

SOMETHING IN THE WATER

Written by

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OPEN ON A BLACK SCREEN.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)
Let me tell you about the time my
brother died.

FADE IN.

EXT. A MODEST ONE-STORY HOUSE - DAY

A one-story cinderblock house. Matte beige. Half the front yard is dirt. The car in the driveway is grimy and has one fender covered in primer. Two of the others are dented. On the porch is a rusted-out grill and a bicycle with no chain.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)
My name is Stephanie Lucas. My
parents died when I was 17, but
that's a story for a different
day...

The CAMERA zooms towards the front door and cuts to:

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The inside of the house used to be nice. The furniture and art was trendy when it was new. Not ostentatious, but not bad.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)
Since then, I've raised my younger
brother and sister, George and
Carrie. Back then, George was 4 and
Carrie was 6. I was 22...

The CAMERA passes STEPHANIE, who sips from a beer while watching "Wheel of Fortune" with little interest, and GEORGE, who plays with Lego bricks. The CAMERA goes into a dingy bathroom, where CARRIE takes a bath.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)
We were living in Tallahassee,
Florida, where we grew up. We don't
live there anymore. We left after
Carrie started seeing things.

EXT. PUBLIC SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Stephanie wears a blue bikini and sits in a beach chair watching George and Carrie splash around in the shallow water and fountains.

At the far end of the pool, the water is deeper and big kids stand in line for the slide, waiting for their turn to make a splash.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

It started that summer. I used to take George and Carrie to this public pool on John Knox road...

Carrie stands near the side of the kids area. She swings her arms back and forth, splashing herself.

Stephanie watches casually. Carrie looks up towards a LIFE GUARD sitting high in a chair. The life guard ignores her completely. He talks to an ATTRACTIVE BLONDE MOM on the other side of his chair.

Stephanie frowns. Carrie keeps talking, like she's answering questions. Carrie nods.

Stephanie gets up and walks over to the life guard's chair and grabs Carrie by the hand. She yanks the young girl back towards her chair, quite roughly.

STEPHANIE

What are you doing?

CARRIE

Talking.

STEPHANIE

Duh. I know that. What were you talking about?

CARRIE

Nothing.

Stephanie is frustrated.

STEPHANIE

Why were you nagging that lifeguard?

CARRIE

Gross! I wasn't talkin' to him.

Stephanie doesn't understand. She looks toward the life guard's chair. No one else is anywhere near it other than the blonde mom.

STEPHANIE

Then who were you talking to?

CARRIE

A boy.

Carrie's face turns white with fear. Stephanie looks towards the chair. No boy there. She scans the nearby beach chairs and families. No boys anywhere near the life guard's chair.

STEPHANIE

What boy?

Carrie looks down and shyly kicks her feet.

CARRIE

Nobody.

Carrie glances in the direction of the life guard. Stephanie does the same.

Nobody's there. Even the life guard is gone now, following the blonde mom towards the deep end.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

I'm not supposed to say.

Stephanie's face turns red.

STEPHANIE

You damned sure ARE supposed to say when you're talking to me!

CARRIE

He told me I'd get in trouble if I told anyone.

STEPHANIE

Who! Tell me or you're gonna be in a LOT of trouble.

Stephanie pauses. She looks for the life guard, finding him flirting with the blonde mom.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Did the lifeguard say something to you? Something he shouldn't have said?

Stephanie takes a step in the life guard's direction.

CARRIE

No! I TOLD you it wasn't him.

STEPHANIE

Then who was it? There's nobody over there.

CARRIE

Yes there is, he's next to the life guard.

She points to the space next to the life guard's chair.

No one is there.

Stephanie looks at Carrie, who is trembling with fear.

Stephanie looks back up and THE BOY is there for a second. Or was he? The image is there for a few frames, but quickly gone. Neither Stephanie nor the viewer are sure if they saw anything.

A light breeze grows stronger and stronger, blowing Stephanie's hair towards Carrie. Stephanie turns to look in the direction of the breeze, which shouldn't exist, as a building blocks that direction.

Stephanie turns back towards Carrie. A ripple moves across the water. Carrie is lifted out of the water about three feet and hurled halfway across the kids area. She splashes down in the foot deep water with a splash and a scream.

The life guard blows his whistle.

LIFEGUARD

Hey, you can't throw kids like that in this area. Someone's gonna get hurt.

The three LIFE GUARDS around the pool stare at Stephanie and Carrie. Parents and other kids do, too.

STEPHANIE

What are you looking at? You get your show for the day?!

