

I awoke to an unsettling symphony of rumbling noises that filled the air, desperately hoping to drift back to sleep as they persisted. A sudden jarring thud shattered my refuge, jolting me awake. Reluctantly, I decided to face the source of the disturbance, realizing that ignorance was not a solution. With caution, I reached for a flashlight, aware that its beam might inadvertently reveal the mysterious presence lurking in the darkness. A surge of apprehension washed over me, prompting me to abandon the idea.

I slowly descended from my bed, the eerie atmosphere enveloping me as I groped my way towards the window on my right. In the absence of any illumination, my outstretched hand collided with the unforgiving edge of the bed frame, jolting me further. Vibrations coursed through my body, defying my attempts to regain control. Despite the fear, my curiosity led me to cautiously part the curtains, ensuring they remained partially drawn to grant me a glimpse of the mysterious scene unfolding outside

Peering through the narrow opening between the curtains, I scanned the backyard surroundings with the limited vision afforded by my solitary eye. The inky darkness stretched before me, revealing nothing out of the ordinary. The area lay deserted and engulfed in a profound stillness, as it often was during the late hours of the night. My attention was suddenly drawn to an anomaly that disrupted the familiar tranquility—our motion sensor-activated backyard light flickered to life, illuminating the desolate scene for a brief moment. The peculiarity of this occurrence struck me, for there was no one in sight to trigger its activation.

In a fleeting moment, my eye caught sight of a figure standing tall, clutching an object that appeared indiscernible at first glance. They stood resolute, leaning against an unknown structure, adorned with stains. A shiver ran down my spine as fear gripped me, compelling me to retreat from the window. Despite the initial shock, a flicker of recognition surfaced within me—the figure I had glimpsed was none other than Daddy Nike. Temptation lured me to steal another glance outside, eager to ascertain his presence, but the apprehension of being discovered held me back.

Upon my best efforts, sleep eluded me as unsettling thoughts of Daddy Nike, drenched in bloodstains, haunted my mind. Just as I began to drift off, my room was abruptly illuminated by the sudden activation of the lightbulb. Assuming it was my sister entering the room to check on me, I opened my eyes, only to find myself alone. The room remained devoid of any presence besides myself. Puzzled, I surveyed my surroundings without lifting my head, but I came up empty. It hit me that I had simply forgotten to switch off the light, and its illumination had coincided with the return of power. Yet, just as quickly as it had come on, the light abruptly flickered out, leaving me startled and filled with an overwhelming sense of dread. Everything fell into a profound stillness, leaving me to confront the enigmatic silence that lingered in the air.

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"Tobe, good morning!" My sister Oma's voice pierced through the morning haze, pulling me out of my slumber. I blinked groggily, my eyes adjusting to the dim light filtering through the curtains. Glancing towards the light switch, I noticed it was turned off, casting a shadow of doubt over the events of the previous night. I quickly dismissed my suspicions, attributing the switch's position to my sister's habit of turning it off during power outages to protect the bulb from the sudden surge when the electricity returns. It was a mundane explanation that offered some semblance of normalcy amidst the chaos within my mind.

Curiosity tugged at me, urging me to investigate further. I approached the window, drawing back the curtains to reveal the familiar scene outside. Everything appeared as it should—tranquil and undisturbed. Yet, doubts still lingered, leaving me to question the authenticity of what I had experienced. Was it an hallucination or just a bad dream?

I turned my gaze back towards my sister, her expression held a mixture of concern and compassion. I felt the weight of her silent pity, a constant reminder of my struggle with schizophrenia since moving in with her. Every word I uttered and action taken seemed to magnify my sense of

inadequacy and madness, amplifying the isolation I felt in my own reality.

"What happened?" Oma's interest piqued.

"Nothing, it was just a bad dream" I couldn't possibly admit I was hallucinating again.

"Do you remember what happened in the dream?" My sister's genuine concern was evident, but her tone still carried a hint of condescension.

"No" I deadpanned, shutting her out.

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My sister had left me to my own devices for the morning, and I didn't hear from her for hours. It wasn't until later in the day that I noticed her rushing around, frantically dressing herself. I paused from heading into the bathroom and inquired, "What happened?"

As she struggled to put on a shirt, her response came out muffled. All I managed to catch was the name "Daddy Nike." My heart skipped a beat at the mention of his name. Without hesitation, I ignored the fact that I hadn't even taken my bath, and decided to follow her outside clad in only boxers. There was no time for further questions, knowing that any delay could result in her dismissing my concerns and claiming I was just being a nuisance.

