

Rain, Reign, Go Away

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The rain. The screams. The silence. The empty. The slaughter.

The sky had already been so dark. The air had already been so cold. The daylight had already been swept away by the threatening clouds. But the horrid weather did not stop the persistent children of South 31st street from running and jumping through the puddles of rain water that had collected and pooled on the concrete.

Suddenly, everything changed. The dark sky became like night. The frigid air became like ice. The small amount of remaining daylight became nonexistent.

But what scared Reigni Scott most was the rain. The normally crystal clear sweet-to-the-taste drops that fell from the sky became like dark poison. All in one sheet, the rain changed from peaceful and innocent to black and deadly.

She took in a sharp gasp of air when the hair-raising uproar began. Reigni's parents, Rachel and Andrew Scott, ran toward the front window to peek outside. Reigni and her brother, Thomas, followed.

The horrifying sound was unlike anything she'd ever heard before. The harsh chorus of blood-curdling screams pierced through the walls of their home as if the thick, insulated structure was only a few sheets of tissue paper.

One ear-splitting screech floated on top of the rest. It sent a chill through her whole body. She'd heard that exact scream many times before in the dead of night when a six-year-old boy awoke from a nightmare. A six-year-old boy who the whole family loved so dearly. Their six-year-old boy. Angel. Their beloved Angel.

“The rain... it’s back...”

The screams stopped as suddenly as they had started. The silence hung heavily in the air like a thick fog, dark and dense; it pounded in Reigni’s ears louder than the screams had. Nobody moved; the rustling of their clothes would be like deafening in the intense quiet. Nobody spoke; a voice would break the dead silence like shattering glass. Nobody breathed; shaking breaths would sound like great gusts of wind in the extreme lack of sound.

Reigni’s eyes met Thomas’s from across the living room. His eyes were twice their normal size. The look that filled them told his sister how terrified he was. His lips quivered. He’d heard Angel’s scream as well. Combined with the harsh noise, such immense silence was too much. The fourteen-year-old boy was on the brink of tears.

They all heard the collective *creek* and *thump* as every door that lead into a warm home on South 31st street opened and closed at the *exact* same time. The family spun instantly toward the closest sound, their front door. Angel stood in the doorway, dripping with the acidic rain water. His sun-streaked blond hair was matted to his forehead. His wet clothing clung to his frame. The water turned the cloth that covered his skin dark, causing his fair complexion to appear even paler.

Light no longer filled the young boy’s eyes. He looked almost...empty. Almost. His eyes were hidden by a strong determination that should not ever spend time in the eyes of a six-year-old. A determination that should not ever spend time in the eyes of *anyone*. A determination that petrified anyone who looked at the young boy.

Rachel dove toward her son, her eyes wide with terror.

“Angel!” she shouted, wrapping her warms around the small boy. “Are you okay? Are you—?”

Her frantic voice was cut off and a loud *crunch* filled the room. Angel’s small hands were tightly wound around his mother’s neck. Blood spilled past her lip. His tight grip loosened and Rachel Scott fell in a crumpled heap to the floor. A scream poured from Reigni’s throat.

The boy who stood in front of her was not the brother she knew and loved. He was not the young boy she’d taken care of for so many years. He was not Reigni’s baby brother. That boy was dead, taken away by the rain they’d been told stories about. The rain that emptied the souls from anyone who was so unfortunate to have it come in contact with their skin. The rain that nearly wiped out the human race so many years ago. The rain brought by *Them*.

A four-year-old named Reigni sat in her grandfather’s lap, looking up at him with a look of awe and wonder on her small round face. Two-year-old Thomas sat on the opposite knee, looking up at the ancient man with the same expression as his sister. The well-known story flowed past the old man’s cracked lips as he spoke to the young children.

“Each day we suffered through the same hellish routine. Hide, keep silent, stay inside, hope. The horrible controlling rain fell from the sky, black and poisonous. Anyone so unfortunate to be trapped outside as they tried to flee screamed. All together. All exactly the same. The screams always cut off after nineteen seconds.

“The silence was so much worse than the screams. It lasted an eternity. It proved that anyone outside was dead. And they were coming...

“Those who’d been emptied of their souls pushed the doors open after exactly three minutes. They were indestructible. If you were the poor, unfortunate soul who’d been chosen, your chances at survival were scarce.

“Each death was more creative than the last. They’d start with the snapping of necks, then continue to get more gruesome. There was always blood. There would always be blood.”

“Dad, stop it!” the children’s mother interjected. “You’ll just scare them with all that nonsense!”

“It isn’t nonsense,” the old man mumbled gruffly. “And They will be back.”

“Reigni, Thomas! Get out!” Reigni’s ears strained in pure horror to hear the last words that would ever pass her father’s lips.

She stared in shock as the empty shell of her little Angel threw her father to the ground. He tried to fight back against the smaller boy, but the rain-infested body was much stronger. The boy had his hands against Andrew’s chest. His sternum was snapped. The strong boy opened the much larger man’s rib cage like double doors. Reigni was too horrified to scream.

Thomas’ cry to their father snapped Reigni out of her reverie. She spun away from her dead parents and shoved Thomas toward the back door. The rain had momentarily stopped; if they could just get to an empty house they’d be safe. Anything would be safer than being trapped in the house with the boy whose mind was set on killing anyone and everyone. Reigni didn’t look back.

“Go! Just go!” she shouted. Thomas hesitated as he looked at the bodies behind his sister. His face went pale. “Go!” Reigni prompted harshly, shouldering him once again toward the door.

The empty body, completely kill-crazy, charged toward them. Reigni forced Thomas outside, trying to escape the shell. She slammed the door shut, trying to buy some time. They both bolted toward the tall chain link fence. The lock had never worked properly; trying to get it unstuck would take too much time. Reigni would *not* allow her brother, her best friend, to be killed by the horrible affect of the deadly rain. She would not allow his life to be cut so short. She would not let him be killed by what had once been their baby brother.

Reigni heard the back door open and shut loudly and she locked her fingers together. “Up and over,” she told him quickly. Thomas planted his foot in his older sister’s hands and she helped him over the fence. She relaxed when she heard the soft sound of his feet on the grass on the opposite side of the barrier.

Reigni stuck her foot in the metal to pull herself up and over. She was so close she to safety. Just one moment later and she would be safe.

But life is unfair. Life is cruel. Life doesn’t care if a person deserves to live or not. Life gives whoever it pleases to Death. Death is Life’s addiction.

Life allowed a six-year-old boy to die. Life let the body of the boy do such terrible things. Life permitted the horrific rain to ruin so many lives. *Each death was more creative than the last.*

Reigni spit up a mix of blood and bile before she even recognized the pain for what it was. Her muscles all slackened but her grip on the fence stayed rigid. Her nerves

and muscles stopped working. Her head rolled forward. Small fingers, covered in blood, poked through the fabric of the shirt that covered her stomach and grabbed the metal of the fence. They were familiar fingers. They'd played with her hair; they'd applied finger paints to her skin; they'd held her hand.

Her time was short; her sight was fading. She only had the chance to choke out one word before her vision completely vanished and the pain disappeared forever, the most important word.

“Run!”

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