

Thick rain clouds covered the moon over Blackwood wrapping the small town in an eerie blanket of darkness, only the occasional flash of lightning shattered it, illuminating the town. The streets, which usually bustled with life even deep into the night, were now deserted as the rain fell down like a stream, each drop crashing against the rooftops and trees that stood in its way. The wind howled loudly through the alleys and streets, carrying with it an unsettling sense of foreboding. Inside a small family house, in the corner of the town, sat four figures at the dining table, seemingly ignoring the storm that was brooding outside and feasting on the food that had been prepared while laughing and conversing with each other. One of the figures, a small child barely 8 years old, stood out. She was laughing but her smiles seemed strained and forced, never really reaching her eyes. "Sophie, dear, is everything alright? You look awfully pale", one of the figures said, looking at the small child with a smile that looked so gentle, so genuine, but at the same time felt so wrong. The child, Sophie, halted at the sudden question, her body immediately stiffening and her eyes slightly shaking as she smiled at the figure in front of her. She didn't say anything, sweat pearls built on her forehead as she just sat there. The table fell eerily silent, the other two figures had stopped talking now, staring at her too, smiles gone replaced by absolute blankness. "I'm fine, mom, just...a little tired", Sophie finally said after what felt like minutes. She had a saccharine smile on her lips, looking like the epitome of innocence, only her trembling hands under the table giving her fear away. With her answer finally, out the two other figures stopped staring at her and cheerfully picked their conversation up again as if nothing had ever happened. "Is that so? I suppose it has been a long day today. You should go to bed early today, "the figure that had asked the question, "mom", said, finally allowing Sophie to calm down again. She held her head down and whispered so quietly that it was almost impossible to hear "but mom, dad, Billy, you're dead..."

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(Norah, 10. Klasse)