ACT ONE

INT. A BEDROOM - A HUSBAND AND WIFE ASLEEP -- LATE NIGHT

A man, BRIAN FLYNN, is awakened by a faint pounding sound. He looks at his wife, VALERIE, who is sound asleep. Brian slips out of bed, walks down the hall to his daughter, SUSIE's bedroom. He opens the door. Susie is sound asleep. The thumping sounds again. Brian closes his eyes for a moment, then opens his eyes and runs down the stairs and out the front door.

Brian walks around to the side of the house and spots a little boy, HARRY, eight years old, bouncing a rubber ball against the side of the house.

BRIAN

Hey!

Harry turns around. The boy glows with a slight illumination.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

(softens tone)

It's late, Son.

Brian slowly walks towards Harry. Harry clutches the ball and walks backwards from Brian's approach.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Don't be scared.

Brian continues slowly approaching Harry. Harry charges at Brian and runs through Brian's solid form. Brian queasily turns around. Harry disappears.

FADE OUT:

INT. KITCHEN -- NEXT MORNING

Brian, Valerie and Susie are sitting at the kitchen table.

VALERIE

You look tired, Honey. Didn't you sleep well?

BRIAN

No, a little boy, around Susie's age, was bouncing a ball against our side wall.

VALERIE

A neighbor?

BRIAN

No. A kid I'd never seen before. In fact

(pause)

VALERIE

In fact, what?

BRIAN

Never mind. I just never seen him before.

VALERIE

Why didn't you wake me? I might have known who he was?

BRIAN

It was 3 o'clock.

VALERIE

3 o'clock?!

SUSIE

Mommy! Don't yell.

VALERIE

Mommy's sorry, Honey. 3 o'clock? Are you sure?

BRIAN

Yep.

VALERIE

What kind of parenting is that? Susie, hurry up and finish, you've got school.

SUSIE

Do I have to go? Daddy doesn't have to go to work.

BRIAN

How about if I take you every day this week? That okay?

VALERIE

I won't argue with that.

BRIAN

Come on, Susie.

SUSIE

Hooray! Daddy's taking me to school.

BRIAN

I hope you didn't take that personally, Dear.

(kisses Valerie)

(to Susie)

Get your books and lunch.

Brian and Susie walk out the kitchen door.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. A TAXI GARAGE -- MORNING

A man, GUS, age, mid-forties, looks much older than his age, is sitting at a table reading a tabloid newspaper. Brian walks in.

BRIAN

Hey, Gus.

GUS

I thought you were on vacation.

BRIAN

I am.

GUS

Can't say too much about a man who loves his job so much he can't stay away.

BRIAN

No, it's not that. I just had a weird experience last night.

GUS

What happened? See a ghost?

BRIAN

Yep. How'd you know?

GUS

(holds up the newspaper)

Why else? Want to tell me?

Brian nods his head.

DISSOLVE TO:

FADE IN:

INT. A TAXI GARAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

GUS

You saw a ghost all right.

BRIAN

What do I do about it?

GUS

Find the little boy's murderer.

BRIAN

What?

GUS

He was murdered. You see, Brian, there's always a reason for a ghost's appearance. It may be a woman waiting for a lost lover to return from sea, a murder recorded as a suicide, a freak accident...Whatever it is, it wants you to solve its problem.

BRIAN

Why am I the lucky one?

GUS

It chose you. Why you? I don't know. Maybe you resemble his father. Maybe you resemble his murderer? Maybe it's because you have a daughter approximately his age.

BRIAN

What happens if I don't help this ghost?

GUS

Adopt him.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)

Gus, pick up at the cemetery.

GUS

That's me. Always assigning me the creepy fares. Say, I'm lecturing at Valley College tonight. You're welcome to come and listen.

BRIAN

I didn't know you lecture at the college. On what?

GUS

On the paranormal. Some of the students formed a club. They invited me.

BRIAN

Okay, thanks. I just might.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. A CLASSROOM -- THAT EVENING

Brian walks into the classroom. A CO-ED enters and wants to sit next to him.

CO-ED

Is anyone sitting here?

BRIAN

No.

CO-ED

I've haven't seen you here before. Are you a member of this club?

BRIAN

No, I work with Gus.

CO-ED

Cool! That must be great. He's my favorite speaker. Does he ever show you his photos?

BRIAN

No.

CO-ED

He's got some great shots. Maybe he'll share some tonight.

Gus walks into the classroom.

