

untitled horror story

Slumped on my bed, alone. My room is dark and deafly quiet except for the crackle of ten or so cheap tealights dotted around. Next to me, its pages open and face down is an obscure, Gothic horror novel called 'A Family of Strangers'. I'm taking a moment to rest my weary eyes.

A piercing, whistling noise from outside distracts me and I look out of the window, awkwardly pressed up to the glass, scanning the back garden for signs of life. There's nothing there though, not that I can see. It's gone midnight and I'm worn out so I've probably imagined it. I'll put it down to that book playing tricks on me. Either that or I've definitely nailed too much coffee today. Clambering back onto the bed, I pick up my book and lie back down, nestling into the pillow as I exhale and draw a line under that short, momentary distraction.

My eyes draw heavy and I can feel them begin to close. I don't fight it, and help them on their way. I should definitely sleep. Suddenly, there it is again, that sharp, rippling noise from outside. There's something or someone in the garden. I'm sure of it. I begrudgingly slide out of bed and plant both feet on the floorboards, wearily dragging myself over to the window. It's so dark out there, and squinting makes no difference to help enhance my vision. I know I heard something and I'm sure I'm not going mad but again, I can't see a thing out there so I'm starting to get pretty spooked. Maybe I am actually going mad? I've never gone crazy before so maybe this is what that feels like. I'd better sleep it off.

Suddenly, from behind me I hear the bedroom door creak and slam shut. The flames from the candlelight shift violently to one side. One by one, around the room the candles go out until I'm left in complete darkness. Jumping out and patting the air to reach around for the door handle, I try to get out of the room. Panicking now and wondering what the hell is going on, I can feel the air turning cold as it hits the back of my neck. My eyes are twitching violently, my heart is beating out of my chest, thud, thud, thud. Can't breathe. I can't catch my breath. I'm free-falling backwards and can feel nothing, I'm letting go.

I'm lying down on my back. My limbs are flat to the floor and my eyes slowly open to let in shards of bright sunlight. I must have passed out and fallen. I can hear delicate bird song, and along with the fresh light, I wonder if this is heaven. Alas, it's not. I'm still in my bedroom but it feels different now, more detached almost. Everything looks familiar but neater and cleaner as if I've been away and my things have been tidied or gotten rid of. I can breathe again and wonder what must have happened to have knocked me to the floor. I'm slowly coming around and muster the strength to sit up. As I pull my weak torso to my knees and rise to my feet, I feel a cold chill descend on my body. I rub away the sleep from my eyes

and see blood on my fingers. What the hell? Wet, fresh blood running down my wrists and both forearms. Trickle racing down in almost perfect symmetry. As I turn to leave the room I immediately fall to my knees, my mouth agape at the horror I see before me. This can't be real, I can't be seeing this. Somebody help me, please! Somebody! Paralysed by fear, I let out an almighty scream before everything turns black and I see nothing. Feel, nothing.

As the girl looked up from where she was sat, she saw herself hanging from a coat hook on the back of the bedroom door. The hook piercing through her throat. This ghoulish, nightmarish image of herself, blood-soaked and staring back at her with eyes wide open and laced with lunacy. Clutched by rotten, black-veined fingers is the girl's book, 'A Family of Strangers'. Untainted and almost other-worldly by its fresh appearance. The book falls to the floor and lands open at the front page. There's a message written in blue ink, "My dearest Joanna, may this book forever be your escape to another world. Love Aunt Abigail."

The End.