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# The Caldwell Mansion

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ATYP at WMU

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## The Caldwell Mansion

It was Halloween night, and my friend and I were out trick or treating, when suddenly, the “terror house” loomed in front of us. My friend dared me to approach it, the reward being a whole bucket of candy. The offer sounded delightful to my stomach, so I accepted, and reluctantly approached the door to the terror house. I put my trembling, pale finger on the bell, and willed myself to press it. The sound of the bell echoed through the house, and the door swung open, revealing... nothing. Vast stretches of darkness enveloped the inside of the house. With my whole body shaking, I stepped across the threshold, and the door swung shut behind me.

Fortunately, I had brought a flashlight with me, just in case my friend dared me to do what I was doing now. I switched it on, and was greeted instantly by the friendly yellow glare of the light. As I shone the flashlight back and forth, I noticed a strange from the bathroom of the house. The door was ajar, so I carefully crept in. What I witnessed inside shocked me out of my wits; crimson red blood ran down the side of the bathtub. Instantly, my body went numb. I couldn't feel my fingers, and out of instinct, let out a high-pitched scream. Nearly frozen with fear, I could neither breathe, nor move, and thankfully, I passed out.

When my senses returned to me, the first thing I heard was a piercing shriek. To my horror, the blood still stained the side of the bathtub a deep red. My curiosity won over me, and I slowly peered over the side of the bathtub. Inside, was a man with a New York Yankees tee shirt on him. The knife wound through his heart was enough to make me faint all over again. I told myself to forget about all of this, and focused my attention on trying to get out of the house.

Unfortunately, the door was locked, so I had to stay inside, and hope for the best. There was a big hall, off to the right of the mansion, so I decided to take that route. As I continued down the hall, a door swung open to my left. Startled, I backed away in fear, but my curiosity overcame me. I cautiously walked through the door, to find an old woman rocking in a chair. Surprisingly, it was my friend's grandmother. I knew it was his grandmother, from a picture inside his house. “What is this place?” I asked her. “Oh, you don't know, do you? It's a shame really, because nobody really knows about the Caldwell house anymore. The stories must have been lost over the years, because most people abuse the tale. They don't take it very seriously anymore, and always make fun of the house. People call the house haunted, maybe even telling others about the massacre that happened inside. Did you know that two hundred people lost their lives in that massacre? Only the owner of the house, Mr. Caldwell survived. The ballroom was showered with blood. It became a pool of crimson, with Mr. Caldwell swimming at the top. I don't know how he got out, but I'm sure that he did. You should run along now, it's getting late,” she said. “Wait, tell me more!” I called out, but she had vanished into thin air.

My heart leaped into my throat, as I raced to the main entrance. This time it was unlocked, and I threw the door open, to run out. My friend was waiting outside. “You never even rang the doorbell. I guess that means I get to keep my candy,” he said. “Hold on a second! You never saw me going inside? I even talked to your grandmother in one of the rooms!” I yelled. He looked at me like I was crazy. “For your information, you never even touched the door. How did you even meet my grandmother? She died in the Caldwell massacre fifteen years ago. Not even I knew my grandmother. There's only the picture in my house to remind me about how she looked. My mom told me about the massacre a couple of days ago. I should walk you back to your house. All of this Halloween rubbish is affecting your brain.”

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That night, I couldn't sleep well at all. Images kept popping up in my head about the Caldwell Mansion, and what had happened inside the mansion. Nine hours later, I discovered that the rest of my family had decided to sleep in that morning as I could hear no one stirring about. For me, sleeping wasn't working out well, so I tossed the covers from my body, dressed myself, and headed for a walk outside.

The air was chilly outside, with a slight breeze that tousled my hair. The neighborhood was deathly quiet, and all the lights were off in each house. My plan was to go to my friend's house and see if he wanted to play on his Playstation 3. I knew that 9:00 AM was pretty early, but my friend had called me to come hang out earlier than that before.

