

WE NEVER OPEN THE DOOR WHEN THERE'S ONLY ONE KNOCK AT NIGHT

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Based on 'We Never Open the Door When There's Only One Knock', by  
[u/likeeyedid](#)

FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FROM A WINDOW, we see a snowy, still landscape. The moon illuminates rolling hills as snow calmly falls from the sky.

It is the middle of winter, and it is quiet, save for some soft snoring coming from someone off-screen.

The room is dark, but cozy. The only light comes from a muted television program playing besides an unused fireplace.

In front of the television, a young woman, Lainey (18) is asleep on a couch, her arm draped off the edge of the couch, with a dropped phone on the ground beneath it.

We linger for a beat until the silence is interrupted by a YOUNG GIRL'S VOICE (15):

THE VOICE

(whisper)

Let it go.

No response. From another window, a finger taps. Lainey stirs.

LAINEY

(sleeptalking)

Mmm.

THE VOICE

(whisper)

Lala.

Lainey's eyes open as she wakes with a start.

She looks around, taking in her surroundings, reminding herself where she last left off.

LAINEY

Hello?

THE VOICE

(whisper)

Lala!

Lainey looks towards a window, where the Voice is emanating from.

WOMAN

Ruby?

THE VOICE  
(whisper)  
Can you let me in?

Lainey finds her phone beneath him. Picks it up.

LAINEY  
How long were you out? You were  
supposed to call me.

Lainey turns the phone screen on.

2:27 AM. No notifications. Something's up.

THE VOICE  
I lost my phone. It got too cold,  
so I came back. Can you let me in?

Lainey walks towards the window, peers outside.

Nothing.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)  
I'm at the door.

Lainey doesn't budge.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)  
Come on! It's cold!

Lainey sighs.

She walks towards the entrance.

INT. FRONT ENTRANCE

A normal front entrance. Its welcome mat is stained from melted snow - there's been activity here through the day.

The door has a large window on it.

By the time Lainey reaches the door, the doorknob is rattling impatiently. Stomps from feet trying to stay warm outside.

Lainey looks out the door's window.

LAINEY  
Where are you? You left your phone  
at Max's?

THE VOICE  
Yeah. I think. I wanted to call  
you, but it was low on battery.

LAINNEY  
Why didn't you charge it?

THE VOICE  
Then it would take too long! And I  
wanted to come back here!

LAINNEY  
How did you get back?

THE VOICE  
Let it go. Max's dad drove me and a  
few others.

Beat. *That was weird.*

LAINNEY  
What did you say? I still can't see  
you.

THE VOICE  
Emily, and Peter. Yeah. She drove  
us back.

Lainney thinks for a second before she's interrupted.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)  
*Lala!*

LAINNEY  
Yeah. Uh. Ruby?

THE VOICE  
Yeah?

LAINNEY  
Can you knock for me?

THE VOICE  
*Really?* All this and you're still  
going to ask me to knock?

LAINNEY  
I have to be sure.

THE VOICE  
What do you want to know?

LAINNEY  
Ruby-

THE VOICE  
I- I feel weak and cold, Lala-

LAINIEY  
(snapping)  
Ruby, we know the rule, can you  
please just knock for me?!

Beat.

Then, a single knock.

**TITLE SCREEN**

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Faint, singular knocks coming from the entrance downstairs,  
alongside inaudible pleads from the Voice.

Lainey sits on the toilet cover, looking at her phone, where  
a shape from a calming app is instructing him on how to  
breathe.

It fills up. She breathes in. It deflates. She breathes out.

She scoffs as she exits the app.

She opens her text messages.

To **Mom:**

Walls of text from Lainey's side, asking Mom to wake up.

She clicks her name, calls her.

Endless rings. Goes to voicemail.

MOM

(VO)

Hi, you've reached Janine. We're  
currently on holiday, so please-

Lainey cuts the call and sighs, barely keeping in her fear.

She buries her head in her hands, thinking for a moment.  
Then, she gets up and opens the bathroom door.

INT. UPPER FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Lainey rummages through a dresser, pulls out a toolbox.

Resting the toolbox on one hand, she tries to open it, but  
her hands are shaking too much, causing her grip to slip and  
the toolbox to fall loudly to the ground.

LAINIEY  
(sotto)  
Shit!

From a nearby window, on the stairway:

THE VOICE  
(whisper)  
Let it go.

Lainey jumps with shock. She regains her composure, gets on the ground, opens the toolbox and pulls out a HAMMER.

She stands up.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)  
Lala, what are you doing?

Lainey makes her way towards the

INT. STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lainey runs quickly down the stairway.