I followed my sister across the compound to the bungalow adjacent to ours, and what I witnessed was an unprecedented sight. There, gathered in front of Daddy Nike's house, was a community of people. It was unusual to see such a crowd in our neighborhood, as most of the residents kept to themselves. My sister, Daddy Nike, and I were the only occupants of the two joined bungalows.

As I approached, I noticed Daddy Nike in distress, tears streaming down his face. People surrounded him, trying their best to console him. He seemed inconsolable, pouring out his heart without anyone prompting him. Even the

elderly women in the crowd attempted to silence him, but he continued speaking, overcome with emotion.

"...My wife left me. I've been struggling to survive, barely managing to pay the rent. With the fuel prices increasing, things have become difficult. Yet, I have still tried my best to take care of her..." Daddy Nike's words were punctuated by sobs, his anguish palpable.

Confusion swirled within me as I tried to piece together the fragments of information. Amidst the murmurs and whispers from our neighborhood, I managed to discern that Nike, Daddy Nike's beloved five-year-old daughter, was missing. The revelation struck me like a thunderbolt.

Then it occurred to me, the structure that Daddy Nike was towering over must have been his daughter, Nike. The pieces of the puzzle began to fit together, but I couldn't bring myself to voice my suspicion amidst the somber atmosphere. My lack of visible distress caught the attention of those around me, and their curious gazes bore into my soul. It wasn't the first time I had been subjected to such scrutiny, for my demeanor often seemed detached and unaffected by the world around me.

The collective attention shifted abruptly as Daddy Nike was urged to report the incident to the police station. A few concerned neighbors offered to accompany him on this agonizing journey. My sister, compelled by her compassionate nature, expressed her intention to join them. Sensing the weight of something crucial that needed to be addressed, I pleaded with her to stay behind, assuring her that I had an important matter to discuss with her, one that demanded our immediate attention.

My sister faced a dilemma, torn between helping Daddy Nike and caring for me. But, circumstances compelled her to stay with me. We slipped away unnoticed from the busy crowd, heading back to our own home. The tragedy unfolding before them consumed the attention of the oblivious onlookers.

"Tobe what is it this time?" Oma queried once we got inside our living room.

I blurted out the shocking revelation, struggling to find the right words to convey the gravity of the situation. "Daddy Nike killed his daughter," I uttered, fully aware of how implausible it sounded.

Oma reacted by tapping the side of her head with her index finger, a gesture that implied my words were delusional. In that moment, I couldn't help but acknowledge that perhaps my account seemed far-fetched, even considering my condition. I deserved her doubt.

Her barrage of questions followed, challenging my claims. "Didn't you see the way this man was crying? Which man would cry like that? Why would he want to report her missing if he was the one that killed her"

"So because he's a man he cannot fake tears? I know what I'm saying Oma, I saw this man covered in blood, with a knife in his hand" I defended my stance, though each word I spoke felt more feeble than the last.

"Jesus Christ! Tobe, what kind of wicked human being would stab their own small daughter. I'm tired of you, I swear!" She exclaimed, her words laced with regret as she uttered the latter of her sentence.

She softened her approach, a genuine plea in her eyes as she implored me to help her understand the reasons behind my unsettling beliefs. Her stance remained still, refraining from outright affirming or dismissing what I had shared. It became evident to me that continuing to make unsubstantiated accusations would only lead to further confusion and strain.

Oma decided to venture outside and participate in the search party for Nike, and although I wanted to accompany her, she requested that I remain behind. She asked me to stay in my room for safety. It felt somewhat demeaning to be given such an order, being a 24-year-old, but I recognized the depth of her worry and the desire to keep me safe. Left alone, my unquenchable thirst for evidence grew stronger as I yearned to validate my fragmented memories and find proof of what I believed I had witnessed

I entered Daddy Nike's house utilizing the spare key he had given us, even though the search party had already scoured the premises. Driven by a need to find any suspicious evidence, my focus fixated on anything that might bear traces of blood, supporting my claims. I meticulously examined the knife cabinet, expecting Daddy Nike to be cautious about leaving damning evidence in plain sight, so my efforts yielded nothing.

