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Short Story Contest

23 July 2025

Blood on the Handle

"Jane!" my best friend called.

Allison Walker had been my best friend since seventh grade. We were now 17 and at a sleepover at her house. I ran downstairs to see her rummaging through her pantry.

"Let's get snacks for our movie night!"

We grabbed Oreos, Cheez-Its, and ice cream. We were going to watch *The Notebook*, a favorite of ours. Allison was the prettiest girl in our grade. She has a boyfriend, but I do not. We were home alone because her parents were out on a date and her brother was out with friends. About halfway through the movie we had seen a hundred times, we decided to do something more fun than watch *The Notebook*.

"Want to go on a little adventure?" Allison asked me.

"Like what?" I replied.

"Just a little walk," she said as she winked.

"Okay," I replied.

It was 10pm, but we decided to go on a walk. It wasn't terribly dark, as it was a summer night, but dusk had hit and we were slightly nervous. We walked down the sidewalk on her street about 12 houses down. Across the street, we heard a ruckus inside a house.

"Is that Elena's house?" Allison asked.

"I think so," I responded.

Elena Johnson was a girl who didn't have many friends. Everyone thought she was a "weird" kid because she moved into the haunted house last year. She always wore dark clothes and talked to no one. Allison and I were friendly to her, but we weren't best friends by any means.

There were two cars in Elena's driveway, but all the lights were off inside. We assumed her family was home, but there was no sign of them by the looks of the house. We crossed the street when we heard Sutton, Allison's boyfriend.

"What's up, guys? What are you doing walking around right now?"

"No, what are *you* doing finding us right now?" giggled Allison.

"I don't know, I just saw you out of my window."

The three of us stood in front of Elena's house.

Bang bang

"Did you hear that?" I asked.

"Hear what?" Sutton replied.

Bang bang...bang bang

"*That*," I said again.

"I don't know what you're talking about." Sutton said.

Allison and I looked at each other.

"What's going on in there?" I said. "We heard that sound earlier too."

Allison looked at her boyfriend. I just stared at the house. Suddenly, a dark, mysterious figure ran out the door, not closing it on their way out.

I gasped.

"Should we investigate it?" Allison asked.

"No way!" I yelled.

"Shhh," said Allison. "They might hear us."

"*Who* might hear us?" I asked, terrified.

We all looked at each other.

"Which way did they run?" I asked.

Allison pointed to the left. I wore a terrified face.

"There is *no way* I'm going in there. Her house is haunted!" I said.

"I don't know, Allison. Are you sure you want to go in there?" Sutton said.

"Why not?" Allison responded. "I guess you can stay out here alone, Jane."

"Allison! Are you really going in there?" I asked.

"I mean, we said we wanted an adventure..." she replied.

"No, *you* said you wanted an adventure," I said to her.

"But *you* agreed."

"Allison, this is insane!"

"Suit yourself."

Allison and Sutton walked towards Elena's house. Soon after, I followed. As we walked up the stairs, I noticed some garden tools on the porch: a pitchfork, a rake, and a scythe. Sutton stepped one foot into Elena's house. Before he took a second step, he paused. There was blood on the handle. Just as I was about to shriek, Allison covered my mouth. I stumbled backwards, tripping over my own two feet. I started breathing heavily. Seeing that blood absolutely terrified me! My friends and I were not only going into a haunted house but a murder house!

Sutton stepped back outside with us.

"Are we still going to investigate?" he asked.

I wore a face of shock. Allison gave me a half smile.

"Do you seriously still want to?" I asked.

"I mean, we won't be alone," she replied.

"I can't believe you're making me do this." I said.

"We're not making you," Sutton said.

"You might as well be! I'm not going to stay out here alone!"

Sutton walked back inside the house. I grabbed Allison's hand, and she grabbed Sutton's. We were all in this moment together. The first room we walked into was the kitchen. The lights were dimmed; one was flickering. I was so nervous I started shaking.

"How are we in here right now?" I whispered.

"Shhh," Sutton replied.

Thud, thud, thud, thud.

We heard footsteps upstairs. It sounded like someone was running. Holding onto Allison's hand, I started pulling away towards the front door.

"We're going to be fine," she whispered to me.

Continuing to hold hands, we tiptoed through the kitchen. On the kitchen island, I spotted a knife with blood on it. I pointed to it—terrified. We walked past the stairs and continued into the Johnsons' living room. Lying on the floor between the kitchen and the living room was Elena's body. She lay with blood splattered around her.

Elena gently opened her eyes and whimpered, *"Help."* She wasn't able to say anything else. The pitter-patter from upstairs crept down the stairwell. Elena's parents came running to her.

"Elena! What happened?" Her dad shouted in fright. "Who did this? Was this you!?" He yelled furiously, pointing to all of us.

"No, sir," Sutton replied for the three of us.

Elena's father looked petrified. He bent over, picked up Elena, and carried her over to the couch. Elena's mom was speechless. She wore a horror-struck look on her face.

