but not these. They're made from a weighted material, and seeing them whoosh about awkwardly, didn't sit well. Not only that, but when I'm in the room, they don't move, as soon as I stepped of the door, they always began to flutter. Nothing else, papers, table cloths, table runner, or mail ever seemed to be bothered in the least bit.

Which brings me to my point, there *must* be a ghost in this house. But I'm so confused and don't have a clue of who it could possibly be. You see, I live in a new house. I'm fairly young, and haven't had anyone close to me die in the past decade. And if it was that one person, my Aunt who died over ten years ago, then wouldn't she have shown herself by now? It couldn't be my Aunt.

So who else?

I decide to count off the list in my mind of anyone, *if* anyone, had died in my past.

Chris, the boy from college. Oh he was a hotty alright, and he died in a terrible accident. But no, I didn't know him that well, and was definitely not him.

How about the girl at work? Hmmm...maybe. I did work with her for two years, we hung out a lot in the lounge, and I did steal her yummy Italian lunch that time, but no. It couldn't be her. I don't even remember her name, I called her Jane, but I'm pretty sure that was short for something else.

As I tried counting dead people on my fingers, which really wasn't many, my dog decided to bark at the UPS guy dropping off my husband's package for work on the front doorstep. Which then in turn began a repetitive bark from my other dog, the old deaf Border collie? They barked back and forth, growling a little when I walked into the room.

"Shhhhh! Stupid dogs, you'll wake the baby!" I shouted carefully as to not wake him myself.

I swear sometimes I didn't know why we had dogs. As much as I loved them, I loved them way more *before* we had children. Now I just feel like I'm taking care of a house full of kids, them and my husband included, and yet there was really only one.

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It was late and my evening was rather boring; my husband was already in bed snoring so loud that the dogs were about to start barking again. I swear, since that curtain began moving, they'd been much *much* more jumpy. Normally, I'd find one dog passed out on the ground next to my side of the bed, while the other, the deaf one, would be in the kitchen asleep on the cold tile next to their water bowl. The younger one, a tall black poodle, would usually have dreams at night causing her legs to run in the air as she growled through clenched teeth. I literally have to rub her back and shake her shoulders a little to wake her from the dream. I wonder what dogs even dream about anyways?

I decided to finish a few chores around the house, the usual drabby stuff like sweeping and mopping.

I looked over, there was that damn curtain again.

Moving and flowing and whirling about.

A chill traveled across my arms and neck, causing the hairs on my arms to rise. I looked up, but there wasn't a vent nearby, plus the air was momentarily off. Not only had there been a creepy curtain, causing agitated dogs jumping at my feet, but now a spontaneous chill was added to my list of weird. And I still couldn't think of who the ghost might be.

I shook the poodle from my side and my nostrils passed over the horrid stench coming from the sink overflowing with dishes. It was hubby's night to wash the dirty bowls and clean the gunk off the plates, but of course, I was stuck with them.

I reached over and shoved the faucet handle up and to the left, turning the water full blast. Squirts of water spewed out from a crease where the handle connected, and I gently pulled the handle down a bit to fix the problem.

It took a few seconds for the water to warm, and eventually it became steaming hot. The small window above the sink started fogging and I stared, waiting for some message, *any* message, to appear.

"Who's there?" I said, staring.

"Please, I know you're there. Just say something or *do* something."

I waited a few minutes longer, more steam added to the fogginess. Another chill ran over my neck and down my back, and then someone whispered in my ear.

"Hey baby." I jumped and turned around.

It was my husband.

"John! Uggh," I laughed and backhanded him across the chest.

“You know you’re crazy right?” He said, mocking me. A few weeks ago, I briefly told him my concern about the ghost.

“Go back to bed will ya,” I smiled. He was partly right, crazy did run in my family; counting today, my brother had been in a psych ward for five years and three weeks. We had been close growing-up, not so much anymore, not after he tried strangling me thinking I was some alien invader.

“I am. I just need a glass of water.” He grabbed a drink and kissed me on the cheek before heading back to bed.

And I began scrubbing a soaked casserole dish. It was pointless to point out that it was *his* night.

There were more bowls and cups than a normal couple used in a week’s time. But I have this thing, a *habit*. I never used the same glass twice, I’m not sure why. I know it’s okay to drink after myself, but something about reusing glasses grosses me out. It always has, ever since I was little. When I was younger, my *habit* drove my parents mad; eventually an entire kitchen cabinet filled with cups was designated to me.

After I loaded the last plate into the washer, I looked down and saw my usual puddle of H<sub>2</sub>O that always accumulated while rinsing dishes. I leaned over and grabbed one of the red kitchen towels from the island next to me, and BANG! My feet slipped right out from under me, the back of my head hit the counter and I landed on the open dishwasher. Immediately, I grabbed my head and started to calling out for John... at least I tried.

My voice wasn’t working and when I grabbed my throat, I felt something sticking out the side of it.

My fingers touched a large object; a black handle from one of the knives, placed in the holder for cleaning, protruded from my neck’s flesh.

I laid there unable to move, unable to speak, my own personal pool of blood, and then I looked up.

A man dressed in black with long grey hair and nails was standing over me. He wasn’t translucent, nor a ghost. He begin saying something to me, surprisingly I understood him.

He reached out his hand for me to grasp and helped me up. I looked down at my body, dead, not yet cold.

“Hello Sarah, I’ve been waiting for you. I’m DEATH,” he said.