Undeterred, I continued my relentless quest for the truth, meticulously searching every corner of Daddy Nike's house. As I neared the end of my exploration, curiosity led me to the store room. Suddenly, a clunk sound startled me, making my heart race. I briefly feared it was the returning community, catching me trespassing, but to my immense relief, it wasn't.

While I was deeply absorbed in my search, I was discovered in Daddy Nike's backyard by someone who initially mistook me for a thief and shouted "Ole! Ole!" Before they soon recognized that it was me. The rest of the community had returned from their search party and had overheard the commotion, leading them to surround me. Oma rushed to the backyard to see what was going on. My sister was furious, and I stood my ground, repeating, "I swear this man killed his daughter." The crowd heard my words, but they dismissed them as the ravings of a mad man. Without evidence, I continued to shout, desperately trying to convince them. It was then that I spotted Daddy Nike among the onlookers, intensifying my bitterness. Some men decided to restrain me for my erratic behavior, and eventually, they agreed to take me to a psychiatric hospital. Oma felt conflicted about the situation but believed it was the best course of action.

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I spent a week at Yaba Left, my mind raced with thoughts of what could have transpired. Seeing Daddy Nike feign innocence on the news only added to my agitation. Every day, my sister visited me at the hospital, despite feeling embarrassed about the situation. It was undoubtedly challenging for her to keep up with me. She expressed the challenges that everyone in the neighborhood was facing due to the prolonged lack of

electricity since the incident. The absence of power only added to the overall turmoil. She mentioned how this situation forced her to depend on expensive fuel just to meet basic living needs. She believed that being away from the neighborhood was benefiting me and my well-being.

As we sat across from each other, separated by a table, her complaints about the lack of electricity reminded me of the flickering lights that plagued our nights before they went out completely. I was tempted to ask if she had noticed the strange phenomenon, but I had to maintain the facade of getting better and appearing well. I assumed she was probably fast asleep when it occurred, unaware of the events that unfolded in our compound.

I recalled the motion sensor light that inexplicably turned on, and it dawned on me why we had installed it in the first place. It was meant to deter anyone from discovering the underground transformer and attempting to steal it. The light would automatically illuminate, signaling their presence. In that moment, I realized that no one was there, so why was the light activated? A seemingly wild hypothesis crossed my mind, but I quickly dismissed it as the product of my imagination. Yet, as I recalled the clunk sound I heard before I was apprehended, a sudden realization struck me, that must've been a shovel, and I knew deep down that I might be onto something.

I observed my sister's bag and pretended to collect money from it, causing Oma to attempt to retrieve it. I gripped the bag tightly, refusing to let go, and despite her struggle, I made the decision to flee with it. Oma's screams alerted the guards, but I managed to slip away with what I was after before they pinned me. While being dragged away, I sincerely apologized to Oma, assuring her that everything would soon become clear. Although my sister felt a deep sense of remorse for me, she believed I had descended into a state of instability.

I pleaded with the psychiatrist to allow me to make a phone call, and after much persuasion, they granted me permission. I retrieved the NEPA card I

had in my possession and dialed their number to report 'a spoilt transformer'.

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After 72 agonizing hours, I had lost all hope, and even my sister had stopped visiting me. But then, I woke up to the shocking news of Daddy Nike's arrest for murder. The electricians who had come to check on the spoilt transformer made a horrifying discovery while digging up in search of damaged cables—a lifeless body of Nike buried alive inside a sack.

Due to my previous witness account, the police conducted an investigation and discovered Daddy Nike's shovel hidden carelessly amidst the debris in our backyard. This evidence clearly incriminated Daddy Nike in the case, granting them warrant to arrest him.

Everything started falling into place. The loud thud I heard was Nike being dropped into the ground. The motion sensor light had activated because Nike had awakened and struggled in a desperate attempt to escape, causing the transformer to malfunction, when the power returned. As for the blood stains I thought I had seen on Daddy Nike, I realized they must have been nothing more than hallucinations. Perhaps I had mistaken sand for blood during my state of confusion.

Daddy Nike's sinister act of burying his own daughter alive revealed a depth of darkness that shook me to my core. Unbeknownst to him, the presence of our nearby underground transformer would ultimately expose his heinous crime. The tears he shed during his emotional outburst last week now took on a haunting significance, serving as a hidden confession of his guilt.

My sister returned to me, filled with remorse and apologies. It was a bittersweet moment for me—I had been right about Daddy Nike's guilt, but the tragic loss of Nike's life weighed heavily on my heart.

