

Jamie

by

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This is a story about Jamie, my friend what used ta live right acrost tha street from me where tha shopping center is now, which is how I know about what happened, 'cause they told a whole different story on tha TV.

Jamie didn't have no family, like most of us, even if he was old enough, he just lived by hisself in his dad's old house, after his folks was gone. He worked over ta the lumber yard on a fork lift, and sometimes he'd stop at Louie's fer a beer on tha way home and sometimes he'd just go home.

Jamie never bothered nobody much, just mostly stayed ta hisself. He mostly just stayed home. His ol' house weren't much, kinda fallin' apart. Jamie's dad took care o' tha place but Jamie didn't much bother. Tha roof leaked but if ya knew where the leaks was you could mostly stay dry and that's what Jamie did. O' course, some places on tha floors was gittin' weak from tha water but Jamie knew where tha weak spots was. Some o' tha winder glass was broke but Jamie put pasteboard over 'em an' he was happy. I guess he had some junk in tha yard an' some folks think maybe that's what started the trouble, that one o' tha neighbors complained, but I think it was just that healthy specter on tha prowl. He come through the neighborhood one evening and Jamie was out on tha porch in his T-shirt sittin' and drinkin' beer an' pitchin' tha cans in tha yard. He'da picked 'em up some day, fer tha deposit. Anyway, that specter just walked up ta tha house, took a long look at the yard, looked once at Jamie, an' walked in like he owned tha place.

Jamie follered 'im in an' ast what tha hell he wanted and tha specter just kept walking around an' looking at stuff. Then he looked at Jamie an' smiled an' said Jamie couldn't live here no more. It wasn't healthy, he said. Not fit for human somethin', he said, 'bout tha health cold. Jamie got mad, 'cause it'd been his dad's house and his grandad's house before that, so he kicked 'im out. I knowed what happened, 'cause Jamie, he told me 'bout it that same day.

Tha next day, tha specter was back with papers an' a cop. They said Jamie had ta leave and stuck a form ta tha door. Jamie didn't leave. He got mad an' yelled and they left. I saw that from acrost the street on my porch.

A few days later a big black van came drivin' up and a whole bunch of guys jumped out, all dressed up in army stuff, 'cept we found out later they was cops. They ran around back and some stayed in front and went ta kick down Jamie's door, but he already heard 'em comin'. When they kicked in his door, he already had his dad's ol' army .45 an' he shot tha first one right between tha eyes, but they killed him anyway.

Tha specter said it was too bad Jamie had ta die but tha place was unfit an' anybody what lived there'd be sure ta get sick or fall through tha floor or somethin', so they killed him fer his own good.

After that, they contempt the rest of the land on that block and nobody argued with 'em about it much. Mostly folks just left. There's a shopping center there now, but they didn't name it after Jamie. They called it tha American Way Plaza.

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