The door swung open, just as I was about to press the bell. "Hello," his mom said. "It's rather early, isn't it? I would be in bed right now if I were you." "Where is Nathan?" I asked. "He went to babysit at the Caldwell mansion. The family said that their child needed to be taken care of while they were out shopping," she replied. "I thought that the Caldwell mansion was abandoned after the massacre," I said. "Haven't you heard? A new family moved in the mansion on Halloween night, just after Nathan had come back home from trick-or-treating. He said that he dropped you off at your house before coming home. Excuse me, I have to run an errand." Nathan's mom walked to her car, got in, and drove off.

I decided to run to the Caldwell mansion and check things out. As I neared the mansion, I saw two lights in the house, and decided that all was going well. With that, I started back home, when I caught the lights suddenly turning off from the corner of my eye. Turning towards the mansion again, I looked up to where the lights were a while ago. However, the lights had turned blue, and were now flickering on and off. Adrenaline rushed through my veins, as I addressed the mysterious situation, and decided that saving my friend was imperative. My reluctant finger pressed the doorbell again, and I watched the door swing open, the darkness reaching for a grip on my soul. My feet worked automatically, stepping in the door, and running to where the blue light was. What I saw wasn't terrifying at all. Nathan sat watching a movie with a woman who I didn't know, and her nine-year-old son.

Nathan turned to me, and started speaking. "Let me introduce you to Mrs. Caldwell," he said. That name had sounded unusually familiar to me, but I couldn't figure out where I had heard it. "I thought you were babysitting?" I asked Nathan. "Mr. Caldwell went to the store for some bread, but Mrs. Caldwell said that I could stay, and watch a movie," he replied. I went in, and sat for a while, but after that, I decided that it was best if I walked back home. "I have to go, but see you around," I told Mrs. Caldwell and Nathan. As I walked out of the room, the door slammed shut behind me. "What the..." But I didn't get to finish my sentence, because a shrieking laughter rolled through the house. I threw my entire weight against the door, forcing it off of its hinges. The sight that fell in front of my eyes was hideous. Nathan lay dead on the ground, blood flowing out of his neck, and quickly filling up the barren, white tile, with the dark red pigment. Towering above him was Mrs. Caldwell, her eyes a shade of red, and fangs colored with the hunger of a vampire. "You should run along now, your mom might be worried," she said with a sneer. The nine-year-old had disappeared, and I didn't want to see what had happened to him, so I ran out of the house, with all the strength that my legs could muster.

I tore my cell-phone out of my pocket, and dialed 9-1-1 as fast as my fingers could go. "9-1-1, what's your emergency?" the dispatch operator at the end of the line asked. "I just

witnessed my friend being murdered inside the Caldwell Mansion!” I yelled my voice cracking. I’m at the Caldwell mansion, and I’m sure you know where that is, so don’t make an excuse because you’re scared!” I shakily added. “Someone is on the w—” the dispatch operator stammered, but the line was cut before he could finish.

One minute later, the screaming of multiple police sirens greeted my frantic heart. Two police squad cars raced in front of the mansion, as two men jumped out of each car. In all, four men barged into the house, but stopped suddenly, as the chief ordered them to. “What’s going on?” he asked me. “I just saw a vampire kill my friend in there,” I said, my voice shaking. “Take us to the exact room that your friend was killed in, and we’ll take care of it,” he told me. “Men, follow the boy to the location of the...,” but he was cut off, by the howling of a wolf, even though it was unusual, at 10:00 AM.

I ran up the stairs, and barged into the room. What I saw there was enough to stop anybody’s heart. My friend Nathan was hanging from a noose, which was tied to the ceiling. “Do you like my new toy?” the nine-year-old boy questioned, as he hit Nathan, which caused him to swing back and forth like a pendulum. The four police officers shuddered, and backed out of the room. They ran out of the door, just as fast as they had come in. I followed suit, and found myself face to face with the police chief. “Are you looking for an exit?” he questioned. I nodded my head dumbly, my face paralyzed with fear. “Well, you aren’t getting one,” he added, as he slammed the door. “Let me introduce myself formally,” the police chief said. “I’m Mr. Caldwell, and I think I’ll celebrate the sixteenth anniversary of the Caldwell Massacre, with some fresh blood, from the source.”