

THE HOUSE ON PELBROOK ROAD

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On a hilly rise in Pembroke road is a big old house. It was once loved and cared for by a family by the name of Finlayson. The family was very large with twelve kids, Mum and Dad and an old Aunt called Clarrissa. Pembroke road itself had no paving. only a shingle road, and dirt often muddy footpath on one side. In its heyday, the road had been tree lined and bustled with traffic. Horses and carriages mingling with the odd motor car. It is 1957. The house in Pembroke road stands empty. As it has for sixty years or more. The road has become a track, used only every once in a while as the odd car travels it to get to Blackball. A small town about ten miles away in the hills. The main road goes there now but others who live in the hills find it a much shorter route.

The Autumn leaves fall from wilting poplar and cherry trees surrounding the old wooden house. It is a very eerie sight, standing alone, with its twin towers and three storeys of broken-shuttered windows. Like a palace really, or something wicked, waiting for something. Waiting for someone maybe. Who knows.

A car pulls up near the postbox on the old broken, white picket fence. There are three people inside.

Chas Everett, Ilene Everett and their son Lamon. A very quiet, strange thirteen year old. They are all from Shannon. A town in the East.

"Jesus!", Chas said sharply "Look at this Goddam place. Christ Ilene, it looks like a damn scene from "The twilight zone,"

"Well, I guess you cant expect much for twenty five thousand", Ilene said and added "I quite like it Chas".

The three got out of the car and walked along a cobbled, ^{put holes} ~~holey~~ path leading to the large verendah. Lamon stopped short near the fence. The others had reached the verendah and were about

to ascend the steps to the front door.

"Wheres Eamon?", asked Ilene looking all around.

Eamon was staring at a window high in the left tower. He was sure that a person sat in the window, rocking back and forth. He couldnt see that well, but sometimes it appeared that the person was beckoning him. It must be a woman, a very old woman. She was draped in lace . It was black and blowing in the wind. Eamon looked at a swirl of rustling, red and gold leaves for only an instant. when he looked back, she was gone. He looked over his right shoulder. There was a sound of distant bells. He saw nothing. His blue eyes staring not blinking. Turning back to the house, his mother beckoning him, caught his eye. Above, the sky was blackening and the sun had turned red, pulsating, veined and vexing.

"Theres something wrong with that boy", his father said shaking his head.

Eamon ran along the path to his parents.

"Mom, the sky, the suns all red", he panted.

"Nonsense Eamon", she protested "its blue sky , the sun is as yellow as it always is". she stroked his hair reassuringly,

"Are you alright?,"

Eamon looked at the sky. It was blue. There were no clouds. That woman intrigued him. was she there? was he imagining the whole thing? Chas opened the door.

"Hold on sweet", Chas said to his wife, then stooping to uplift her and carry her over the threshold. Eamon followed curiously. They entered the house and stopped just inside the door. "What an enormous hall. ^{" Chas thought.} There was a huge spiral staircase leading upwards at the far end of the hallway and there were several doors leading off on all sides. All around were old furnishings and things. They couldnt help but notice a very strange feature. John Finlayson, the youngest of the family who owned the house

had told them before they came to look. "The place hasn't been lived in for thirty or forty years, so you'll expect a bit of a mess then?".

That's to be expected, but strangely there was no mess. It was as if the place had never been left alone.

"~~Shit~~, that's ~~bloody~~ odd", said Chas

"Yeah", replied his wife cautiously.

Chas turned to call Eamon, but he was nowhere to be seen. He called out. No answer. The only safe bet was that he had climbed the stairs to go exploring the old house. However, they both felt that something was not right, not normal with this house. It felt uneasy. Like it had secrets, ~~or their were souls trapped in the finely decorated walls and ceiling.~~ It was becoming quickly colder, increasing each moment they stood there. Chas turned to his wife.

"You go to the car, this place gives me the creeps". he said nervously to Ilene.

She turned towards the door. As her foot moved its first step, the door slammed shut. Ilene ran to the door and tried to open it. The knob wouldn't budge. Chas walked quickly to the door and tried as well. Nothing. They panicked, Chas went to a window. The shutters slammed closed in his face then the next and the next. Bang..Bang Bang, one after the other.