Nobody responds. They stare like Stephanie is a murderer.

Stephanie rushes and helps Carrie up.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Are you okay?!

CARRIE

My butt hurts.

She rubs her backside.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

I want to go home!

Stephanie grabs Carrie roughly by the hand and yanks her towards her beach chair. She quickly grabs her stuff and George and heads for the exit.

Everyone stares at her as she goes.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

In the bathroom, Stephanie gives Carrie a bath. George plays with Lego bricks in the living room.

As Stephanie washes Carrie, she notices that there are bruises on her arms, about midway between the shoulder and elbow. The bruises look like they come from the grip of small hands.

STEPHANIE

Where did you get these marks?

Carrie plays with the water and doesn't answer.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Carrie?

Carrie pouts.

Stephanie grabs Carrie's chin and somewhat roughly turns the younger girl's face upward to make eye contact.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Where did they come from?

CARRIE

The boy.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Stephanie stands in the kitchen making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. No crust.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

Things didn't get better.

Carrie runs into the kitchen, dripping wet and wrapped in a towel.

CARRIE

He's here! He's here!

Carrie runs for Stephanie, who hugs her close. George walks into the kitchen.

GEORGE
Are we leaving?

He says it with only a tinge of sadness. He's already starting to get used to this.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)
We were out of there that day. We never went back.

Stephanie pulls George into the hug. He feigns disgust when Carrie's wet hair touches his face.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

George sleeps on one of the twin beds in the room. Stephanie flips through the channels, looking for something to watch. Carrie lays snuggled next to Stephanie.

Stephanie stops on an old rerun of "Friends." Carrie gets up and walks towards the bathroom.

She stops when she reaches the doorway. She stares into the bathroom for a few seconds.

Carrie goes and gets in bed next to George, pulling the covers over her body. Stephanie looks over at her.

CARRIE
He's here.

Stephanie turns off the TV and stares towards the bathroom.

INT. BARNACLE BILL'S - DAY

Inside Barnacle Bill's, a seafood and oyster bar, Stephanie stands next to the cashier, where a MANAGER looks at her with concern.

MANAGER
You quit with no notice like this,
I won't be willing to hire you back
if you change your mind.

Stephanie puts her apron on the counter.

STEPHANIE
Don't worry. I won't be back.

She walks out the door.

EXT. INTERSTATE 10 - NIGHT

Stephanie merges her blue Toyota Camry onto Interstate 10, leaving Tallahassee.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)
We left. We never went back.

A series of shots of Stephanie, Carrie and George checking into various motels, leaving motels, eating at fast food restaurants, washing themselves in rest stop bathrooms.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)
Moving around didn't help a whole lot. Every time Carrie saw the boy again, we moved again. I went wherever I could find work.

Superimposed over the car driving down the road is a series of city limit road signs: Perry. Twoegg. Brooksville. Yeehaw Junction.

EXT. TRAILER, RURAL GEORGIA - NIGHT

A single trailer sits on a private lot in the rural Georgia woods. No other houses or trailers are nearby. The dirt road that leads up to the trailer is quiet.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)
After about a year of moving around, it happened. By this time, we had left Florida. We were living in Macon, Georgia.

INT. TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Stephanie sits at a table playing "The Game of Life" with Carrie.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)
When we were in Georgia for a while, we thought everything was okay.

Carrie twirls the spinner and moves her little car. Neither Carrie nor Stephanie shows any joy while playing. From time to time, they look towards George, who is watching cartoons on TV.

Carrie glances towards the bathroom and shivers. Stephanie notices.

STEPHANIE

Are you okay?

Carrie looks back towards the game and nods her head.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

She wouldn't say much. She was
always scared.

Stephanie takes her turn.

STEPHANIE

Have you been seeing the boy?

Carrie nods.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

When?

Carrie plays with the spinner, but doesn't take her turn.

CARRIE

He's ALWAYS in the water.

Stephanie frowns.

STEPHANIE

What water?

CARRIE

All of it.

Stephanie grabs Carrie by the chin and makes her look up.

STEPHANIE

Stay away from him.

CARRIE

I do. Always.

STEPHANIE

Does he ever do anything? Does he
touch you?

Carrie shakes her head.

CARRIE

He tells me stories.

STEPHANIE

What kind of stories?

CARRIE

Stories about dead little boys.

Stephanie is shocked. And scared.

Carrie spins the spinner.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Stephanie browses through a section filled with various books on ghosts and the supernatural. She pulls out several books, but doesn't seem to like them. She keeps a few others and takes a stack of books back to a table where George and Carrie sit coloring on library handouts labeled "Good girls and boys wash their hands!"