GUS

Welcome everybody. Thank you for inviting me again. For those who don't know me, my name is Gus. And I've had a ghostly experience. By that, I mean I have seen a ghost.

A MALE STUDENT raises his hand.

MALE STUDENT

You're not going to tell us the same story about the dance are you?

CO-ED

I like hearing that one.

GUS

I relate it again for the benefit of those who haven't heard it

(looks at the co-ed)

Or for those who'd like to hear it again.

(pause)

One night, I was driving my cab when I picked up a girl walking home from the prom. She said she was cold, so I lent her my jacket. I dropped her off in her driveway and told her not to worry about the fare, and that I'd be back the next night to get the jacket. The next day, I went to her home and knocked on the door. An older lady answered. She told me that my fare was her daughter. She died the week before her prom - thirty years earlier. The mother told me where her daughter was buried, so I went to the cemetery to the grave. And there was my jacket, neatly folded. Urban legend? No. It really happened to me.

BRIAN

Did you solve her problem?

GUS

Yes, I did. Turned out, she was murdered...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A CLASSROOM -- LATER

GUS

That's it for tonight. For those of you who are interested, I give a taxi tour of haunted LA. I've left some business cards on the back table.

The class disperses. Brian walks up to Gus.

BRIAN

Gee, Gus. I didn't know you're quite the celebrity.

GUS

Yeah, well. Just a man capitalizing on his hobby. Fares cover the bills, but the tours fund my retirement. Interesting lecture?

BRIAN

To say the least. How'd you get to know so much about ghosts?

GUS

After I had my experience, the subject fascinated me. So, I talk to my fares, read those tabloids, browse the internet...Come across a lot of celebrity gossip, so if you ever want to know...

(winks and points at his chest)

Did you have any questions that I didn't answer?

BRIAN

There's one you kind of answered, but didn't.

GUS

What's that?

BRIAN

You solved the girl's case. But you made it sound too easy. I know it's not.

GUS

Right. Sometimes all you can do is get the case back on active status. Sometimes you will bring some insight that the police didn't think of. Think like a historian. Do the research. Find out about the boy, the house, the crime, if there really was one. If so, try to find out about the police investigation. If not, try and figure out what is causing his appearance and go from there.

BRIAN

Thanks, Gus.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DRIVEWAY OUTSIDE OF BRIAN'S HOME -- NIGHT

Brian gets out of his car. He walks to the side of the house where he had seen the ghost. He walks back and into the house and walks up the stairs. He stops at Susie's bedroom door and listens. He hears Susie's voice. Brian opens the door.

SUSIE

Buit this is my room, now.

BRIAN

Sweetie, who are you talking to?

SUSIE

Daddy. You scared him.

BRIAN

Scared who?

SUSIE

The boy.

BRIAN

What boy?

SUSIE

The boy who says he lives here.

Brian walks in and sits on Susie's bed.

BRIAN

Honey, do you know how he got in here?

Susie shrugs her shoulders.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Next time you see him. Call me.

SUSIE

But Daddy, you scared him.

BRIAN

Susie, I don't want you talking to strangers, no matter how nice they are.

SUSIE

But he's not a stranger. His name is Harry.

BRIAN

Who?

SUSIE

Harry is the boy that lives here.

Brian kisses Susie on the forehead and tucks her in. He leaves the room and closes the door. He walks into his bedroom. Valerie is in bed and asleep. Brian changes into sleep attire and goes to bed. He closes his eyes, then opens them. Harry is at the side of the bed, glowing in the dark.

HARRY

Daddy?

Harry disappears.

FADE OUT:

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. KITCHEN -- MORNING

Valerie is cooking. Brian walks in. Susie is sitting at the table.

VALERIE

Did you have a nightmare last night?

BRIAN

No, why?

VALERIE

You just about hit the ceiling?

BRIAN

You noticed?

VALERIE

Who wouldn't?

BRIAN

How about the dead waking me?

VALERIE

No. You woke me.

BRIAN

I saw that boy again. I think he's a ghost.

VALERIE

A ghost?

BRIAN

What else could he be?

VALERIE

Susie, Honey. Would you like a brother?

BRIAN

Susie's seen it.

Susie nods her head.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I talked to Gus. He says I need to solve its problem.

VALERIE

It's YOUR vacation.

CUT TO:

INT. A REAL ESTATE OFFICE -- DAY

JANE MARTIN sits at her desk and is speaking on the phone.

