

# FIND THE DOLL

by

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NAT. GUILDFORD - RESIDENTIAL AREA - DAY

September 1996. The camera slowly moves along one of the quiet streets in a residential area. We hear children's laughter. At the end of the street is a large house which the camera is approaching. The house is old, made of dark red brick, but it looks quite decent.

NAT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - SAME TIME

Three children are playing in a backyard. ROBERT - 6, red-haired. He is an arrogant, cheeky boy; his sister GRET is 5 and blonde. Their friend STEVIE is 6. He is a stocky, timid boy. They decide whose turn it is to seek in a game of hide-and-seek.

GRET

No, not fair! You hid from me twice!

ROBERT

(laughing)

It's your own fault if you can't find us.

STEVIE

Come on, Rob.

GRET

(puts her hands on her chest)

Brother, can't you be a gentleman?

ROBERT

Don't try to soft-talk me.

STEVIE

Are you arguing again?

(shrugs)

If so, I'm going home.

GRET

I didn't start it. It's just no use playing with my brother.

She turns her back on the boys.

STEVIE

Oh, OK, Gret. If you want, I'll seek this time, shall I?

GRET

(turns back)

No, let him go!

Robert smirks.

ROBERT

I bet you can't hide from me.

GRET

I can!

Brother and sister fight. Stevie breaks up the dispute, before looking into the eyes of both of them. After that, Robert goes to the garden house and stands facing the wooden washing-line pole. He begins to count to twenty. Gret and Stevie run away in different directions.

NAT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Stevie runs across the backyard, and out to the front of the house, where he finds the garage door standing open.

INT. HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

The boy runs into the garage and hides in the front seat of a car.

NAT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Gret runs to a small shrub that borders a neighbour's house. She hides under a big shrub, but then turns and looks at the neighbour's house. After a few seconds the girl runs to a window two metres away from her. The window is open, so the little girl nimbly climbs up and gets into a room.

INT. NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE - ROOM - DAY

The room is full of old things. Gret gingerly steps past all the rubbish and opens the door to the passage.

INT. NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The girl is in an empty living room and then goes up the stairs. The stairs creak.

INT. NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - DAY

Gret walks down the passage to the last door. She pushes the door with her foot. It is not locked. It opens with a creak. She goes inside. There is a large mirror opposite the door and a thick layer of dust on it. The girl stretches out her hand to the mirror to wipe away this dust.

NAT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Robert goes slowly past the area.

ROBERT

(shouts)

Hey, had time to hide? I'm going to find you.

(silence)

Gret, I bet you're under your bed at home.

INT. CAR - DAY

Stevie is crouching so he cannot be seen from the outside. Bored, he opens the glove compartment. A cloth drops out and a flick knife covered in blood.

STEVIE

What is this?

The boy slowly pokes his head out of the window and then tucks his head back in. With trembling hands he puts the cloth and knife back.

INT. HOUSE - GRET'S ROOM - DAY

Robert looks under his sister's bed. In the passageway between the room and the passage, his mother MARIE - 38, appears. She's holding a dish cloth.

MARIE

Robert, what are you looking for?

She steps inside the room. Robert gets up from the floor.

ROBERT

We're playing. Leave us alone!

MARIE

(indignantly)

What kind of tone is that?

ROBERT

I have to find the girl or she'll laugh at me!

MARIE

Don't you dare hurt your sister!

ROBERT  
No one's hurting her. I've got to go.

He runs past his mother.

INT. HOUSE - STAIRS - DAY

Robert goes down the stairs, his mother following him.

ROBERT  
Better tell me where she's hiding.

MARIE  
Gret didn't come home, by the way, supper is almost ready, so find your sister, call Stevie and come and eat. You can stop your stupid games!

She goes back to the kitchen and Robert approaches the front door.

ROBERT  
I promise to be on time! And Stevie loves free food.

MARIE  
(reproachfully)  
Robert! The boy slams the door.

