

SILAS CROWLEY'S

THE CREAKING DOOR

a Short-film

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[9°57'24.3"N 84°01'23.7"W]

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INT. HOUSE, ISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is decorated in soft tones: antique dolls on shelves, faded star-print wallpaper. A nightlight casts a warm light in the dimness.

In bed, under a thick blanket, is 7-year-old ISA, with straight hair and huge, dreamy eyes.

Beside her, sitting on the edge of the bed, is her mother, JENNY, in her 30s, with a tired but sweet face. She tenderly tucks the blanket into her.

ISA
Mommy... when I grow up, I want to
be a nurse.

JENNY
Yes? And why?

ISA
Because I want to take care of
those who are sick. Like you when
you got sick last time.
(pause)
And I'm going to be the best nurse
in the world.

JENNY
I have no doubt, darling. You're
going to be the best.

Jenny strokes her forehead and gives her a soft kiss.

JENNY
Now go to sleep, you have school
tomorrow.

Isa nods, with a smile that soon fades as Jenny gets up and heads for the door.

Jenny turns off the overhead light.

CLICK.

Darkness.

The dim light from the nightlight flickers for a second... then stabilizes.

Jenny places her hand on the door handle, which looks worn and rusty, ready to close it.

ISA
(seriously)
Mommy... please leave it open.

Jenny stops.

She looks at her daughter. Her expression is neutral, but her tone is firm.

JENNY
Sure, honey. Just a little bit,
okay?

Jenny slowly pushes the door ajar. The hinge creaks with a long, high-pitched sound.

REEEEECH...

The camera remains fixed on the now ajar door as Jenny walks away.

Silence.

The nightlight goes out.

CUT TO:

EDITED SEQUENCE - ISA'S ROUTINE

There is no dialogue. Only ambient sound and music.

INT. ISA'S APARTMENT ROOM - MORNING

Isa (now in her 30s) wakes up. The room is gray and dull. The alarm clock vibrates weakly. She opens her empty eyes. She sighs.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Isa takes a shower. The water falls heavily. She stands still under the stream, not moving much. White walls, no decoration. Steam fogs the mirror.

EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING

Isa waits for the bus. Headphones in. She stares at the ground. People pass by without looking at each other. The cars. The smoke.

INT. BUS - MORNING

Isa sits by the window. Outside, buildings, people, noise. She listens to music but shows no emotion. She leans her forehead against the fogged-up glass. She closes her eyes.

INT. CALL CENTER - DAY

Rows of desks, all the same. People talking at the same time, wearing headphones. Isa in front of her computer.

She looks at the screen. She blinks slowly. The phone rings. She answers automatically. Her lips move weakly.

INT. ISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isa takes off her shoes.

She sits on the bed. She stares into space.

She turns off the light.

REPETITION OF THE SEQUENCE

The following scenes repeat the routine, with minimal visual variations but no dialogue. With each cycle, the tone becomes darker, the light dimmer, Isa's face more subdued.

DAY 2

-She wakes up. She sits up in bed, but takes longer to get up.

-In the shower, she leans against the wall.

-On the bus, she sees a mother tucking her daughter in.

-At work, someone next to her laughs. Isa doesn't react.

-At night, Isa stares at her half-open bedroom door. Just like when she was a child.

DAY 3

-The alarm clock rings. Isa doesn't move.

-In the bathroom, she stares at herself in the mirror.

-On the bus, there's no room to sit.

-At work, the screen flickers.

-At night, she gets into bed, but leaves the door ajar.

CUT TO:

INT. ISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dim lighting. Only a table lamp illuminates the space.

Isa sits alone in front of the television, not really watching it. A cup of cold coffee in her hand. The same routine scene as always.

THE PHONE RINGS.

Not the cell phone. The landline. An old, white one with a tangled cord.

Isa blinks slowly. She looks at it strangely. It almost never rings.

The ringing of the doorbell breaks the monotony of the room. Isa gets up, walks over, and picks up the receiver.

CLOSE-UP SHOT - ISA'S FACE:

Isa listens.

SILENCE.

Only the subtle hum of the air, perhaps a distant clock.

Her eyes open, barely. She doesn't say a word.

She swallows.

She turns her head slightly. She looks at the wall. Her gaze remains fixed.

Her other hand tenses. She squeezes the sleeve of her sweater.

Her breath catches slightly.

She closes her eyes. A single tear escapes, without drama.

She remains silent. She nods slightly.

She hangs up.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, DINING ROOM - DAY

Natural light enters through a window covered with old curtains. Dust floats in the air. All is silent except for the faint sound of a spoon against a bowl.

Isa, wearing a gray sweater and with dark circles under her eyes, sits in front of a wheelchair. In it, her mother. We don't see her face. Only her hunched back, her gray hair tied back in a loose bun. A blanket covers her legs.

Isa carefully blows on the spoon. She brings it to her mother's lips, which are out of frame. The spoon trembles slightly in her hand. Her breathing is slow, measured.

The mother makes a slight movement. The spoon disappears out of frame.

Isa watches her swallow.

Silence.

Isa repeats the gesture. She blows. She moves closer. She waits.