JANE MARTIN

With the real estate market so hot. Now is the time to sell. Here's what to do. Trade up to a bigger home while you have purchasing power.

Jane looks up. Brian is at her desk. She motions him to sit down.

JANE MARTIN (CONT'D)

(on phone)

If you decide to sell, you have my number.

(Hangs up the phone)

Yes. How can I help you?

BRIAN

Do you remember me?

JANE MARTIN

Of course, how can I forget my first commission? You realize it's been six years. Can't cancel the sale, now.

The two share a laugh.

BRIAN

No, nothing like that. Do you remember anything about the previous owner?

JANE MARTIN

Hmmm. Let me think. I remember it was a divorce sale.

BRIAN

Do you know if they had any children?

JANE MARTIN

No, I don't remember

BRIAN

Do you know about any unusual history regarding that house?

JANE MARTIN

No, why?

BRIAN

I'm just doing some research on the history of the house...I'm on vacation this week. I need something to do.

JANE MARTIN

I'm sorry. Anything unusual about the home, I would have disclosed to you when you bought it. Why don't you try the County Recorder's Office? They should have all the records.I recall that the home had been sold quite a few times before you and your wife purchased it.

BRIAN

I'll do that. Thank you very much for your help.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. KITCHEN -- EVENING

Brian, Valerie and Susie ar eating dinner.

VALERIE

How's it going, Sherlock?

BRIAN

(Sifting through a Manilla folder)

I'm making progress. I found out that this home had four previous owners before us.

The table starts to rattle. A plate falls out of the cabinet and onto the floor and shatters.

SUSIE

That's Harry. He's hungry.

VALERIE

(looking at Susie)

Must have been an earthquake. Seems we've been having a lot of small tremors, lately.

BRIAN

Susie, run up and get your homework. Daddy will help you tonight.

SUSIE

Okay! Be right back

Susie exits the kitchen.

BRIAN

Listen to this, Val. In 1985, an eight year-old boy by the name of Harry Williams was found dead inside a dumpster. Police believe he was kidnapped and killed.

VALERIE

Did they find out who did it?

BRIAN

I don't know. The article mentions a Detective Michael Peterson. He would know.

VALERIE

If he's still around. That was over twenty years ago.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BRIAN AND VALERIE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Valerie is standing in front of the dresser and combs her hair. Brian walks up behind her and massages her shoulders. He bends over and kisses her. Valerie screams. The couple look in the mirror. Harry is standing at their bedroom door.

VALERIE

(shaking)

Brian, I think you better find that detective.

Brian nods his head.

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. POLICE STATION -- MORNING

Brian walks up a set of steps and into the police station. He walks to the information booth, where an INFORMATION OFFICER is sitting.

BRIAN

Excuse me. Can you tell me if a Detective Michael Peterson still works here?

INFORMATION OFFICER

No. Never heard of him.

BRIAN

He worked here about twenty years ago. Do you know anybody who might have known him?

The Information Officer looks around the room. He summons over an OLDER DETECTIVE.

INFORMATION OFFICER

Hey, lieutenant. Can I see you a minute over here?

The older detective walks over.

INFORMATION OFFICER (CONT'D)

Know anybody by the name of Michael Peterson?

OLDER DETECTIVE

Yeah, retired about ten years ago. Who wants to know?

The Information Officer nods towards Brian.

BRIAN

My name's Brian. I live in the old Peterson house.

OLDER DETECTIVE

Wait right here.

The Older Detective walks away.

INFORMATION OFFICER

May I ask what the big deal is about finding this detective?

BRIAN

Do you believe in ghosts?

The older detective returns and hands Brian a cell phone.

OLDER DETECTIVE

I've got Mike Peterson on the line. He wants to talk to you.

(hands Brian the phone)

BRIAN

Detective Peterson, my name is Brian. I live in the Williams' old house.

(Brian listens to the response)

I was hoping the case could be re-opened...Solved? But I didn't...Union Station Coffee Shop? Tomorrow at nine a.m....okay...okay. Thank you. Bye.

Brian hangs up and returns the phone to the older detective.

OLDER DETECTIVE

Got what you want?

BRIAN

Yes. Thank you, lieutenant.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. BRIAN AND VALERIE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The house shakes strongly. Brian and Valerie wake up. Susie runs into the room.

BRIAN

It's an earthquake. Come here, Susie.

VALERIE

Get under something!

Brian lifts Susie and stands under a door arch. Valerie crawls under a table. Lights flicker on and off. Books fall. Lamps crash.

