

SCARTCHING

Written by

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Based on, The Scratching Sound

by

Kate Robert

Address
Phone Number

HECTOR (CONT'D)
How did the movers beat us by so
much? Didn't they...

He turns to Jamie and sees a lack of enthusiasm.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Hey, you okay?

Jamie nods her head and smiles.

JAMIE
Mmm hum.

HECTOR
You sure?

She looks around the house and her smile fades.

Hector's smile fades, he wanted today to be great. He walks over to Jamie and puts his hands on her shoulders.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
I'm really trying Jamie.

He wraps her up in a hug and she nestles into it.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
I know it sucks, it all kinda
sucks.

But...

Hector searches for the words to make everything better for Jamie, but no matter how hard he looks he can't find them.

JAMIE
I know.

She pulls away enough to look up at him.

JAMIE (CONT'D)
I know.

Jamie's tone shifts to match Hector's from before, they both want to be strong for each other.

She kisses him twice, first for about a second then a brief peck.

She turns around to face the house.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

I think I want to move the couch over there, put the book shelf there, and move the boxes into where ever the office is.

HECTOR

Really? I kinda' thought it'd be nice to just leave the boxes as is, you know, in our way and full of shit.

They smile at each other.

SMASH CUT:

4

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

4

Jamie RIPS open up one of the boxes and pulls out a set of steak knives. She looks into the box and puts the knives back.

She picks up the box and walks over to the island counter, passing a hallway where Hector passes from one room to another.

She sets the knives on the counter then sifts through the box.

JAMIE

What are we doing with the bowls we got from Mom?

HECTOR (O.S.)

My mom or yours?

JAMIE

Yours.

HECTOR (O.S.)

Trash.

Jamie shrugs and sets them to the side. Next she pulls out a decorative hand towel.

JAMIE

(To self)

You go in the bathroom.

(To Hector)

What about the fancy soap?

Hector walks into the room.

HECTOR
That can go in the kitchen , I can
actually take them.

Hector takes the items and walks to the kitchen.

Jamie moves to the next box and digs inside. She stops when she sees hers and Hectors WEDDING PHOTO. She pulls out the framed photo and looks at it with a smile.

A printout of an ULTRASOUND catches her eye and her smile fades. She pulls the small print out of the frame and looks at what could have been her son.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
What's that?

Jamie turns her smile back on to show Hector the wedding photo, but first she hides the ultrasound.

JAMIE
Our wedding photo!

HECTOR
Oh, the one that makes you look
like a fish-person?

JAMIE
No. The one, where you look
slightly less repulsive... some
how?

HECTOR
Where are we gonna put it?

JAMIE
Either the bedroom or trash can.

HECTOR
I vote bedroom.

JAMIE
Yeah, I think so too.

She stands up and carries the photo to the bedroom. As she walks down the hall we see Hector in the background climb on top of a table and pick at something on the ceiling.

RING RING RING

Jamie glances back at him for a moment then keeps walking as Hector starts to fish his phone out of his pocket.

HECTOR

Helloo?

5

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

5

Jamie walks into the bedroom carrying the frame. She flips on the light switch but nothing happens. She tries again.

JAMIE

Hey, the light in here doesn't work!

HECTOR (O.S.)

(On phone)

One second.

(To Jamie)

I may or may not have forgotten to tell the power company we were moving until today. It should be on sometime tomorrow though.

Jamie roles her eyes at Hector. She picks up a COMMAND STRIP with a hook form a box on the floor. She goes to the center of the back wall and places it, then hangs up the photo.

She steps back to make sure it's centered.

SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH

She perks up at the sound of the scratching. Where is it coming from?

SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH

She looks down at the corner of the room and listens.

NOTHING

She gets on the floor and leans closer to the wall when suddenly...

HECTOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Babe!

Jamie turns around to the door way and Hector leans into the doorway like a cartoon character.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Babe, promise you won't hit me.

JAMIE

No?

HECTOR
Okay, promise you won't hit me
hard.

JAMIE
Fine.

Hector comes all the way into frame.

HECTOR
So that was Danny, he needs me to
come in right now.

JAMIE
What? No!

HECTOR
I know! Apparently Tonye's an ass
and no one else there can work the
new switcher.

JAMIE
Which show?

HECTOR
For sure the evening but possibly
the late night too.

JAMIE
Can't you just say no?

HECTOR
I kind of already said yes...

Jamie lets out a grown like a small annoyed dinosaur.

JAMIE
Ah, seriously? We were supposed to
have first night.

HECTOR
I know! At least we'll have a
second night!

He gives a cartoon smile -beat- Shifts to more serious.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
So are you going to be good here?
I'll need to take the car.

Jamie looks at the wall then back to Hector.

JAMIE
Yeah, I should be fine.

HECTOR
What's up?