Lainey reaches the bottom floor, and makes her way to the

INT. MAIN ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Lainey practically sprints to the front door.

She crashes into it. Looks through its window to the darkness beyond.

Nothing.

Lainey takes her phone from her pocket, turns on the flashlight, shines it through the window:

Absolutely nothing.

Lainey turns the flashlight off and puts the phone back.

The Voice, coming from just outside the door, jumping Lainey:

THE VOICE  
Lala?

In response, Lainey grips the door's lock and pushes on it, making sure that the door is locked. It's already locked, however, causing her just to fruitlessly push on the lock.

Pulls on the doorknob. Definitely locked.

With her safety ensured for now, Lainey takes some steps back from the door, readying her hammer in front of her.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

Lala?

Lainey checks her phone. Empty - no response from mom.

LAINEY

I called mom.

No response. Lainey takes a breath, puts her phone back into her pocket.

LAINEY (CONT'D)

She's coming. You hear that? Mom and dad'll be back here soon. And then they'll chase you away. And you'll be gone.

No response. Lainey scoffs to herself, faking it until she makes it.

LAINEY (CONT'D)

You thought it would be easy? Just come up here and speak like Ruby and think I'd just *forget*? Slip up? It'll all be over soon. Why? Why even try? We all know how you guys operate. Don't open the door when there's one knock. We *know*. So you're going to have to try something else to get me to budge. Because I'm nice and cozy and safe inside here, and you're outside, and it's going to stay that way until you're gone.

Lainey, exhausted from the stress, takes a seat on the staircase, facing the door.

It's quiet.

Lainey's phone vibrates suddenly. She gets it out, but her grip on it slips from her excitement.

The phone crashes to the ground loudly, sliding across the floor, landing face up.

Lainey looks towards the door's window:

Still nothing.

She gets up and takes one step towards the phone.

Freezes when she hears the Voice:

THE VOICE

Mom's asleep right now with dad. We know that. They're on vacation in London. They left yesterday, leaving you here alone to watch the house. It was exciting. Home alone! First time!

Beat. Lainey's frozen still, not even daring to draw a breath.

Lainey's phone vibrates again. This time Lainey can see the notifications:

Two automated news headlines from Twitter.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

You'll call dad next. Let it go. You'll be back here. You'll take your phone now.

Lainey runs to her phone, takes it, and rushes up the staircase.

INT. STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

As Lainey runs up the stairs, the Voice pipes up from a nearby window:

THE VOICE

Your bedroom! It's safe!

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lainey reaches the upper floor and runs towards her bedroom.

However, she doesn't notice the open toolbox on the floor, and trips.

She falls to the floor, scraping her arm on a wall.

She quickly gets up and rushes to the bedroom.

INT. LAINEY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lainey gets into her bedroom, slams the door shut and locks it. She puts her head against the door, listening for any voices outside.

Silence.

Lainey takes a deep breath, finally in a safe space. She sits down to rest.

But as her eyes look around her room, she notices her bedroom window.

Quietly, Lainey stands up, facing off against the window.

Beat.

THE VOICE

This is the only window in the house that doesn't open. Well, the bathroom, too, but you like your room better.

LAINEY

How do you know all this?

The Voice sighs.

THE VOICE

That's what I've been trying to tell you. I'm Ruby.

LAINEY

Shut the fuck up.

THE VOICE

No. I'm Ruby. I'm your sister.

LAINEY

Shut up. Shut the fuck up. You're not her. You didn't knock. You're one of... *those* things. Not her. Not her.

THE VOICE

No. Ruby's no longer here. I'm her now. Take a deep breath.

Lainey takes a deep breath. She's shaking. She realizes she's still gripping the hammer, her hands white. Lets it go; it drops to the ground.

INT. LAINEY'S BEDROOM - LATER

Lainey, lying on the ground now, looks at her phone; she's calling **DAD**.

Ring. Ring. No response.

The phone goes back to contacts. It's **3:21 AM**. Her call history is filled with calls towards her parents.

Lainey stares at the white screen for a moment, spacing out.

Then, she turns the phone off. Looks towards the window.

LAINEY

Is Ruby dead?

Beat.

THE VOICE

I didn't kill her.

Beat. Lainey looks back down.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

I know you don't trust me. But I have to do this. And so do you.

LAINEY

Why do you do this?

No answer. Lainey continues.

LAINEY (CONT'D)

If you're Ruby, you know about the knocks. You know that we know. I know.

Lainey winces. Touches her arm. Blood.

THE VOICE

You're going to get that looked at.

LAINEY

Shut up. Answer me. Why do you think what you're doing works?