HARRY (O.S.)

Where's Daddy? Where's Daddy?

The shaking stops. Harry's cries for his father also stop.

BRIAN

I didn't know ghosts could feel earthquakes.

Brian walks downstairs and examines the walls.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

At least there doesn't seem to be any cracks on the walls.

VALERIE

And nothing down here fell over.

BRIAN

That's good.

VALERIE

Let's go back to sleep. I'm sure the morning news will say something about this.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A COFFEE SHOP INSIDE UNION STATION TRAIN STATION -- MORNING

A gruff old man, MICHAEL PETERSON, sits at a table drinking coffee. Brian walks up to the man.

BRIAN

Detective Peterson?

MICHAEL PETERSON

Yes. Have a seat.

BRIAN

My name is Brian Flynn. Thank you for seeing me.

MICHAEL PETERSON

You know, when I worked, I started each day with a coffee here. I haven't been here since I retired. I retired with every case of mine closed. Now, I'm starting this day with a cup of coffee here. Tell me why, Mr. Flynn.

BRIAN

It's the Williams boy's murder. I don't know if you believe in ghosts, but I do...now. I believe it wanted me to find his killer, but you told me the case was solved.

MICHAEL PETERSON

True. I found the boy's killer. It's his father he's looking for.

BRIAN

Huh?

MICHAEL PETERSON

Look, Mister Flynn. I'm not saying that I believe or don't believe in ghosts, but I knew I'd be back here drinking coffee to start my morning.

A waitress comes over and gives refills to the two men.

MICHAEL PETERSON (CONT'D)

The boy's father blamed himself for Harry's murder. Pretty tragic case. The "if" factor is pretty common among survivors. The boy had thrown a temper tantrum, was punished, so he decided to run away. The father let him, thinking the boy would return shortly. He never did. After the trial, the father sold the house and moved to Northern California. So, the case is closed. But, it seems it still needs closure.

BRIAN

Wow. Thank you, detective.

Brian stands up to leave.

MICHAEL PETERSON

I hope you find the boy's father.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. BRIAN AND VALERIE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Brian and Valerie are getting ready for bed.

BRIAN

So, I spent the entire afternoon calling all the James Williams in Northern California. After about two dozen, I found the right one.

VALERIE

So, you think.

BRIAN

I'll know tomorrow. He agreed to meet me...at a cemetery. Said he'd be there before nine and again before five.

The house shakes. The shaking is more violent than the night before.

HARRY (O.S.)

Want Daddy! Want Daddy!

BRIAN

This isn't an earthquake. It's the boy.

VALERIE

I'd say you better leave now and get there before 9!

Brian gets dressed and heads out the door.

BRIAN

I'll try and be back by dinner.

CUT TO:

EXT. A MARKER AT A CEMETERY -- MORNING

A man, JAMES WILLIAMS, elderly, is kneeling in front of a tombstone.

JAMES WILLIAMS

(to himself)

I'm sorry son. Come back to me. Please come back.

Brian walks up to the James.

BRIAN

Mr. Williams?

James turns around.

JAMES WILLIAMS

Yes.

(studies Brian)

You're about the same age as my Harry would have been had he lived.

BRIAN

I think your son wants you.

JAMES WILLIAMS

Why should I believe you? When you called, I thought you were some weirdo.

(Pause)

But then I thought, why would anyone care about my life?

(Pause)

I would give anything to see my son again. Tell me, why do you say it's my son?

BRIAN

I live in your old house. Your son, well, he's throwing a temper tantrum and he's asking for you.

JAMES WILLIAMS

(smiles slightly and tears)

He always threw tantrums and threatened to run away after I punished him.. I always stopped him. This time...This time I didn't...Oh, God...What did I do? I love him so much.

BRIAN

He knows that. He wants to see you. Please come back with me.

James nods affirmatively.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STREET WHICH BRIAN AND VALERIE'S HOUSE IS BUILT. -- NIGHT

The house is pitch dark. A car pulls up. Brian runs out of the car, towards the house. James is behind Brian. They meet valerie and Susie in front of the house.

VALERIE

It happened again. This time the lights didn't come back on.

James walks into the house. Harry's spirit appears at the top of the stairs.

JAMES WILLIAMS

Son. I'm sorry. I love you so much.

Harry floats towards James. James smiles as tears roll down his face. The boy's spirit enters into James body and disappears. The lights come back on. James continues to smile and cry.

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