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Mrs. Rude

The Haunted Harmon's

The unseen presence crept slowly across the bed. Heart thundering, breaths caught in his throat, my dad lay motionless on his bed, the covers pulled up to his chin. Only a few seconds earlier, the ghost haunting our house had announced her presence with a knock-knock on the headboard. The springs in the mattress compressed as the spirit climbed onto the bed and slowly made her way towards my father. Eyes squeezed shut, dad remained paralyzed with fear as the presence reached him. A heavyweight pushed down onto his legs as if someone had laid down on him. As the pressure on his legs diminished, dad threw off the covers and tore downstairs to find his family in the living room.

“You won’t believe what just happened to me,” he shouted, and he was right, we probably wouldn’t have believed him if the entire incident hadn’t been captured by the video camera positioned on the headboard.

Days passed after my father’s bizarre experience and nothing had happened, at least nothing I was aware of. Until one night.

I pushed my ear onto the smooth wood of my bedroom door. It was pitch black, the moonlight pouring through my window served as the only source of light. I heard the sound of mumbling coming from downstairs, and a faint hint of light spilling through the crack at the bottom of the door. Clutching my best friend and loyal companion, Cookiebear, the stuffed

animal bear, I gathered the courage to push open the door and investigate the incoherent noise from downstairs.

I tiptoed down the plush carpet on my staircase and made it to the cold wood of my kitchen. I held Cookiebear close to my chest as I saw my father, mother, and older sisters sitting at our kitchen table with a video camera in the center, all saying things my five-year-old mind could not comprehend. My father turned to his right and saw me standing there.

“What are you doing down here,” he said, “you should be in bed.”

My father carried me back to my room where I laid awake. Despite the summer heat, shivers ran down my spine at the thought of what I had just seen. I didn’t know at the time but my family was having a “Communication with a ghost.”

These communications continued on for several months, as I heard my family talking to each other in the middle of the night. I discovered that my family was talking to the ghost of a woman named Mary Bell Wilson, who my father, with the aid of the Fort Collins Museum, found out was a twenty-two-year-old woman with a two-year-old daughter, who died of typhoid fever in the 1800s. The shivers that used to run down my spine at the thought of a ghost quickly diminished when I discovered our ghost was a twenty-two-year-old mother.

One night, my sisters and I charged around the house screaming and chasing one another. I dashed into the living room, my sisters close behind me, and found my mother sitting in the living room folding laundry.

“Mary Bell, what did you do to these girls?” she joked. But seconds later... crash! My mother, sisters, and I glanced over to the stairwell, where three large picture frames lay shattered on the floor at the bottom of the stairs. The same thing happened the day after when my oldest

sister heard a loud crash and glass shatter and discovered more broken picture frames on the floor.

These experiences continued over the years, but my childhood fears slowly disintegrated as I grew up. I even began to think of our friendly ghost as part of our family. My family continued to joke about what had happened to us, and the unique experiences that we faced. The most unique being that my parents went onto a show in Los Angeles to talk about our ghostly experience.

While my first paranormal experiences are very foggy, my family's ghost allowed us to spend more time together. My close-knit family became even closer because of our shared love of the paranormal. And not just that, but how many families can say that they've had a ghost before? Mine can, and it's the thing that makes my family so unique and crazy.