THE VOICE

Because you love me.

LAINEY

I loved *her*. Not you.

THE VOICE

Not always.

Beat. Lainey stands up, remembering something.

LAINEY

No.

THE VOICE

You didn't love me when you had Jack.

LAINEY

Don't bring this up.

THE VOICE

I wanted him. But you didn't let me.

LAINEY

Was this what she was thinking when you took her? Is that why you know?

THE VOICE

You knew I wanted him. And so you brought him everywhere you went. You rubbed it in my face.

Lainey shakes her head.

LAINEY

I love you. I always did, Ruby.

THE VOICE

I know.

Beat.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

But in my quietest, darkest moments, I wonder if you always will. Even if we've had our history. Even if... I'm like this.

Lainey's face twists in anger. She stands up, puts her hand on the doorknob.

LAINEY

Fuck. *Fuck!* That's why people fall for it. Okay. You didn't knock on this door. I can open it.

THE VOICE

We're going to talk, Lainey. We have to.

LAINEY

No. Not we. You.

THE VOICE

I know this isn't perfect. This isn't the way I wanted it, either. I wanted to grow old. With you. But that's not going to happen now. And I know you don't trust me. But you have to understand one thing: I. Am. Ruby.

Lainey releases her grip from the door.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

I remember that I woke up like this. And I didn't feel cold, even though I was just outside the house. But I just wanted to come inside. To see you one more time. I wanted that so badly. And for that to happen, you have to open the front door.

Lainey rubs her arm. Winces.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

But I know more. I know everything that's going to happen tonight. It feels like I'm... outside... time and space.

LAINEY

And you want to come inside.

THE VOICE

Just like I wanted you. Wanted your love.

Lainey takes a deep breath.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

You're right. I didn't knock on this door. I'm not in here yet.

LAINEY

Do I open the front door?

Beat.

THE VOICE

You're going to go downstairs now.

Lainey looks at the door, cautiously unlocks it.

With a snail's pace, she grips the doorknob and turns it.

It clicks. The door is open.

Lainey lets go, instinctively takes a step back from the door.

The door groans as it barely sweeps open.

Nothing.

Lainey goes to the door, looking through the open gap.

Nothing.

She opens the door.

INT. UPPER FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Lainey walks through the hallway, looking around for any activity.

THE VOICE

The second drawer from the left.

LAINEY

I know.

INT. KITCHEN

Lainey opens a drawer and takes out a first aid kit. She tends to her wound.

INT. MAIN ENTRANCE

Lainey sits cross-legged, right by the front door.

She has her phone in her hands, waiting.

Turns on the screen. **5:48 AM**. No notifications.

A knock on the door. Lainey looks up.

THE VOICE

Hi, Lala.

LAINY

Ruby.

THE VOICE

Can you place your hand on the glass?

Lainey stands up, checks that the door is still locked - it is - and places her palm on the glass.

The heat from her hand makes an outline of fog on the cold glass.

From the window, we see the first light of dawn beginning to emerge.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

I see it. The outline of your hand. Do you see my hand? I'm placing it on where I think yours is. I don't see you.

LAINY

I don't see you either, Ruby. Are you going to be back tomorrow night?

THE VOICE

Mom and dad will be back by then. You'll actually be interrupted from your sleep by one of their missed calls. And no, I'll be gone. Gone. I don't know what happens then.

Beat.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

When I woke up, I knew a lot of things. But I didn't know if you would open the door.

Beat.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

I want to see you, Lala. It's taking all my strength to cry out and ask you to open this door.

LAINY

But you knew I wouldn't.

THE VOICE

Now I do. Let it go.

Lainey begins to cry.

One knock on the door.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

I'm crying, too. But you probably  
can't tell.

LAINEY

You're gone. That's why I'm crying.  
Gosh, Ruby.

One knock.

THE VOICE

You're too strong. It would never  
have worked on you. I don't know  
why I didn't believe. Why I wanted  
you with me.

LAINEY

Because that's you, Ruby. You gave  
so much more than I did.

One knock.

THE VOICE

I was weak. I thought you would  
wanted to resolve it right here and  
now. Just be done with it. See me  
and that would have been it.

One knock.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

But you're here now.

LAINEY

I'm here. I'll always be here.

One knock.

THE VOICE

Remember me.

The knocks cease.

Lainey looks up through the door's window. Bright light from  
the rising sun shines through, causing her to squint.

Lainey wipes her face, unlocks the door, and takes a step  
outside.

EXT. THE HOUSE - MORNING

Lainey walks down the patio and stops on the lawn.

She looks up at the sky, takes a deep breath, and lets it go.

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