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The Noise

Chapter 1

There once was a normal thirteen year old boy named Kai. He lived with his mom, his dad, and his little sister, Raya, in a quiet neighborhood. He went to Maple Grove Middle School, the kind of place where teachers had taught the same lessons for years. Every morning, Kai walked the same way to school. And every morning, he passed the old abandoned house at the end of Willow Street. No one knew who had lived there before, or why it had been left behind. The windows were boarded up and the yard was overgrown with long weeds that reached the sidewalk. Kai never liked looking at it for too long. That morning, as he walked past the house like he always did, he heard a slow sharp creak as if a door had shifted or a floorboard had been bent . Kai froze. A cold shiver ran down his back. He glanced at the house, but nothing moved. He told himself it was just the wind. Kai picked up his pace and did not look back. School was good. His first period was math, and his teacher yapped on about fractions while Kai stared at the clock. Every time a chair moved or someone whispered, Kai jumped slightly, his thoughts drifting back to the house. At lunch, his friends joked and laughed, but Kai barely spoke. By the time the final bell rang, clouds had rolled in, turning the sky a dull gray. As Kai started his walk home, a strange thought crossed his mind. For the first time ever, he wondered if the abandoned house had noticed him too.

Chapter 2

That night, Kai couldn't sleep. The house across the street was quiet, the kind of quiet that made every small noise feel louder. His parents were watching TV downstairs, the low mumble of voices drifting upstairs. Raya was already asleep, her door cracked open with a night-light glowing softly inside. Kai lay on his back, staring at the ceiling. Every time he closed his eyes, he heard it again—the creak. Not loud. Not dramatic. Just... wrong. Around 11:47 p.m., Kai rolled onto his side and checked his phone. No new messages. No notifications. He sighed and set it back next to his lamp. Then he heard something else. A faint sound, barely noticeable at first. Like footsteps—but distant. Slow. calm . Kai held his

breath and listened. The sound stopped. His heart pounded as he sat up slightly, eyes fixed on his bedroom door. The hallway was dark, empty. Nothing moved.

After a long moment, he told himself it was probably his dad or mom getting a glass of water. Still, he didn't sleep much after that. The next morning, Kai left the house earlier than usual. He didn't tell his parents why. As he walked toward school, he realized too late that he was about to pass the abandoned house again. He slowed down. Something was different. The weeds near the sidewalk were bent, like someone had walked through them recently. One of the boards covering a window was slightly loose, hanging at an angle it hadn't been before. Kai stopped. Maybe he was just seeing things. His chest tightened as he stared at the house. He was sure of it now—this wasn't how it looked yesterday. A car passed behind him, making him jump. When he turned back to the house, the window was still dark and still. Kai swallowed and hurried away. At school, he mentioned it to his friend during second period, trying to sound casual. "Do you ever notice that old house on Willow Street?" he asked. His friend shrugged. "Yeah. It's creepy. Why?" Kai hesitated. "I think someone's been there." His friend laughed, shaking his head. "Bro, no one lives there. My brother says it's been empty for years."

To be continued