INT. HOUSE, ISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isa's room when she was a child. Everything is the same.

Isa sleeps soundly. The door is ajar. The hallway is a dark tunnel behind her.

Absolute silence. Only the sound of the wind outside.

Suddenly...

RAEEEECH...

The sharp creaking of the hinge. Slow. Unsettling.

The door closes by itself. The click of the latch rings loudly in the stillness.

Isa opens her eyes. She blinks, confused.

She sits up, staring at the closed door. She watches it for a few seconds. There is no sound. Nothing moves.

She gets up slowly. Her bare feet make a soft tap-tap against the wood. She opens the door slowly. She looks down the dark hallway.

Nothing. Empty.

They stay for a few more seconds, trying to hear something.

She returns to bed. She lies down. She closes her eyes.

The camera remains fixed on her. Silence returns.

The door slowly opens behind her, without her noticing.

RAEEEECH...

Darkness.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

The kitchen is silent. Only the faint hum of the refrigerator fills the air. Isa, in her pajamas, her face tired, holds the landline phone in one hand.

She leans against the wall, almost in the shadows.

Her voice is low, tense, as if she doesn't want anyone else to hear her.

ISA
Hello... yes, excuse me for
calling at this hour. It's Isa...
Jenny Foster's daughter.

Pause. Listen.

ISA
Yes... yes, she's fine, she's
sleeping now. I just... wanted to
ask something.

Another pause. Isa scratches her head.

ISA
Is it... normal for her to try to
get up in the night? I mean... to
try to leave the room.

Silence. Isa rubs her arm.

ISA
(whispers)
It's been like... three nights. At
first I thought it was a dream,

but last night I found her
standing in front of the door,
barefoot. She was talking to
herself and laughing.

Isa takes a deep breath.

ISA
I don't know if it's part of the
deterioration... or if she needs a
change in medication.

Another pause. She nods slowly.

ISA
Yes. No, she didn't say anything
to me. She just... looks at me
like she doesn't know me.

Isa closes her eyes for a second. She swallows.

ISA
Yes. Yes, that's fine. Thanks for
taking the call. Good night.

Hangs up.

Silence.

Isa remains motionless for a moment.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - NIGHT

The hallway lights flicker softly. The hospital's colors are pale, almost lifeless. Everything seems clean, but there's a sense of sickness and death in the air. The sound of squeaking wheels.

Isa walks nervously down the hallway. She stops when she reaches a corner.

From there, she watches something in the distance.

Jenny, barefoot in a hospital gown, her hair disheveled, is dragged by two nurses and a guard.

Jenny writhes violently.

JENNY (O.C.)
No! NO! He'll come for her!! DON'T
LET HIM IN!

SHOT - ISA'S FACE:

Isa, paralyzed. Goosebumps. A tear falls, but she doesn't move. Her eyes are fixed on her mother.

The mother tries to break free, kicks, and a nurse falls. The guard grabs her violently and pushes her toward a windowless metal door.

INT. HOUSE, ISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isa enters. She sits on the bed, lies down.

She takes a deep breath. She turns off the nightlight.

CLICK.

Darkness.

Everything falls silent... except for a sound that seems to come from the woodwork of the house: slow, steady creaking, as if something were moving slowly through the hallways.

The door is ajar.

SHOT - ISA'S FACE IN BED:

The light from the window barely illuminates her face. She closes her eyes.

REEEEECH...

The door opens by itself, slowly, very slowly, letting out that sharp, prolonged creaking sound.

Isa opens her eyes. She doesn't move.

She breathes heavily. She turns over, slowly, to look at the door. Nothing. Only darkness.

She sits up in bed, tense. She gets up.

She walks toward the door. Her steps are firm but shaky.

In anger, she pushes it hard until it slams shut.

ISA
Enough!

Silence.

Isa takes a step back...

The door violently opens on its own, hitting her in the forehead. Isa falls back to the floor, stunned.

CLOSE SHOT - WOODEN FLOOR:

Her legs suddenly tense. Something invisible grabs her feet.

Isa screams.

ISA
NO! LET ME GO!

She begins to be violently dragged toward the dark hallway.

Her body hits the floor, her nails scrape the wood.

Whatever is dragging her drags her away.

Isa disappears into the darkness. The screams fade, little by little.

Silence.

Suddenly...

ISA RETURNS, CRAWLING.

Bleeding from her nose, her clothes torn, her eyes filled with terror.

She reaches the half-open door.

CLACK!

The door closes by itself again. This time quickly, BRUTALLY.

THUD!

IT HITS HER DIRECTLY IN THE HEAD.

Isa falls sideways. Motionless.

Blood trickles onto the wooden floor.

Absolute silence.

Then...

DOORS ARE HEARD ALL THROUGH THE HOUSE, OPEN AND CLOSE BY THEMSELVES.

Furious. Violent. A crash that shakes the walls.

THUD! THUD! THUD!

THE CAMERA TURNS TO A TABLE WHERE THERE IS:

An old photo from the 90s. Isa and her brother as children, smiling in a park.

The camera slowly zooms in on the image as the crash continues...

THE END