"We're not going to get out, we've got to find Eamon" shouted Chas. They turned to the stairs. Suddenly realising that the room was filthy. There were sheets covering furniture and cobwebs and dirt everywhere.

"Here I am", said Eamon.

They turned around to see him standing in the front door, it was wide open. They looked at the windows, filthy and webbed. The shutters were open.

"Whats wrong, you look terrified", he said to his parents
"Its Ok, she wont hurt you".

"What the hell are you talking about?" snapped Chas.

"The house", replied Eamon.

He had seen the woman in the window. "She sits there day in
dayout. She is waiting only waiting. She is waiting for me",
slurred Eamon. He seemed to be in a trance or a dream. His
eyes stared wider and wider until they looked ready to pop
out of his head. "Shes calling me. I must go to her".

He walked across the hall and onto the stairs and then dissappeared.
Chas ran to the stairs. They were dirty and high. He stepped
onto the first one. It creaked and groaned beneath his feet
as if something was ordering him to step off. The second
step was worse. Looking down, Chas could see no footprints
in the dust. ~~No spiders web touched.~~ To all intents and
purposes, Eamon had simply vanished.

For two hours Chas and his wife searched the house looking
for Eamon. No luck though, he was not to be found. There
was one place they hadnt searched though. The very top of
the left tower. There was a door but it was locked. Chas
stood outside the door. Looking through the bunch of keys
they had been given.

Chas said "There isnt one for this door. Theres one for
everything else but not this door",

Ilene was terrified. "Do you think he could be in there?"
she said.

"I dunno, but Im going to find out",

The door was solid oak, Chas tried to kick ~~it~~ at the lock.
Nothing happened. His foot hurt though.

A small noise became noticable from in that room. It was as
soft as the evening breeze. Ilene gasped. Pointing in terror.

Chas looked to where she was staring. A strange reddish glow, so light, barely a tint on the light of day. It seemed to move slowly up the stairs. The terror grew. Nearer and nearer it came. The only way out of the tower was the stairway, and they were standing at the top with nowhere to hide. This misty light came closer and closer. A strange feeling of calm embraced the two as the presence flowed through their bodies and into that small room at the top of the tower.

"Holy shit", exclaimed Chas "what the hell was that?".

"I dont know, but it was not dangerous", said Ilene.

The door at the top of the stairs popped open. It stood ajar slightly. Within it they could see the shadows of the two people shading the wall. It seemed dark and dank in there. They knew that if they did not go in, they might never see their son again.

They left the relative light of the purple wallpapered hall, and opened the door. The room was small, dark and musty. Chas held Ilenes hand. She was shaking, badly frightened. Suddenly, the squeak of a rocking chair cut through the silence. The rocking chair moved on its own. They stared at it. They stared as it rocked more and more. An apparition began to manifest itself. An old woman, the old woman who Eamon had seen in that window high in the tower.

"Wheres my son", demanded Ilene "Wheres Eamon?".

The old woman pointed at the wall opposite the window. It was only a wall. Chas hurried over there. He felt around the wall for a door, some kind of secret opening. There was none. Suddenly, came the sound of something like a cat crying. It was very muffled and from within the wall. It went loud and soft like the wailing siren of a fire engine. Chas thought he saw the wall move. The grey lavender patterns twisting

out of shape on the wallpaper. He was right, the face of Eamon appeared then his hands and feet, All patterned in the wallpaper as though trying to force his way through a wall of balloon rubber. Chas and Ilene tried to drag him through, but their hands went through the wall as if it were not there, a different dimension. Eamon disappeared. Ilene cried for him.

"What do we do now?". she asked chas.

"I dont know, I just dont know". he said. Embracing her.

It was getting on towards dark now. They had bought this old house without looking at it first, and arrived here only to find things were not as they seemed.

"Look here". exclaimed Ilene pointing at the rocking chair.

It was still rocking, but the woman was gone. Eamon sat there, staring out the window, his black hair flicked periodically by the breeze.

Ilene touched him on the cheek. He was cold, so very cold.

The chair began to rock. Ilene snatched Eamon from the chair.

The three managed to leave the room before the door slammed shut, knocking Chas to the ground. He was the last out the door. The other two had made it onto the staircase. Chas got to his feet and followed. No sooner were they on the stairs, they began to move side to side like a rope bridge, tossing them to and fro helplessly.

