

Buried Secrets

BY: SOFIA VARELA

It's 3am. Reagan tosses and turns in her bed, unable to fall asleep. Her room is too hot, her comforter is too scratchy, and not to mention she can't shake this peculiar feeling she's been experiencing the past few days. Ever since she moved into her new townhouse, she's just felt *odd*. Her mother says it's new-town jitters, but Reagan has moved to 15 different towns in her 13 years of living, and she has never felt this way before.

Suddenly, a loud crash causes Reagan to jolt in fear. Across the room, she can faintly make out her window shattered, with glass reflecting the moonlight.

"*What the...*" she thinks to herself. She goes to investigate, careful not to step on any shards. She peeks out the broken window, but only sees the dark night sky. Confused, Reagan decides to clean up the mess in the morning, and hops back into bed. That odd feeling grows stronger, but Reagan ignores it and closes her eyes.

"REAGAN!" A loud voice booms. Reagan sleepily opens her eyes to see her mother looking at her with a worried expression.

"What?" she groans.

"What is this mess?" her mother exclaims, pointing to the glass shards.

"I don't know, it woke me up last night," Reagan lies.

Her mother pauses before saying, "Just go eat some breakfast, I'll clean this mess up." Reagan shrugs and makes her way to the kitchen.

Reagan rummages through her pantry until she finds a half-empty box of Lucky Charms. She pours a decent amount into a bowl, and searches the fridge for some milk. All she finds is spoiled coffee creamer and apple juice.

"MOM!" she calls. No response. She grumbles and makes her way to her bedroom, where her mother has just finished cleaning up the broken window.

"We have no milk," Reagan says grumpily. "Can I go get some milk from the grocery store?"

"Sure, just be back in time for lunch," her mother replies. Reagan breathes a sigh of relief. She's eager to get out of the house.

"That'll be \$3.74," The cashier says. Reagan hands him her credit card.

"Hey, you moved into that new townhouse on Mills Avenue right?" The cashier asks. Reagan is surprised he knows this and hesitantly nods her head.

"Wow, you must be freaked living on that old burial site, huh?" he replies. Reagan's stomach drops.

"What?"

"Your house is built on a burial site for the asylum patients. You didn't know?" Reagan stands there with her mouth wide open.

"You okay?" the cashier stares at her with a confused expression.

"I... have to go." Reagan snatches her credit card and darts out of the store.

“Hey! You forgot your milk!” The cashier calls out. Reagan has too many thoughts running through her head to hear him.

When Reagan arrives at her house, all the lights are off. She bursts through the door and calls out, but she gets no reply. She tries to flick the lights on, but the power is completely out. Reagan groans and starts making her way to the basement, when she hears indistinct whispering. Curiosity gets the best of her, so she tries to search for the source of the whispering. After looking in every room, closet, and crevice of her house, Reagan finds nothing. Frustrated, she grabs a plate from the China cabinet and throws it against the wall. It shatters into pieces, and that somehow eases Reagan’s frustration.

Suddenly, that same odd feeling in her stomach gets so strong, Reagan feels like she’s going to pass out. She hears a loud crash behind her and sees another plate on the floor in pieces. Then, another plate is thrown, and another, and another. Soon, Reagan is dodging from side to side trying not to get struck with a flying plate.

“STOP!” Reagan calls out. Panic rises, and she feels like she can’t breathe. Reagan falls to the floor, gasping for air. Tears are streaming down her face when the light flashes on.

“REAGAN!” Her mother screams, running to her side.

“Can’t...breathe...” Reagan chokes out.

“It’s ok honey, take deep breaths...” Reagan follows her mother’s advice and slows her breathing.

“Why don’t you go lie down,” her mother suggests. Reagan nods, and makes her way to her bedroom. She collapses onto her bed and falls into a deep sleep.

The next morning, Reagan’s mother drags her to the car to presumably visit a therapist about her feelings of unease. The entire ride, neither say a word. The only sound that comes out of Reagan is a soft grunt when they arrive.

As the pair enter the building, a woman who looks awfully cheerful comes up to them and says,

“Are you Reagan?”

Her mother replies, “Yes this is her.”

“Great! Welcome! We can start on our tour now!”

“Oh that won’t be necessary,” Her mother says quickly, and then turns toward Reagan.

“I love you okay. Don’t you ever forget.” She gives Reagan a warm embrace in which Reagan does not return. She watches her mother exit the building before what just happened sinks in.

“MOM!” she calls out! She tries to run, but security guards pull her back.

“DON’T LEAVE ME!” She sobs. She falls to the ground, but the guards yank her up. They escort her to her hospital room, but little did Reagan know, that was the last time she’d ever see her mother again.

The whispering never stops. Day in and day out, Reagan is consumed by the indistinct whispering that follows her around like a dark cloud. At night the whispering grows louder, so all Reagan can do is lie awake and eventually cry herself to sleep. As the days pass, Reagan feels

more and more like a ghost, doing her daily activities without any thought or effort. Though finally, Reagan is free of her torment, lying in her tear soaked hospital bed, surrounded by nothing but her own mind.