"I'm calling 911," Elena's dad said. "You can hardly breathe," he continued, looking at his daughter.

"No," Elena whimpered. Elena's father looked confused but started dialing.

Allison and I looked at Sutton.

"I don't think that's a good idea, Mr. Johnson," Sutton said.

"Why?" He replied quickly. "What do you know?"

"Nothing, sir, but she seems uneasy. Maybe something happened more than we know," said Sutton.

Elena's dad looked at his wife.

"It seems like you're not sharing all that you could," he said.

Sutton looked guilty. I was confused. Did Sutton know something we didn't? Did Elena's father have a point?

Suddenly, the dark mysterious figure bolted into the kitchen. Sutton turned around quickly. He looked at the mysterious figure and then eyed the knife. The mysterious figure grabbed the knife and again left running. I looked at Allison, wondering what on earth was happening. Allison slowly let go of Sutton's hand. I squeezed on to hers even tighter.

It seemed as if Sutton was on both sides of this mystery. He had been acting suspicious, but he was our friend and came along on this journey.

"Jane... I think we should go," Allison said to me.

"No, please, stay here and help me!" Elena's dad said to us.

"We don't know if they're trustworthy," Elena's mother said.

"We promise we are; we're just scared." I replied.

I looked at Sutton, terrified. Once again, the dark mysterious figure came into the kitchen. But this time not alone. The figure turned from one dark figure into two. The first one handed the knife to the other and then leaped towards Sutton.

"What are you doing?!" Sutton cried.

The figure with the knife walked over to Elena.

In a dark voice, he said, *"I'm going to end your suffering."*

"No!" Shouted Elena's dad.

Mr. Johnson jumped at the figure and tacked it down. The knife went flying in the air.

Elena's mom stepped forward and caught it.

The first figure was fighting Sutton, while the second was fighting Elena's father.

"Jane! What do we do?!" Allison asked me.

"How can we help?!" I shouted to everyone.

Elena's?
Allison's mom took the knife in her hand and stabbed the second figure—who was fighting her husband—in the back. It groaned and used its hand to grab the spot Elena's mother had hit.

The first figure noticed the second figure's wound and pounced onto Elena's mother.

"We have to do something!" I shouted frantically.

The second figure started to look dizzy and uneasy. A few moments later, he passed out. Elena's father went to sit with Elena to see how he could help her.

Allison and I went after the first figure. I don't know what we were thinking, but I know I couldn't stand and watch all of this happen. Now that Sutton was free, I thought he would help us too. Actually, I didn't know what he would do, but I hoped he would help. Allison and I tried to help Elena's mother escape from that first dark figure. Each of us grabbed one of the figure's arms to help Elena's mother be freed. I glanced at Sutton to motion him to come and help us, but he was gone. I looked at the door and saw his body vanish from the house. I had no time to think or say something to him. *How could*

he disappear on us like that? Just as we freed Elena's mom, Sutton returned with the scythe. The first dark figure looked around the room. I wanted to take off his face covering, but I was too scared. Sutton held the scythe up in the air. The first dark figure must have taken that as his cue to exit. He ran out of the house for good this time. The second dark figure was still lying on the floor.

"Should I call 911?" Elena's father asked.

All the eyes in the room looked at Sutton. He nodded.

So, the police came and did an investigation. Since the second figure was still there, it was easier to get some clues about the whole case. They took off the second figure's face covering to reveal one of Sutton's older friends. The officer thanked Allison and me for all our help. Elena's mother did too. The officer asked everyone some questions in private. He talked to Elena and her parents first. Elena had a hard time getting any words out. Soon after, an ambulance was there to pick up Elena and the second dark figure. Both of Allison's parents went too. Next, the police officer asked Allison and me questions about the case. Allison and I had to be honest about our concern with Sutton.

"He's my boyfriend," Allison started. "But I honestly have no clue what he and his friends were up to. I trusted him wholeheartedly, but I would be lying if I said he had nothing to do with this."

"There was someone else here. I think the other person did the crime, and this guy was here for backup. I can't be sure though." I told the officer.

He thanked us again and told us we could be on our way. Allison and I speed-walked back to my house and locked the front door immediately.

"Well, that was fun!" Allison said. I gave her a serious look, but then let out a giggle.

"Please don't make me do that again." I said to her.

"Again?! I hope nothing like that happens again."

"What do you think about Sutton?" I asked.

"I don't know," she said. "I don't want to think about that right now."

I nodded.

"Want to finish watching *The Notebook*?" I asked.

Allison smiled. We walked upstairs and entered my room.

"I think our ice cream melted," I said as I laughed.

"You're right," Allison replied. "Want to get more?" She asked.

I smiled. We got some ice cream and went back to my room. We finished watching *The Notebook* and ended our night in peace.

"What an adventure," I said. "I still can't believe it."

"Oh, me neither." Allison said. "Goodnight, Jane."

"Goodnight."