Suddenly the swaying stopped. Chas yelled.

"Get down now". Ilene ran down the stairs dragging Eamon.

All at once the stairs dropped, folding down like the "Pop up headlights of a sports car. Becoming as a ramp. The three tumbled over and over rolling down all the way to the bottom of the tower.

"Are you all right?", asked Chas shaken.

"Im ok"replied Ilene. Eamon said nothing.

"What now", asked Ilene nervously.

"We find a way out of here, follow me", Chas replied.

It was dark in the bottom of the tower. There were no lights and nothing to break out with. Ilene looked up. She screamed.

The top of the tower had begun to move. It was descending on them. If they did not get out, they would be crushed.

The spiral staircase which ran the full height of the tower was folding up like a concertina. Closer and closer.

Creaking and screeching and rumbling. Chas looked up.

There was a door about twenty feet up the staircase. That would be the only way out. Despite the fact that the spiral staircase was coming down on them. Chas led them back up.

It was jerking around a lot and hard to hold onto, but they managed to get to the door. Chas kicked it open and they

dived through dragging Eamon with them just as the top of the tower reached the doorway. They were now in a small

room. The walls and ceiling were spattered with a dark reddish black pattern. It didnt look like paint, more

like blood. Old blood.Eamon yelled "NO". raising his

hands to cover his face as if protecting himself from some invisible attacker. He was shaking profusely and

sweating. Suddenly the voice of the old woman was heard.

Eamons mouth moved as she spoke. His eyes had gone white, with no pupils.

The voice screamed "You killed me Finlayson you murderer!"

Ilene shook Eamon "Wake up Eamon", she yelled. The voice

continued "Norman Finlayson must die by midnight tonight

or I take the soul of Eamon!" The voice stopped. Eamon

fell to the ground shaking. Norman Finlayson had something

to do with all this. This room was splattered with

blood. He must have killed Aunt Clarrissa, but why?. Why was Lamont to lose his soul. Ilene had been to a seance or two and had read many books on possessions by spirits, poltergeists and the like. To be put to rest, the old lady had to be avenged, her spirit was weak and she would float aimlessly in time unless Finlayson died at the hands of another to avenge her soul.

"Jesus, this is all to much for me", said Chas. "Im getting the hell out, now."

The three made their way through another room and into the kitchen at the bottom of some stairs. This kitchen was underground. It seemed peculiar to have one so far from the main servery area. They went in. Chas squealed in revulsion as his eye caught sight of a human skull in a pot half filled with water. It reeked and was mouldy. There was a large ice box in the corner, more of an annex of the kitchen really. Ilene went in slowly. The door slammed. She jumped. Chas opened the door.

"Calm down...Jesus Christ!" he said alarmingly. "Dont look". It was too late. Ilene flicked her eyes to the spot Chas had told he not to look at. There was a pile of corpses in the cooler. All were naked and had large chunks slashed off. Most were rotten. Some were Children some were adults. In all there were thirteen ~~corpses~~.

Chas and Ilene realised quickly what had happened. Finlayson or one of them, had murdered all of them except one. But which one? The smell of rotting corpses made Chas wretch, vomiting in the corner. They left the ice box and returned to the kitchen. Lamont was crying.

Tears of blood ran down his face filling pools at his mothers feet. She closed her eyes; ^{then} and opened them, the blood was tears. The old woman cried as time runs out.

"I've got it", said Chas excitedly "It wasn't Finlayson, the old man who killed the family. I remember hearing a tale at the pub in Blackball about this place. It seems that for some reason, the members of the Finlayson family disappeared over the years. A few as children, went onto the black moors and were never seen again. The others came back to visit and went missing. The only ones left were Norma and Clarissa. Clarissa died, apparently from a heart attack. She was buried in Blackball. Before she died, the old woman rattled off something about cannibals eating human meat and that she lost her favourite nephew Eamon. Of course everyone thought she was a nutcase and that was the end of that. With her body accounted for we have all of them but one. Norman Finlayson. Oh my God, he did all this. He must know where we're going to discover it". Chas took Ilene and Eamon by the hands. "There is a way in, so there must be a way out", he said. Feeling their way back up the stairs, Chas found a hidden button beneath the handrail. Pressing it hard, a panel opened in the wall on the stairs. They quickly walked through. This panel led directly back to the entrance foyer where they first seen the inside of this tragic house. Eamon suddenly woke up. "He's here, he's going to kill us. The old lady she she told me", he panicked. Chas looked around. Seeing no-one there, he led them towards the front door. As they approached it, the door slammed shut, as did the shutters. Oddly the house returned to splendour and light. "We have to deal with it", said Chas "Yes I know", replied Ilene.