NAT. GARAGE - DAY

He walks past the open garage, he comes into to check the car. Through the glass, Stevie's bright red sweatshirt's catches the light. Robert maliciously smiles. He suddenly jerks open the car door.

ROBERT  
Aha! Gotcha!

Stevie sadly gets out from the car, confusion all over his pale face.

STEVIE  
Can you stop yelling?

ROBERT  
What's the matter?

STEVIE  
Nothing. I gotta go home.

ROBERT  
No! Stop! We'll find my sister and  
have supper.

STEVIE  
(brightening)  
Is your mum cooking something  
tasty?

ROBERT  
(smiles)  
You bet!

NAT. BACKYARD - DAY

They are sitting on a bench in outside. Robert tosses a  
tennis ball into the air. Stevie looks glumly into the  
distance.

ROBERT  
I have no idea where to look for  
her.

STEVIE  
What about the neighbour's house?  
You said no one lives there.

ROBERT  
What? She's too chicken to go in  
there.

Robert jumps off the bench, runs toward the neighbour's  
house. It's a few metres away.

ROBERT  
She's a little girl in this big  
empty house.

STEVIE  
(corrects)  
She's a year younger than me and  
it's just a house.

ROBERT  
I heard that the owners went away  
leaving all their things behind.

STEVIE  
Why have you stopped talking? What  
if there's something interesting?

ROBERT  
My father told me never to go near  
to this house.

STEVIE  
Huh! I didn't think you were a  
coward or that you listened to your  
father. Come on. Let's go!

Stevie pushes past his friend, climbing over the bushes.

We see the open window.

STEVIE  
It's open, by the way! Looks like I  
found your sister.

ROBERT  
Okay, but shut up about it!

Robert climbs in after Stevie.

INT. NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The boys peer round the living room.

ROBERT  
(shouts)  
Gret? Are you here?

Silence.

STEVIE  
Come out now! The game's over.

Silence.

ROBERT  
(shouts)  
Mum is calling us. Supper's ready.

A creak comes from the second floor.

STEVIE  
Did you hear that?

Robert nods. He takes a step towards the stairs.

STEVIE  
Are you going upstairs?

ROBERT  
Sure. Are you scared?

STEVIE  
(hesitantly)  
Err - no.

Robert goes upstairs, Stevie grabs a poker from the fireplace in the living room.

STEVIE  
(to himself)  
Just in case.

INT. NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE - SECOND FLOOR

He catches up with Robert on the second floor. Together they come to the open door where Gret went in.

STEVIE  
Your sister's got nerves of steel!

ROBERT  
No, she's just curious. Gret, come on out!

STEVIE  
Don't shout so loud!

ROBERT  
I'm just letting her know we've found her.

They open the door of the room. It's empty.

ROBERT  
Where is she?

STEVIE  
(suspiciously)  
That creak came from here, didn't it?

ROBERT  
I don't know. This house has got loads of rooms.

Robert approaches the mirror. On the mirror is the print of a little hand. He's trying to compare it with his own and puts his hand there.



ROBERT  
It's fresh.

STEVIE  
(affirmatively)  
Your sister.

Robert turns to the door.

STEVIE  
Shall we get out of here?

ROBERT  
Yes. Come on!

STEVIE  
What about the search?

ROBERT  
If she's here, she heard us. Gret!  
(shouts)  
We're gonna leave - the game's  
over!

NAT. NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE - BACKYARD

They come out through the kitchen door to the backyard.  
There is a seesaw where Gret is sitting.

ROBERT  
There she is!

They run up to the girl. Gret is not moving.

ROBERT  
Go home right now!

Blood begins to drip from her nose.

STEVIE  
Oh, my God, she's fainted, Rob!

ROBERT  
Gret, what's going on?

The brother reaches for his sister's hand, but the hand  
falls off, like from a doll. In fact, that's what it is.  
They stare at the doll's frightened eyes. This doll is  
identical with Gret.

The screen darkens.