

The Private Storm

by

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1 EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Darkness.

An urgent knock at the door.

KATIE

Jonas?!

Close up on a hand beating at the door again.

Cut to: KATIE, mid 30's - a warm and open minded soul - she's the kind of person who looks for the good in everyone. Katie stands at the front door of a suburban home, her hair haphazardly tied back and wet from the rain that beats down outside.

She looks around, concerned.

Katie reaches into her pocket and opens the message app in her phone:

We see a back and fourth of txts from JONAS, the most recent reads: **Spare key under the mat.**

2 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Inside **70's Rock Music** blasts from a portable radio sitting down the far end of the room.

We hear the sound of a key in the lock and the door swings open into darkness as Katie tentatively steps inside.

KATIE

Jonas... It's Katie.

Katie steps inside, her foot crunches over something on the floor just inside the doorway. She squints in the darkness but can't see exactly what she's stepped on.

Katie reaches down to dust off her shoe but a loud thud from above pulls her attention towards the staircase ahead.

KATIE

Jonas?...

We move hand held with Katie as she approaches the stairs cautiously. Opaque plastic painting tarps are draped over stacked furniture and moving boxes line the walls; it looks

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like Jonas has just moved in.

Katie moves over to the radio and turns the volume all the way down.

KATIE

Hello?

Katie moves across the living room and tentatively makes her way up the staircase. POV from the dark stair case looking down as Katie calls up to Jonas.

Push in on the darkness at the top of the stairs and hold a fraction too long when:

A door slams abruptly behind Katie, she turns sharply and looks back down the stairs to see: a puffy eyed JONAS, a volatile looking man in a state that can only be described as 'rock bottom'. Jonas has staggered in the back door a beer in one hand. He's wearing a ratty old t-shirt and work pants, both splattered with paint.

KATIE

Oh my god...

JONAS

Hi

KATIE

Um... Hi?! I've been beating on the door for ten minutes... It sounded like you were having a party in here.

Jonas gestures to the space around him

JONAS

Oh yeah, gotta fill the new house with good vibes, cleanse the place of bad spirits.

Jonas makes a playful little 'spooky finger gesture'

Katie raises her eyebrows.

KATIE

The bad spirits?

Jonas nods playfully and then his face drops intensely as he looks at something behind her.

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KATIE

What... What's the matter?

Jonas POV as he stares at Katie in the doorway, darkness behind her, he stares at her with a haunted look on his face.

Jonas has been staring, almost frozen in the doorway but snaps out of it and moves in to give her a forceful embrace.

JONAS

Nothing... I'm just messing with ya.  
Thanks for coming over.

KATIE

Of course, I've been worried about you, I wanted to... check in see how you're doing.

Jonas raises his eyebrows?

JONAS

No you didn't.

KATIE

Yes! I *did*.

Jonas holds his 'I don't believe you' gaze.

KATIE

What?!...

Beat.

KATIE

Ok I came to check in... And Jodie asked me to make sure you signed the divorce papers.

JONAS

Yeah that's what I thought.

KATIE

Don't be like that. I still care about you, that's why I came straight over... You sounded... *terrified* on the phone

Jonas nods, his cheerful facade drops and he looks Katie dead in the eye.

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JONAS

I've never been this scared before.

KATIE

About what? What's going on?

JONAS

Have you got a minute?

KATIE

Of course...

3 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Close up as Jonas pulls a beer free from a 6 pack.

Katie sits on an old crate under a stark ceiling light hanging above her. Jonas stands at the far end of the room and cracks open the beer.

Jonas takes a deep breath.

JONAS

Ok... I don't want to scare ya.

KATIE

Well it's a bit late for that.

Long pause.

Jonas gathers his thoughts.

JONAS

You remember my mate Ian?

Katie laughs.

KATIE

Yeah with that ridiculous laugh.

JONAS

Yeah, Ian with the funny laugh... Well I started going to this weekly prayer group with him at that church on Sommerville road.

KATIE

You? Going to church?

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Katie laughs at the thought.

JONAS

(laughs) I know... But no word of a lie. It's saved my life...

Pause

JONAS

Ian's the only person I could talk to throughout all this. But then one day he just... stopped coming. Didn't tell any of us, just dropped off the radar. So I head over to check on him. We sit down, have a coffee and he tells me...

