

A THIEF NEXT DOOR

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

An expansive driveway, double wide garage doors, gardens and a well cared for lawn. Oozes curbside appeal.

HENRY CANTRELL, 30s, short and fit, hides in bushes nearby. He wears dark clothes, black soft-soled shoes and gloves.

Henry picks up a duffel bag and creeps to an open window.

He checks it with the edges of his gloved hands. Satisfied, he throws the bag inside, jumps up and in.

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

Henry swings his arm up and touches a timer on his wrist watch for ten minutes.

The interior of the house suggests a tasteful and well-financed decorator.

Henry grins.

He hustles up the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

A bed with puffy blankets, two bedside tables, a walk-in closet, jewelry boxes and chests of drawers.

Henry moves to the jewelry boxes and dumps them in his bag without looking at the contents.

He tilts his head as if he heard something. Henry remains calm. He checks:

OUT THE FRONT WINDOW:

No cars in the driveway.

OUT THE SIDE WINDOW:

Views into the window of the house next door. DEAN REMINGTON, 30s, scrawny muscles, scolds SAM REMINGTON, 12, paper thin.

BACK TO SCENE

Henry smiles as if welcoming the distraction. He checks his watch: Eight minutes.

He searches the bedside tables and discovers cash and more jewelry. In the bag they go.

The yelling from next door becomes audible.

DEAN (O.S.)

You stupid little shit. You were told not to play on my computer.

SAM (O.S.)

I didn't do it.

A muffled slap.

DEAN (O.S.)

Wanna try that again, Sam?

SAM (O.S.)

I didn't do it.

Henry shakes his head.

He slinks over to a chest of drawers and pulls them open. An array of watches pour into the bag.

More yelling from next door. Henry spies.

OUT THE SIDE WINDOW:

DEAN

I know you were on it. There's peanut butter on the keyboard.

SAM

You eat peanut butter.

DEAN

No mouth from you. You want the belt?

SAM

No.

Dean backhands Sam.

DEAN

You can address me as sir or father.

SAM

No, stepfather, sir.

BACK TO SCENE

The boy's hurt stare seems to connect with Henry's gaze. Henry turns away. He furrows his brow and hesitates.

He checks his watch: Six minutes.

INT. UPSTAIRS - CHILDREN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Henry scoops up a laptop computer into the bag. A teddy bear draws his attention. He walks out with a troubled expression on his face.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

Henry rakes in silverware, coin collections and sports memorabilia.

Another check on time: Fifteen seconds. He smirks.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Henry strides away from the house, blends in with the night.

SAM (O.S.)

Okay, okay! I used your stupid computer.

DEAN (O.S.)

Now you get the belt!

Henry stops mid step with his bag. He looks conflicted.

DEAN (O.S.)
Pull your pants down!

That does it. Henry hides his bag behind a shrub. He strides to the house next door.

EXT. REMINGTON HOUSE - NIGHT

Henry sneaks along the house. He peeks inside.

THROUGH A WINDOW:

Dean has his belt off. Sam bends over with his butt exposed. Sam waits for the first lash to fall.

BACK TO SCENE

Henry cringes at the dark bruises.

Henry dashes to a door, it's locked. He knocks.

DEAN (O.S.)
Who is it? I'm busy.

Dean opens the door. Henry punches him and rushes in.

INT. REMINGTON HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sam pulls up his pants. Henry yanks his arm and turns.

Dean punches Henry and it's on! Dean swings away at Henry until he goes down. Henry is out cold.

Sam shakes as he watches from a corner.

LATER

Duct tape binds Henry's limbs to a chair. He comes around.

DEAN
You're not from this neighborhood.

Dean touches Henry's dark shirt.

DEAN

Which makes you a thief.

SAM

You shouldn't have been stealing.

DEAN

Don't talk to him.

Dean pushes him away from Henry.

SAM

Sorry, sir.

Sam shoots Dean a dirty look, dark with intent.

HENRY

How did the boy get those bruises?

SAM

Dean said --

DEAN

Never mind what I said.

Dean holds the knife and holds it up to Henry's face. He twirls and watches the light reflect off the blade.

HENRY

I have at least ten thousand dollars
from next door. Interested?

Dean gazes at Henry. Almost licks his chops.

Sam sneaks to the knife drawer. He pulls it open and removes a small blade. He glances at the back of Dean's head.

Sam hides it behind his back. He catches Henry's eye.

DEAN

I thought you might have something.
Where?

HENRY

Duffel bag. In the bushes.

DEAN

No tricks. I get the bag. You go?

Henry nods.

SAM

That would be the same as stealing!

Dean waits by the door and motions to Sam.

DEAN

Come with me.

Sam walks to Henry and stomps Henry's foot. Henry grimaces.

Dean laughs and leaves with Sam.

Henry looks at the knife in his hands. He cuts the tape and gets up. He turns out the lights and leaves the house.

EXT. REMINGTON HOUSE - NIGHT

Dean clenches the bag and Sam.

DEAN

Easy money, not so easy leaving.

Sam stomps on Dean's foot and bites his knife hand.

Dean yelps as the knife falls.

Henry rushes Dean as Sam ducks to the ground.

Henry slugs away. Dean manages to get a few hits in on Henry.

Dean grabs a knife off the ground.

Sam gets up and is in harm's way.

Henry jumps for Dean and falls on him.

Henry rolls off Dean.

A knife sticks out of Dean's unmoving chest.

Sam stares at the knife.

Henry crouches down and blocks the body from Sam's view.

HENRY

Sam, a man you don't know robbed the neighbors. Your father tried to stop him and the man killed him during a knife fight. Truth?

SAM

Truth. Will I see you again?

HENRY

Do you want to?

Sam nods and hugs him.

Henry peels the boy off and locks eyes with him.

HENRY

Then you will.

SAM

Stealing is bad. You should stop.

Henry rises and nods. Sam watches as he walks into the night. Police car sirens blare in the distance.

FADE OUT.