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A Ghost Story

Dear...,

I'm dead, but I'm still here.

There is life-*ish* after death and I am not the only one here. Some of your family members are here, the ones that have kicked it. Your aunt Jessica, uncle Thomas, grandma Edna, *and even your dad*. They've been too afraid to talk to you because of how thick-headed you are, so they asked me to tell you this.

We know you do not believe in us. I know you don't believe I am here. The cool breeze blowing across the porch, shaking the wind chimes, isn't us-that would be absurd. The flickering lights in the hallway at work aren't the work of a poltergeist-replace the bulbs already they won't cost much. That slight chill you feel across your arms and down your legs when you're home alone is because you don't turn the furnace on. It's no wonder you're freezing. There are a lot of misconceptions about our presence. Even the word 'presence' is too much in my opinion, I can't speak for everyone, but that's how I feel. For a better lack of a word I say we're more of a 'feeling'. A *living* feeling that's happy to see you. And yes, ghosts can be cheerful too. We are still people in our own right. We can talk to you but in the most inconvenient ways. We like moving your keys, the remote control, the pencil that you just had in your hand, or my personal favorite, leaving a book open to a specific page. It's funny watching you spend half an hour reading the same page for some hidden meaning. Your expressions are priceless. We know it freaks you out at first, and potentially drives you mad, but that isn't our intention! But it is easier to talk to the kids, they haven't become as cynical as the rest of you. You should believe them when they say someone is in the room, they aren't lying, it could be someone you and I once knew. And don't worry, the real trouble makers are stopped before things turn out crazy. We fight just like the living, just like when we were together.

I was someone who didn't believe in the concept of spirits. If I can't see it, then I can't test to verify its existence. If you cannot observe the ghost, does it exist or does it not? Science isn't necessarily black or white, but try telling a hardcore scientist that. Believing in something like us is not easy to accept, I use to be a physicist, so I understand. They call you crazy or ill, and not in a "mad scientist" way, but in the "homeless guy talking to the empty space on a bench" way.

We know you talk to us, or you at least try to. And we hear you, trust us we do. Some of you talk to us for hours like we're your therapist. However, it's nice to hear you talk to us, so we don't feel forgotten. It's the worst feeling in the world, it's worse when you are dead, to just be forgotten. When you are forgotten, you start to fade out of existence. I was afraid of being

forgotten like a man who washed ashore on a deserted island, except we don't need to eat, but we can go crazy. Those times when you speak aloud as if we are there, when you pretend we are right in front of you, it keeps us going. That's when we are there the most, those 'fake' conversations aren't so fake, at some point you don't notice that you're not alone, we are genuinely there. We step in without scaring you because then you would reject our 'feelings' then we wouldn't be able to talk. Sometimes it is easier when you are asleep, but you have a harder time accepting we were there at all, but some part of you does believe us.

Your disbelief always astonishes me to my core. How you choose to keep your head buried in the sand, but still find the time to blame us for our own death? It's one thing to be stressed and yell into an empty room, but why do you keep doing it if you deny our existence? You blame us for dying, you blame me for leaving you alone. If you just believed in us, you could hear us talk back, we could tell you how sorry we are for leaving. We don't want to see you hurting, it hurts us as well.

You've been told ghosts exist due to some form of regret, or unfulfilled desires. You aren't completely wrong; truth is we want to watch over you. Some of us can instantly 'pass on', but we like to watch you live your life and we want to be there for you. From what I have heard you get this fuzzy feeling in your stomach that grows until you shimmer away, I guess you can say this is where the concept of a guardian angel comes from. Although I have not seen an angel, I can't deny their existence because how do I explain my own? Some folks who have been in our state longer than us, have said they have seen one, others have said they have seen wicked things. Maybe in time, I will get to see something wicked, an angel, or nothing at all. I might pass on earlier than expected.

I write this to tell you goodbye because I think I am ready to 'pass on', whatever that means, but I don't want you thinking it was your fault. I died on that concert floor because of my own actions. Please know it wasn't my intent to die while buying your cold medicine. I choose to fight back against the man with the gun, I choose to get your medicine, none of this is your doing and I see now that you don't need me as you did before. Had I stayed, it would have only prevented you from getting better. Maybe when I figure out how all this ghost business works I can come to visit when it matters and you'll know it's me. I know you can always see me. It's hard for me to watch you and our kids move on, but you're already there. Don't freak out when you find this on your laptop, it wasn't anyone pulling a mean trick on you. I want you to know I was here listening, keeping you company, and watching over you. I even spoke with some of your family members who have been watching over you longer than I have and left those duties to me. I never thought you needed someone keeping you safe, but our kids elected themselves. I write this to assure the non-believer in you that I was here, and that I am good too. I know for months you been feeling emptied and disconnected from everything in your life, like a ghost. But this isn't the end of your story, it's the end of mine.

We are here.

We were there.

I am here.

I was there.

Love,

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