Jonas takes a deep breath

JONAS

He tells me he saw a demon. In his house. Clear as day. Standing down the end of the hall staring at him.

Beat.

KATIE

Right... And that's got you all freaked out now you're in this big empty house.

JONAS

No Katie... I'm freaked out because... I saw one too.

CU on Katie who tries to keep a poker face while a chill runs down her spine.

KATIE

(cocking her head) Jonas...

JONAS

I wish I was joking.

Jonas looks down, communication isn't his strong suit.

KATIE

I mean... I have a million questions... *Where'd* you see it?

Jonas raises his head slowly to meet Katie's eyes.

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JONAS

Standing in the darkness, in the corner of the room... Right behind you.

Katie goes cold. She slowly turns to look at the dark area of the room behind her.

POV from the dark corner looking back at Katie.

Katie turns back to look Jonas in the eye.

KATIE

Jonas... This is an old place-

JONAS

It's not only one i've seen... It's like... they've always been there watching, but now I can see 'em... And they're everywhere.

KATIE

... Everywhere?

JONAS

Yeah... Earlier, on the stairs, I said I was joking... But actually, there was one standing right behind you.

CUT TO: A quick flash of Katie on the stairs from earlier, we push in on the darkness behind her. Jonas' frozen and haunted look from before suddenly makes sense in this new context.

Back to Katie, a look of concern on her face.

Jonas pulls up a chair and sits opposite her.

JONAS

I told you you'd be scared.

Katie leans forward and touches Jonas on the for-arm.

KATIE

Ok... I can see why might be concerned. But have you thought about... maybe talking to...a professional about this?

Jonas explodes in a rage.

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JONAS

Ah fuck it, I knew you'd react like this! That's exactly what Jodie said.

KATIE

No, no Jonas-

JONAS

Then she tried to spin it around and tell me I was a danger to the kids.

Jonas kicks a pile of stacked boxes in a rage which spill out across the floor.

JONAS

FUCK!!

KATIE

Woah! Hey! Come on, stop it. You tell me you're seeing... fucking demons in your house, what do you expect me to say?

Pause.

JONAS

(calm again) I have spoken to someone.

KATIE

(optimistic) Okay.

JONAS

I sat down with Reverend Williams at the Church.

KATIE

Ok good... And what did *he* say?

JONAS

He told me to go through the house and throw out *anything* even remotely satanic.

4 EXT. BACK YARD - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jonas marches down the back steps with an armful of boxes.

Jonas has thrown a load of scrunched up newspaper and fire wood into an old barrel, he tosses in piles of books and

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CD's.

JONAS (VO)  
No matter how harmless; Posters,  
Books, even the kids CD's and toys.

On the barrel: we see CD's from ACDC, Madonna, Meatloaf, Stephen King books, a plush toy of a cheeky devil all get dumped in.

Close up on a match striking and falling into the barrel. It goes up in flames.

Push in on Jonas staring down at the burning barrel, the flames dancing in front of his face.

5 INT. BATHROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Close up on a sheet ripping.

JONAS (VO)  
Then he told me to cover all the  
mirrors in the house.

Jonas uses gaffer tape to secure the sheet over the mirror. He's sweaty, bug eyed and manic.

6 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Push in on Jonas, completely transfixed as he tells his story.

JONAS  
And you'll notice i've poured a line  
of salt across the thresholds.

CU on Katie.

In a quick flash from earlier we repeat the shot of her stepping on something in the doorway and cut to a close up of her foot crunching over a line of salt in the doorway.

On Katie; extremely concerned now.

KATIE  
Your Minister told you to do this?

JONAS  
Yes.

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KATIE

I think maybe you should get a second opinion.

JONAS

Katie, it worked. I stopped seeing them...

Beat

JONAS

For a while... then they started looking for other ways to get in.

KATIE

What do you mean?

7 EXT. FRONT PORCH - DAY - FLASHBACK

We follow Jonas as he goes for a morning jog. He runs through a freeway underpass and out into the light.

JONAS (VO)

Well I thought they were just... spirits. Lingerin in the darkness, watching. But actually, they're all around us, walking among us.

He runs along the street and back towards his own house only to see a REPAIRMAN on the front porch, craning his neck and looking in the front window. The Repairman is dressed in a blue work uniform with an ID badge clipped to his shirt.

JONAS

Can I help you?

REPAIR MAN

Oh! Hey buddy, I'm here to turn on your gas.