They heard a crash from the downstairs kitchen. There was no-one else in the house but them, so it must be Finlayson they thought.

"Wait here", demanded Chas. "Ill go take a look".

He went back through the panel and crept slowly down the stairs; Reaching the entrance to the kitchen, he could see the six feet high grey haired figure of Finlayson. Finlayson turned on his heels facing Chas.

"So you know, now your gonna die", he said picking up a cleaver ^{which} ~~that~~ was sitting nearby on a large chopping table. Chas turned to bolt back to the stairs, but too late. Finlayson tossed the cleaver with high precision striking the back of Chas's head, digging in and splitting him like a peach. Finlayson grabbed a meat hook from the ice box and hacked it into the back of Chas's neck while he lay there in his death throws. He dragged the body across the floor and into the ice box. He lifted him up onto the rack and hanging the body up to chill.

"Ill be needing that", he said. Taking the cleaver from Chas's head with a squishing and cracking sound. He headed up the steps, having closed the ice box door. When he appeared at the open panel with blood all over him, and the cleaver in his hand. Ilene knew that chas was dead. She took Eamon by the hand and ran to the huge staircase. Eamon took two steps then vanished again. Ilene just kept running up the steps untill she reached the top. At the top w as the door to the left tower. She knew that Eamon would be in there. She tried the doorknob. The door opened. Inside, she slammed it shut and turned around. There stood Eamon rocking the old lady.

"I will help you", came the voice through Eamon. "If

Finlayson dies before midnight then your son is yours,
If not then Eamon will be in my place. wait in the tower"
said the voice.

"Yes...Yes I will", said Ilene, desperate at the death
of her husband and wondering what would happen to Eamon.
It was a quarter to midnight. Finlayson stalked about
downstairs waiting^{for} for the two victims. Suddenly, he noticed
a chair move. He thought he must be seeing things until
it moved again. He walked to it. It flew up and hit
him in the face knocking him backwards. The long narrow
carpet he was standing on flicked out from under him and
he fell to the ground. Then a large picture of Uncle
Johnathon flew from the fire place and broke over his
head. Then another one and another one. The room became
filled with a faint red misty glow. Each blow on Finlayson
made the glow brighter. The huge rolled settee dived across
the floor, scooping him up and smashing him into the wall
as a bust of Caesar fell off its pedestal and smashed his
head. Still he got to his feet. Staggering across the
room towards the door, he saw the grand piano gathering
momentum. It struck him with enormous force, breaking
his body in half against the oak front door. He was dead.
The time 11.55pm and at the moment of the death of Finlayson
Eamon was released. The furniture carried on flying around
the house getting faster and faster. Eamon appeared
back in the tower.

"weve gotta get out of here", he shouted at his mother.
Taking her by the hand and leading her down the main
stairs. Ducking objects as they went. Managing to slip
across the floor without being struck, the two climbed
out a window. A candle stick flew through above Ilenes

head . The two of them ran back to the car and watched as furniture and ornaments, whatefer came smashing through every window in the place. The front door smashed open, out came the grand piano, still with half of Finlaysons body squashed on it , chairs tables beds, all were coming straight at the car. Ilene started it and they sped off. As they drove away the furniture began moving back inside. Ilene stopped the car and got out to look at the house. The ~~the~~ house crumbled ~~ed~~. The left tower had caught fire. It looked as though blood was pouring from the little window in the left tower. The window where the woman had been trapped for so long. A whisp of reddish sparkling smoke rose into the sky, then it was gone. Eamon and Ilene knew it was the spirits released from their prison. She had lost a husband and Eamon a father. They drove away sadly as the last of the house on Pembroke road crumbled into dust.

THE END