

The Sounds of Screams

I woke up to the sound of screams filling my ear. It took me a moment to realize what was happening but when I did, I stood up and ran to the window. I could see a red light flicker through the curtains. I threw them open and looked outside. The half of the neighbour's house I could see was a blaze.

My neighbour Linda was a single mother and would often ask me if I could watch her three-year-old son Jack whenever she had to work weekends.

I turned around and yelled for my parents, forgetting Mom was working a night shift at the hospital and Dad was looking after Grandma at her house. I could hear the screams more clearly now "Help someone help, Jack where are you, help."

I ran down the stairs and grabbed my phone off the table. I hurriedly pulled on my shoes and dashed out the door, not even realizing when my dog Roxie ran out behind me.

I sprinted up the slight hill to the house. Every second it took felt like a second wasted. The closer I came to the house, the louder the screams became. I saw Linda on the ground holding her ankle, looking around frantically at the house that was slowly being consumed by flames. I sped to her side, trying to get an explanation out of her.

"What happened?!"

"Jack, Jack!"

"LINDA, LINDA calm down what happened?!"

"I don't know, I was getting a glass of water when I heard the fire alarm go off. I looked around and saw smoke and fire coming from upstairs." She grabbed my arm. "I tried to go find Jack but my ankle got burned badly by the fire and I stumbled outside hoping someone had noticed and called for help."

"Is Jack still inside?" I said, trying to stay calm.

"Yes he is" she said starting to cry

I threw my phone towards Linda. I told her to call for help as I ran towards the house.

"Kerrington stop! what are you doing? come back." she screamed

I ignored her, and ran to the door, kicking it open with my foot. I looked around and saw fire slowly climbing down the stairs. Smoke blurred my vision, and I started to cough. I fell to my knees. All that I have learned about house fires from school is starting to come back to me.

I know that Jack's room is upstairs so I stood up and tried to make my way to the stairs. The heat was unbearable but I knew I needed to hurry. I got to the stairs, and the whole thing was covered in fire but I pushed my way through the fire, looking at my skin. It was hard to hear anything over the crackle of the fire and the alarms going haywire but I faintly heard screams and barks coming from outside. And was that Jack?

"Jack I'm coming," I said through the haze.

I took two steps in the direction of the hall but the fire and smoke was so thick that I decided to crawl to get away from them. I could feel my heart pounding in my head as my eyes began to water. I finally got to Jack's room. The door was opened so I stood up, and looked in but I couldn't see him.

"Jack, are you in there?" I yelled choking on my words.

There was no response. I stepped into the flames, hoping he was on the other side. It hurt so much but I could not think about that.

"Jack Jack," I said as I looked around.

He was not anywhere to be found. A feeling of despair washed over me. I felt that I was wasting time going into rooms not knowing if Jack was in them. I turned around and saw the fire had made a wall of flames so deep I could not see the other side. "What is that," I thought as a shape leaped through the fire. "No way."

"Roxie, are you OK?"

She barked and jumped through the fire again. I followed her hoping she knew what she was doing. I could feel the fire in my hair slowly burning to my scalp. I tried to keep up with her as she ran out of the room into the hall. I folded her farther down the hall in the opposite direction of the stairs. She led me to Linda's room and when I looked inside I saw Jack.

"Jack there you are, I'm coming!"

"Kerrington help me. I'm scared," he whimpered.

"It's OK," I said, trying to make a plan in my head.

He was in the corner of the room standing on the bed with his back against the wall. The fire was everywhere it was burning the ends of the sheets making its way to Jack. I knew the only way Jack was getting out of there was if I ran in, and carried him out. I hesitated for a moment if I went in there was no way I was coming out untouched. In that moment a piece of the roof fell down just beside me and Roxie. I leaped forward into the flaming room. Everything felt surreal, like it was all a ringing in my ear. The cries of Jack as the fire started climbing his legs, the frantic bark coming from Roxie as she paced back and forth just in front

of the door. The sound of the alarm, the fire crackling and faintly I heard the sound of firetrucks coming nearer.

I hardly realized what I was doing. I grabbed Jack and flung him over my shoulders like a shepherd holding a lamb. I turned around, and dashed out of the room into the hall and in a matter of seconds, I was making my way down the stairs with Jack still on my shoulder, and Rockie close at my heels. We burst through the front door as pieces of the roof fell behind us.

It felt like in the movies when the buildings are blowing up behind them but they don't look back as they triumphantly walk out.

I passed Jack to Linda as they cried happy tears. I fell to the soft grass as everything turned black. The last thing I remembered was Linda screaming my name as the sound of fire trucks and their loud sirens filled my ears.

The end