Jonas nods suspiciously.

REPAIR MAN

Side gate was locked.

8 INT. KITCHEN - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jonas stands in the window, looking out at the Repairman in the yard below him. The look on Jonas face is deeply concerning, almost frightening.

The repairman runs up the back steps and joins Jonas in the kitchen.

REPAIR MAN

Alright, should be all good to go.

JONAS (VO)

The first thing you notice is the cold, the temperature drops about 5 degrees when they're close.

Jonas pulls his arms in close and does up his jacket.

The repairman reaches in front of Jonas to test the gas stove.

JONAS (VO)

Then you notice this darkness... Just above their head, it's like all the color's been drained from the world. Like their own private storm cloud.

Jonas POV: we look at the repairman as he tests the gas stove and then slowly tilt up to look at the space just above his head. We don't see any evidence of the darkness above him, but Jonas clearly does.

The gas bursts to life.

The repairman gives a thumbs up and turns the stove off.

REPAIR MAN

You're all set.

CU on the Repairman, he looks up at Jonas and we see he has incredible, piercing blue eyes.

JONAS (VO)

And when you look in their eyes, it's as if you're looking at the devil himself.

Jonas looks down at the repairman not even bothering to disguise his contempt.

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JONAS (VO)

That's when I realized... this is a gift from God. He's called on me to cleanse the earth of all these evil spirits.

CUT TO:

The repairman is loading up his van in the driveway. Suddenly the same **70's Rock Music** from earlier starts blasting from the house behind him, he doesn't pay it much attention.

Close up on the repairman as the out of focus figure of Jonas approaches from behind.

9 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Katie sits paralyzed. She's genuinely concerned.

KATIE

Jonas... I don't know... what you're going through... But I think maybe you're unwell. And really think it would be wise to talk to someone other than your Minister... Just to see what they have to say.

JONAS

You know what else Reverend Williams told me?

KATIE

What?...

JONAS

Take note of the non believers. And don't ever talk to a fucking shrink.

CU on Jonas as he looks Katie up and down and visibly shivers. He draws his arms close and zips up his hoodie.

JONAS

Is it getting cold in here? Man i'm cold. Are you cold?

KATIE

I'm fine...

Jonas does an almost over the top shiver.

Jonas POV on Katie, He looks directly at her and then his

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eyes slowly scan upwards to the dark space above her head, mirroring the shot from the gas man.

Wide shot. An agonizingly long pause. The tension in the room is unbearable.

KATIE

... I um... I think I might need to head off Jonas. If you could just grab those papers - (that'd be great)

JONAS

What's the matter.

Katie lets out a laugh, it could be fake but it's hard to tell.

KATIE

Nothing's the matter I just-

Jonas stands and looks down at Katie, towering over her.

JONAS

(cynical) It's alright... I get it. Let's go get the damn papers, they're just upstairs.

Jonas motions with his hand for Katie to lead the way.

JONAS

After you.

They move off towards the stairs, Jonas a few paces behind Katie.

They reach the foot of the stairs and Katie stops; there's no way she's going up there.

KATIE

Um... Why don't you go grab them and I'm going to go to the bathroom.

10 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

The rain comes down hard outside.

Katie flicks on the bathroom light, closes the door behind her and leans back on the door in exhaustion. She puts her hand to her chest and exhales as quietly as possible.

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She gets herself together and walks towards the bathroom sink. She turns on the faucet to make some noise and puts her hands to her face, closing her eyes.

She opens her eyes and see's something in the mirror's reflection behind her.

Slow push in on a laundry basket full of dirty clothes. There's something hanging over the edge of the basket, partially obscured by a filthy old shirt.

Katie turns over her shoulder almost in slow motion, her heart racing.

She walks over to the basket, moves the sweaty shirt aside to reveal the laminated ID Badge of the Repairman from earlier. It's has a clear photo of his face and a little gas flame logo.

Beat.

Katie reaches out with a shaky hand and picks up the ID. She stares at it and her mind starts to race.

Katie stands frozen.

The silence is abruptly broken as the **70's Rock Music** blasts on once again, Katie jumps in fright.

CU on Katie as she turns slowly in the direction of the music. The wheels start turning in her head. Panic rises the reality of the situation dawns on her.

Hold on Katie as her breathing intensifies to near hyperventilation.

The sound builds to a deafening crescendo.

BLACK.