

"Blocks"

by
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1 INT. THIRD-FLOOR BABY'S ROOM - NIGHT

1

In the darkened room, a mobile playing a sleepy tune rotates around seven-month-old PATRICK's crib. He is asleep, his blanket pulled up to his chin.

MRS. McGRADY, 68, a white-haired woman dressed in a simple dress and a pink sweater, looks down lovingly at the baby.

MCGRADY

(sotto voce)

Look at the little one sleepin'
like an angel. Rest well, Patrick.
Your parents will be home soon.

She shivers a little.

MCGRADY

It's gettin' a bit *chilly* in here.
Where's your other blanket?

Not wanting to wake the baby by turning on the light, she squints and goes to get the second blanket. She trips on something. Her steps become uncontrolled. She hits the window, shattering it. With a fading scream, she falls out the broken window to the walkway below.

The GHOST CHILD, a disembodied voice, is heard in echo.

GHOST CHILD

(giggles)

In the dark, we see a set of blocks on the floor. Three of them slide together with a clack.

FADE TO:

2 INT. THIRD-FLOOR BABY'S ROOM - LATER

2

PETE, Patrick's father, approaches LISA, his wife. He is tall, clean cut, and in his late 20s. Lisa is medium height with flowing blonde hair and thin glasses.

The room lights are now on.

PETE

I wheeled the crib into *our* room.
Patrick never even stirred.

(CONTINUED)

LISA

It's hard to believe he slept
through the police cars and
everything.

(sniffs)

Poor Mrs. McGrady! What could have
happened to her, Pete?

PETE

She must have tripped on
something.

LISA

But *what*? We don't have any rugs
in here. The room is all hardwood.

PETE

She *was* getting up there in years.
Maybe she tripped over her own
shoelaces?

Lisa sits down on the rocking chair.

LISA

I feel so *bad*.

PETE

Lisa, it was a *terrible* accident.
Accidents happen.

LISA

(longish beat)

What are we going to do?

PETE

I called her son, Harold. He's the
only family she had. He'll let us
know if we can do anything.

Lisa rubs her eyes.

LISA

(sighs)

It's like a bad dream.

PETE

I'll have the window fixed
tomorrow.

(beat)

Why don't we. . .

Pete suddenly looks confused.

(CONTINUED)

PETE

Honey?

LISA

What?

He points at Patrick's blocks on the floor where the crib was. Lisa rises.

LISA

How did they get *there*?

PETE

We must not have put them away before we left.

LISA

No, I'm *sure* I did.

(beat)

You don't think *those* are what Mrs. McGrady tripped over, do you?

PETE

I hope not!

LISA

I feel bad enough as it is. If her death was. . .

Lisa moves to gather the blocks.

LISA

I'm putting them away right now before. . .

(screams)

PETE

(alarmed)

What's wrong?

Lisa points at the blocks, shaking. Three of them are separate from the others. Those three spell out the word "DIE."

FADE TO:

Yawning, Pete walks into the kitchen. Lisa is already there.

(CONTINUED)

PETE

Coffee ready?

LISA

Almost.

He sits at the kitchen table.

LISA

I threw the blocks away.

PETE

Why?

LISA

I can't bear the thought of
keeping them in the house after
what happened to Mrs. McGrady.

PETE

We don't know for *certain* that she
tripped over those blocks.

LISA

But she *could* have!

(beat)

And how about what they spelled?

PETE

If Patrick had spelled "dog" or
"cat," you'd be saying he was a
genius.

(beat)

He *loves* those blocks.

LISA

I'll buy him a new set.

PETE

My sister spent a pretty penny on
them. They're not the modern-day
cheap stuff. They're wooden -
probably made a long time ago.

LISA

I'm sure she'll understand.

FADE TO:

4

INT. THIRD-FLOOR BABY'S ROOM - NIGHT

4

LISA

Pete! Come here! Quickly!

Pete rushes down the hall from the master bedroom.

PETE

What's up?

PATRICK

(giggles as he plays)

Pete sees that his son is happily playing. . . with blocks.

PETE

They look just like the old ones.

LISA

They *are* the old ones.

PETE

Huh?

LISA

Did you fish them out of the trash?

PETE

Not me.

FADE TO:

5

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT DAY

5

Pete enters the kitchen from outside, closing the door behind him.

PETE

The garbage truck just took away the blocks. They're gone for good.

LISA

Thank God!

(sighs)

There's something *weird* about them.

(CONTINUED)

PATRICK
(crying - filtered
over the baby
monitor)

LISA
Right on cue.

FADE TO:

INT. THIRD-FLOOR BABY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa strides into Patrick's room, her husband behind her.

PATRICK
(slowly stops crying;
smiles)

LISA
(sweetly)
There, there, honey. Did you have
a nice nap?

PATRICK
(giggles)

Lisa takes him from his crib.

PETE
Lisa!

Pete points down to the floor. . . at the blocks.

LISA
But how. . .

This time, they are spelling out "STOP IT."

PETE
That's *enough*!

He gathers all the blocks into the center of the floor.

PETE
I'm going to grind these things
back into tree bark!

Grunting, he stomps repeatedly on the blocks with his
right foot. Shortly, he stops and screams in pain.

GHOST CHILD
(giggles - in echo)

(CONTINUED)

LISA

What's wrong?

