

"Hello," he said, his voice low and gravelly, like the rustling of dry leaves. It was a sound that sent shivers down Emily's spine as she stood at the doorstep of the old mansion. The once-grand estate loomed before her, its turrets and gargoyles reaching towards the moon like skeletal fingers.

Emily had received a cryptic letter from this stranger, inviting her to meet him at Ravenswood Manor. The letter was unsigned, but the words had seemed to sear themselves into her brain: "Come alone. The truth about your sister awaits."

Emily's sister, Sarah, had gone missing three years ago. The police had given up on the case, and Emily had been left with nothing but questions and a gnawing sense of guilt. She had tried every lead, every tip, every rumor, but they all seemed to end in dead ends.

As she stepped inside the mansion, a chill ran down her spine. The air was thick with the scent of decay and rot. A chandelier hung crookedly from the ceiling, casting flickering shadows on the walls.

The stranger emerged from the darkness, his eyes gleaming with an unsettling intensity. "Welcome, Emily," he said, his voice dripping with malice. "I've been waiting for you."

He led her deeper into the mansion, through winding corridors and dusty rooms. Emily's heart pounded in her chest as she tried to keep up with his long strides. They finally arrived at a door hidden behind a tattered tapestry. The stranger pushed it open, revealing a room that seemed frozen in time.

Inside, Emily saw a collection of artifacts that made her blood run cold. Old photographs, yellowed with age, depicted a young woman with a haunting resemblance to Sarah. Emily's eyes widened as she realized that she was staring at her own sister's face, captured in moments of joy and laughter.

But there was something else in the room, something that made Emily's heart sink. A series of newspaper clippings, each one detailing a brutal murder that had taken place in the town. The victims all had one thing in common: they had gone missing before their disappearances.

Emily's eyes locked onto the stranger, her mind racing with questions. "What do you want from me?" she demanded, trying to keep her voice steady.

The stranger smiled, his eyes glinting with a sinister light. "I want to show you the truth," he said, his voice dripping with menace. "The truth about your sister, and the darkness that lies within this town."

As Emily listened, the shadows in the room seemed to grow longer, as if they themselves were alive and watching her. She knew that she had to get out of there, but her feet seemed rooted to the spot. The stranger began to speak, his words weaving a web of terror around her.

And then, everything went black.

When Emily came to, she was lying on a cold, stone floor. The room was empty, except for a single piece of paper on the ground. Scrawled on it was a message, in handwriting that sent shivers down her spine: "The truth is just the beginning. The darkness is waiting."

Emily stumbled out of the mansion, into the darkness of the night. She knew that she had to uncover the truth, no matter how terrible it might be. But as she looked back at Ravenswood Manor, she couldn't shake the feeling that she was being watched, that the shadows themselves were closing in around her.