JAMIE
Nothing, I just think I found out
why the house was so cheap.

HECTOR
Shit, why?

JAMIE
I think I heard rats...

HECTOR
(Worried)
Shit, you sure it was rats?
Couldn't be squirrels?

JAMIE
I don't think so.

HECTOR
Mice?

JAMIE
Too big.

HECTOR
Trees?

JAMIE
Trees don't have feet.

HECTOR
That's what you think! But I mean
like, on the other side of the
wall.

JAMIE
Definitely in the wall.

Hector lets out a long annoyed groan. Thinks. Then makes a
decision.

HECTOR (O.S.)
Okay. I don't have time for this
right now. I'll grab traps on the
way home. If they haven't broke the
house yet it can wait until later.
Are you going to be good here?

JAMIE
Yes, I'll be good get out of here.

HECTOR (O.S.)
 Okay, just ignore the rats unless
 directly confronted.

He kisses her fast then runs out.

HECTOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I'll check out the reports about
 the house to and see if they
 (bumping into something)
 Shit, ouch... mention anything
 about rats. Or tiny trees!

Off screen Jamie hears him rush outside followed by the car
 starting and driving off.

A beat. She looks to the wall, then stands up.

SHOT STAYS ON THE WALL CREEPING EVER CLOSER AS THE SCRATCHING
 RETURNS.

6 **INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

6

Jamie sits alone at a small dining table eating Chinese take
 out. This was supposed to be a special night.

She walks across the room and tosses her trash away.

SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH - Slower and harder this time.

She looks for where the sound could be coming from. Then
 decides it's not worth it.

She walks to

7 **INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

7

Jamie walks over to a box and opens it up.

SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH

She looks around the room.

JAMIE
 Really dude, are you following me?

She turns back to her work but the SCRATCHING MOVES CLOSER.

UNSEEN BY THE AUDIENCE OF FIRST VIEWING: A figure moves
 closer to her in the deep background.

The SCRATCHING suddenly becomes more rapid and Jamie looks over to the sound, confused.

She walks towards the wall when - TEXT TONE comes from her phone by the knife set.

She ignores it and keep searching for the cause of the noise.

TEXT 1: They definitely want me doing the later shows too.

TEXT 2: I probably won't be back until the morning...:(

TEXT 3: SEE YOU TOMORROW! :D

She reaches the wall and presses her ear to it. The scratching is just on the other side.

A pained MOANING sound comes from inside the wall and the scratching stops. Was that a voice or the house settling?

She leans back then forward again then steps back. Not sure how to react. The MOANING returns. She cautiously walks around the corner to

8 **INT. OFFICE - NIGHT**

8

Jamie peaks her head into the room.

JAMIE

Hello?

No reply. She roles her eyes and chuckles to herself.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

(to herself)

I'm losing it...

(To her stomach)

Maybe you dodged a bullet, Emmet.

She takes one last look.

CRYING - Coming from the front room.

Jamie perks up, worried. Was walks cautiously to -

9 **INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

9

Jamie enters with her hand on her belly. She looks confused around the living room while she makes her way to the front door.

10 **EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT**

10

Jamie looks outside at the empty yard. The street is empty too. Empty of people, cars, and houses. Nothing for miles.

She is alone. The CRYING can still be heard, but quieter now.

11 **INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

11

Jamie closes the door, shaking now. She makes her way to the box she was unpacking but then stops when a thought hits her.

She turns and looks at the wall.

JAMIE

No... No...

She creeps closer to the wall and puts her hands then ear against it.

The cries are coming from INSIDE THE WALL.

Jamie draws back and gasps.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

(To herself)

Stop it. Stop it.

Jamie starts to have a panic attack as the baby in the wall starts to cough and the SCRATCHING becomes more intense.

While this happens we see A FIGURE watching her in the back.

- BUZZ BUZZ -

All the noise stops and Jamie looks over to see her phone buzzing.

She keeps her eyes locked on the wall for a moment then scans the house as she moves to pick up the phone.

HECTOR (O.S.)

Hey, I have a little bit and wanted to check in. How are you doing?

JAMIE

I... I think I'm starting to freak out.

HECTOR (O.S.)

Shit, what's happening? Are you okay?

JAMIE
It's not that, it's the walls..?

HECTOR (O.S.)
(Relieved)
Oh, what? Are the rats scaring you>

JAMIE
(Doubting herself)
I don't think they're rats...

HECTOR (O.S.)
Oh? What do you think they are?

JAMIE
I don't know, I think I'm just
being crazy...

HECTOR (O.S.)
Are you sure? What's it sound like?

JAMIE
Crying...

HECTOR (O.S.)
Oh... should we call someone for
you?

JAMIE
(Exasperated)
No, I'll just.
(She looks back to the
wall)
Did you have a chance to look into
the house?