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

I went to the library and tried to do some reading on ghosts. Most of the books weren't real helpful. I felt kind of stupid. I wasn't a kid. But I had seen what had happened.

Stephanie sits down at a computer and browses through various websites about the supernatural and ghosts. She comes across a page with detailed stories about demons. It has a black background and blood-red text.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

Best I could come up with was a demon. Ghosts weren't supposed to do the things the Boy was doing. But demons sometimes did.

The website she's perusing has an article about "water demons." There is a LOT of text.

Stephanie closes her browser window and gets up to leave. She grabs Carrie and George and heads to the desk to check out the books she gathered.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

Yeah, I know all that stuff sounds crazy. I didn't really believe it, either. Not really.

Stephanie leads Carrie and George out of the library, grim-faced.

INT. TRAILER - LATER

Stephanie stands in the kitchen, getting dinner ready for Carrie and George.

Two boxes of Kraft macaroni and cheese sit on the counter next to a can of tuna. A pot of water warms up on the stove.

CARRIE

George keeps asking questions about why we move so much.

STEPHANIE

I hope you didn't tell him.

Carrie is puzzled.

CARRIE

Why not?

STEPHANIE

It was probably nothing. George is too young to hear about such things.

CARRIE

Sorry.

STEPHANIE

Why are YOU sorry?

CARRIE

I told him.

Stephanie's anger is visible. She tries to keep it in.

STEPHANIE

I wish you hadn't done that.

Stephanie walks into George's bedroom to check on him. He's sitting there staring at a glass of water sitting on his night stand. He's crowded in the corner, away from the glass.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

George hops up and runs past Stephanie and out of the bedroom. She looks at the glass of water for a second, then turns to follow him.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

George doesn't answer. He's crying now. He runs past the bathroom, giving it a frightened glance as he keeps going.

Stephanie follows him. George runs into the kitchen.

Stephanie hears George scream and a huge crunching sound.

Carrie screams, too. From the kitchen.

Stephanie arrives in the kitchen.

Water boils out of the pot onto the stove and then the floor. The water briefly appears in the form of the boy before splashing onto the ground, inert.

Across from the stove, George lies crumpled against the front of the dishwasher. The front of the dishwasher is smashed in, the impact of something throwing George's body with full force.

A trickle of blood leaks from George's mouth.

Otherwise, he is completely still.

Carrie grabs Stephanie's hand.

CARRIE

He's here!

STEPHANIE

The boy?

Carrie nods vigorously. Tears streaming down her face.

CARRIE

Yes! He's in the boiling water! He keeps saying the same thing!

STEPHANIE

What is it? What is it!

CARRIE

He keeps saying 'Kill the boy! Kill the boy! Kill the boy!'

Stephanie yanks Carrie by the hand, pulling her out the front door. She doesn't check on George and doesn't look back.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

We never went back. Not even to get our stuff. Or to see George again.

Stephanie pulls her Camry into a gas station and parks at the pump. She gets out and puts the gas nozzle in the tank and pumps a few dollars of gas.

She puts the pump away and walks inside. As she approaches the counter, she sees a newspaper that has a picture of her with her parents, Carrie and George. The chyron reads "Questions Raised About Youth Death."

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

I did see myself again. In the newspaper. And on TV. I was wanted for questioning. But I didn't have any answers.

Stephanie pays for the gas and hurries back to her Camry. Carrie sits in the back, reading from a Beverly Cleary book.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

We've been on the run ever since. I'm wanted by the police.

Stephanie gets in the driver's seat and buckles her seatbelt. She adjusts the rearview mirror so she can make eye contact with Carrie. Carrie gives her a faint smile and goes back to reading.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

And the boy. No matter where we go, he shows up. He's always in the water. You'd be amazed how hard it is to get away from water in this country. Best we can do is keep running. It always takes him a while to catch up.

Carrie starts the car and pulls out of the parking lot.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

He always does, though.

Stephanie pulls the Camry back onto the Interstate.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

Since George died, we've lived in 13 different states. None of them for very long. Every time the boy catches up, we move on.

Stephanie keeps her eyes laser-focused on the road.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

Every once in a while, I hear about some dead kid. I wonder if the boy did it. I wonder if there was anything I could've done about it.

Carrie closes her book and stares out the window.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

I find whatever work I can. Carrie's starting to get older.

(MORE)

STEPHANIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Before long, she'll be working,
too. Then we'll be a little better
off. For a while.

FADE OUT.