

A Knock at the Door



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A Knock at the Door

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Mum and Dad have gone to the summer pasture lands. There's a lot to do there, clearing up and getting the summer cabin ready for winter.

Sára, Sunná, Jánoš and Ovlá have been left at home because they are school children and this time they didn't get time off.

Ovlá, the eldest, is left in charge of the children while Mum and Dad are away. He is getting the children ready for bed.

Outside the Northern Lights are shimmering in beautiful colours. It seems as if they are coming down to the bedroom window.

The flashing Northern Lights are frightening Sunná. Quickly she draws the curtains, noticing the woman next door is doing the same. Sunná thinks she's not so brave either when she's alone at home. Sunná gets into bed, closes her eyes and falls asleep.





Suddenly Sunná hears something and calls out:

– Sára, are you awake? Listen! There are people on the steps outside. Someone’s knocking on the front door.

– Don’t be silly! I can’t hear anything. Now, Sunná, go back to sleep and stop playing around!

– I’m not kidding! I can hear a car engine outside, Sunná replies.

– You’re just overtired. Can’t you see it’s pitch-black outside and still night-time. You’re just dreaming, Sunná. Not even crows bother us out here!

– Enough fooling around and being afraid! Please stop your worrying. Get rid of your silly ideas and calm down. Don’t be such a scaredy-cat, Sára says.

– I’m not joking. Sunná is serious and turns her back on Sunná. Then sighing deeply she says quietly: – Did you really not hear the knocking on the door? And now the doorbell is ringing?

Sunná can’t stop thinking. She really feels that something is going on. She’s uncomfortable and snuggles down under her blanket, her heart beating fast. In the darkness she’s hurt and surprised that Sára doesn’t believe her.

All of a sudden something is happening in the other bedroom. Ovlá gets out of bed, but his legs are so heavy he can hardly walk. Tired as he is, it's really difficult for him to move his feet. He drags himself to the front door and opens it.

Sunná hears a man and woman talking to Ovlá. She can't make out what they are saying but feels it must be something serious since their voices are trembling.

– Sára, listen! I knew there were people outside. Do you still think I'm making it up?

– OK! Maybe not this time, Sára replies in an irritated voice.





Jánoš also hears voices and tries to tiptoe along the corridor. But it's no use. Sunná has never heard the floor creaking so loudly. It sounds like Jánoš is stumbling from wall to wall. Perhaps he's a bit frightened or just sleepy. Sunná hears Jánoš' every movement but she's mostly curious about what is happening outside. She wonders who on earth has come to their house in the middle of the night.

Sára hurriedly gets dressed and rushes out to see what is happening. She sees a policeman waving his arms wildly.

He's asking one of the children to go down into the cellar to see if there is an intruder hiding down there.

– I'm not going down anyway! Ovlá exclaims. – How can you know if there's someone in our cellar? Have you seen tracks leading to the cellar, or what?

The policeman has no chance to answer Ovlá as Sára, boasting, declares: – Me and Jánoš can go and look in the cellar for this person.





Sára is running around the house looking for something. She picks up a log from the wood box in her right hand and throws Jánoš a bunch of sedge saying quickly:

– Jánoš, we can use these to hit the ghost.

What am I supposed to do with a bunch of sedge? Jánoš thinks. I suppose it's good to have something in my hand. Who knows it might be useful. At least I might be able to tickle the intruder's nose!

Fearfully they go down the steps into the cellar tramping and shouting at the top of their voices:

– Come out whoever you are!

Meanwhile Sunná jumps out of bed and starts dressing. She unable to fasten the button of her trousers, her fingers trembling and weak, as if frozen. Sunná is afraid that somebody might hit and harm Sára and Jánoš. With wide-open eyes she rushes around her bedroom looking for a hiding place in case the intruder comes in. Under the bed or in the wardrobe?

No, she creeps back under her blanket.

Sunná is worried. Why did Mum choose to go to the summer pasture lands at this very time. She folds her hands to pray. Silently she recites the Lord's Prayer and slowly she calms down.

Sunná has been turning and twisting in her bed with fear. She can't wait no longer. Throwing off her blanket she jumps out of bed and starts dressing again.

She can hear Sára and Jánoš screaming and running from room to room down in the cellar, shouting: – Out with you! Out with you! You've no right to be here! Get out or we'll hit you!



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