HECTOR (O.S.)
I actually did, there is nothing in
the report I got, but there are a
lot of weird gaps. So I'm actually
going to do some googling to see
what's up.

STUDIO TECH
(Over the phone in the
distance)
30 seconds!

HECTOR (O.S.)
You sure you're good? I gotta go.

JAMIE
Yeah I'm fine. I'm gonna have to
distract myself for a bit.

HECTOR (O.S.)
 Alright, we'll talk when I get
 home. I love you.

JAMIE
 I love you too.

CLICK

Jamie recomposes herself and looks down the hallway. She
 shakes her head and exhales.

JAMIE (CONT'D)
 (To self)
 I'm good.

12 **INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

12

Jamie puts bowls and dishes into a cupboard above the sink
 then tosses the empty box aside and moves to the next one.

Inside she sees unused baby gear, a BOTTLE, BLANKET, OLD
 TOYS, STUFFED SHEEP...

She closes the box and shuts her eyes. She takes a deep
 breath and presses the top of the box down to reseal it then
 places it under the sink.

SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH - From under the sink.

She pauses and shakes her head, denying the sound.

She stands up to leave and the SOUND FOLLOWS her.

13 **INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

13

Jamie enters and opens another moving box. The scratching
 grows stronger and is joined by the MOANING, which are now
 definitely human, and PAINED.

She tightens her fists and looks around the house then to the
 front door then remembers, She has NO WHERE TO GO.

JAMIE
 Shut up... Shut up...

The sound continues.

JAMIE (CONT'D)
 SHUT UP!

Jamie throws the first thing she can grab at the wall and collapses to her knees.

She covers her face and cries for a moment.

CHILD'S VOICE (O.S.)
Help us...

Shaking, Jamie looks up at the wall and holds for a moment.

JAMIE
You're... not in my head?

CHILD'S VOICE (O.S.)
We're here...

Jamie crawls over to the wall and puts her hand against it.

The SCRATCHING returns. Much softer now.

JAMIE
Where are you?

FLICK - a light shines behind her. She turns around and sees that it is coming from the bedroom.

Jamie gets up and checks the closest light switch. Nothing. Staying far away, she cranes her head to look behind the hallway.

We see what she sees as she looks down the hallway, nothing.

- BUZZ BUZZ -

She reaches for her pocket but turns around when the CRYING starts up again, now it sounds sick, cries mixed with coughs and heaving. Jamie turns around worried. She can't take this anymore.

Grabbing a knife from the set, she moves to

14

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

14

She looks around for the source of the cries.

VOICE (O.S.)
We're here.

She looks to the wall where the voice came from. She runs over bangs her hands on the wall.

JAMIE
Here?

VOICE (O.S.)

Help us!

JAMIE

I'm going to get you out!

She starts to pound on the wall. Trying to get through. The crying grows sicker.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

I'm coming! I won't lose you!

Tears role down her cheeks as she stabs the wall. Her pounding knocks the wedding photo off the wall and onto the floor.

She glances back to the photo and sees a small bloody hand print where the ultrasound used to be. She gasps and puts her hand to her mouth. In the background the FIGURE walks past.

She falls to the floor to pick up the photo.

- BUZZ BUZZ -

Jamie slowly reaches into her pocket and answers the phone without breaking from the wall.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Hector I'm really..

HECTOR (O.S.)

Jamie, you need to get out right now!

I'm coming home!

JAMIE

I they need my help... I can save this one!

HECTOR (O.S.)

Jamie no! I looked into house. The last owners... all of them... you need to get out!

JAMIE

Was that always here?

Jamie looks over at a door randomly in the middle of the room.

HECTOR (O.S.)

Jamie get out of the...

OFFICER TODD
 (Shaking his head)
 I don't know why they ever bother
 selling this house.

OFFICER WAYNE looks at OFFICER TODD with a questioning look.

OFFICER TODD (CONT'D)
 Something about this just eats
 people up...

OFFICER PETE (O.S.)
 Todd! You're going to want to see
 this!

24

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

24

Todd enters the bedroom and greets PETE who is standing next
 a 6 inch hole in the wall covered in blood. He gestures to
 Todd to take a look inside.

OFFICER TODD
 Dear lord...

P.O.V. FROM INSIDE THE HOLE LOOKING AT TODD'S HORRIFIED FACE.
 WE PULL BACK THROUGH DARKNESS AS THE HOLE GROWS SMALLER. IN
 THE DARKNESS, SEVERAL DEAD BODIES IN VARIOUS LEVELS OF
 DECOMPOSITION. INCLUDING THE FRESH BODY OF JULIA AND THE
 SKELETAL REMAINS OF A YOUNG CHILD HOLDING HIS INFANT SIBLING.

CREDITS