Pete is favoring his left foot.

PETE

My foot!

LISA

Can you put any weight on it?

He tries. . . and screams.

PETE

No.

LISA

It might be broken.

(beat)

We'd better call Dr. Ponde.

FADE TO:

Lisa, Patrick, and Pete walk in. Pete, bringing up the rear, is on crutches, his right foot in a boot.

LISA

Careful, dear.

PATRICK

(coos)

LISA

Dr. Ponde said you should be off your foot as much as possible so it can heal.

PETE

I will. . . as soon as I do one thing.

LISA

What?

PETE

I need you to go upstairs, please, and get those blocks *and* the metal wastebasket in the bathroom.

(CONTINUED)

LISA

What on Earth for?

PETE

I'm going to barbecue those damn things out in the driveway and get them out of our lives forever!

FADE TO:

Not much remains of the house but a smoldering husk. Several fire trucks are present, their lights flashing, their sirens occasionally sounding. A muttering crowd has gathered around to watch. Several firefighters are still spraying water on the hot spots.

A young FIREMAN approaches his Chief.

FIREMAN

We got the report, sir. The house belonged to the Connolly family: Mother, father, and baby boy.

The CHIEF, an older, white-haired man, looks confused.

CHIEF

Baby?

(beat)

Are you sure?

FIREMAN

Yeah.

(beat)

The neighbors said he's about seven months old.

CHIEF

(sighs)

Tell the men to keep looking. We found the parents' bodies. The baby's must be in there *somewhere*.

FIREMAN

Will do.

PATRICK & GHOST CHILD

(chilling giggles -
with some echo)

The Chief looks around.

(CONTINUED)

CHIEF

Did you say something, son?

FIREMAN

Not me.

FADE TO:

MONICA, Pete's younger sister, is seated at her kitchen table when the phone rings. She answers it.

On the other end of the line is SAUNDERS, a gray-haired man in a fancy suit. We see him and Monica on a split screen.

MONICA

Hello, Monica Connolly.

SAUNDERS

Ms. Connolly, my name is Saunders.
I'm an attorney representing the
estate of Amelia Griffith.

(beat)

You were at the estate sale a
couple of months ago in Boston.

MONICA

(tentatively)

Yes.

SAUNDERS

You bought some children's toys?

MONICA

Just some blocks.

(beat)

A lovely old set.

SAUNDERS

Yes. They were a gift to young
Jeremiah Griffith in 1913.

(beat)

We'd like them back. They never
should have been put up for
auction. I'm prepared to offer you
double the price you paid for
them, plus something for your
trouble.

(CONTINUED)

MONICA

I don't have them anymore. I gave them to my nephew.

(anxiously)

Could they *hurt* him?

SAUNDERS

Oh no. It's more of an issue of . . . embarrassment.

(beat)

You see, the Griffith family gained some notoriety during the early 1900s for *alleged* dealings in Satan worship. Some said that even young Jeremiah was involved.

MONICA

I've never heard of this.

SAUNDERS

The family has tried to keep things hush hush. There are always some people, however, who are anxious to resurrect the tale, and the blocks being auctioned off *could* start tongues wagging.

MONICA

Let me call my brother and see if I can get them back.

SAUNDERS

Thank you. The Griffith family and I appreciate your help.

(beat)

May I call you again in an hour or so?

MONICA

Certainly.

(beat)

Goodbye.

She hangs up the phone, and it quickly rings again. She answers it.

MONICA

Hello, Monica Connolly.

Through the receiver, she hears the slight crackling of the dying fire and the occasional siren wail. The Chief is heard filtered through the receiver.

(CONTINUED)

CHIEF

Hello, Ms. Connolly. This is Chief
Humbolt of the Milford Fire
Department. Are you related to
Peter Conn-

Monica screams and drops the receiver. We faintly hear
the Chief.

CHIEF

Ms. Connolly?. . . Ma'am?

FADE TO:

BOBBY and TIM, two teenaged boys, walk carefully inside
the burnt remains of the house. Bobby is holding a
backpack.

BOBBY

You should have seen it, Tim. The
whole house was on fire!

Tim takes in the scene.

TIM

There's not much left of it.

BOBBY

My dad says they're going to bring
in the wrecking ball and knock it
down before some neighborhood kids
sneak inside.

TIM

(snickers)
Like us.

Bobby spots the blocks - untouched from the fire.

BOBBY

(surprised)
Will you look at that?

He approaches them, picks up a couple, and makes a small
stack.

BOBBY

Why didn't they burn?

(CONTINUED)

TIM

Who knows?

Bobby looks around.

BOBBY

(sotto voce)

Do you think anyone would miss them?

TIM

(surprised)

You're gonna *take* them?

BOBBY

Why not? I'll bet my little sister would like 'em.

TIM

(unsure)

I don't know if you ought to do that.

BOBBY

Somebody may as well play with them. That's what toys are for.

TIM

(tentatively)

I *guess* you're right.

BOBBY

I think I can fit them all in my backpack.

He unzips the backpack.

TIM

It looks like some other kid was here before us.

Tim points out that the blocks spell out "FIRE."

BOBBY

Someone has a *sick* sense of humor.

They load the blocks into the backpack.

PATRICK & GHOST CHILD

(giggle chillingly -
with echo)

FADE TO BLACK.