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Wake Wood

By Brendan McCarthy

- Happy birthday, Alice.
- Hi, Dad.
We got a new patient at the back.
Your kind of dog, you know?
You can see him after school.
He's so cute. Aw!
Hey, little boy. Thanks, Dad.
- Guess which hand.
- The right one.
Yes.
A locket. I love it.
Thanks, Mum. I love you.
I love you too.
Birthday girl.
Oh, you're so silly!
And straight to school. Happy birthday!
Hi, boy. How are you?
Did Dad fix you OK?
[Barks]
[Growls]
No!
[Shop door opens]
Excuse me. Um...
Is this hypoallergenic?
- Hello there.
- [Man] Afternoon, Arthur.
- Afternoon, boss.
- You here to keep your hand in?
I would normally. The knee,
you see, not getting any better.
That's why I got a younger man in.
[Mooing]
Steady hand, see.
Just steady her there, yeah?
Ah, there we are.
[Phone rings]
[Ringing tone]
Hello. I'm sorry, I was hoping
to get something for a headache.
Sure. Come in.
Headache, was it, Miss Brogan?
- Mary. Are you all right?
- Yes, yeah.
I... I didn't see anyone else come in.

- Are you two togeth...?
- My niece. Deirdre.
- Hi.
- She's visiting.
- Looks like you need a refill.
- Right.
Yeah, thank you.
When did you do the place up?
It looks really different.
- Just recently.
- Must be nine months.
More, even, since they moved here.
Ventolin. I need to see a prescription.
I might have it here.
I do hold on to everything.
- How long are you visiting for?
- What a relief.
This expired last year.
Hey.
You all right?
- What are you doing?
- You know what I'm doing.
No!
It's like a black hole in here.
We're not just throwing
Alice's stuff away.
- No, we can't keep them.
- D'you not understand?
I'm not... I'm not ready.
You'd forget her if you could.
What can I do?
You can let me go.
It's not you, Patrick.
It's not because of you.
You know what?
All I want is for you to be OK.
Drive me to the station.
[Thunder]
[Clunking]
What is it?
[Engine fails]
[Engine fails to start]
We'll get some help at Arthur's place.
He'll know a mechanic.

[Distant clunking]

Listen. It's there when the wind dies.

- What is this place?

- I don't know.

Brilliant.

[Woman] These look like gravestones.

[Rings doorbell]

Car's there.

- I'll try and call him.

- I'll check round the back.

[Clunking]

[Woman] Let's go home.

[Patrick] What happened?

Louise.

- [Patrick] Talk to me, will you?

- Look, I just wanna go to bed.

Louise, Patrick.

Arthur, what are you doing here?

I just wanted to make sure that everything's all right with you both.

- What do you mean?

- Well, is it?

[Patrick] Our car broke down in the middle of nowhere.

We walked to your place, couldn't raise you.

What is this, Arthur?

You just let yourself into our home?

[Arthur chuckles]

Country habits, I suppose.

You say you came to my place.

Well, that would make sense.

- What the hell is this?

- All right, I'm going.

[Groans]

You're doing a great job here, Patrick.

We're so glad you chose Wakewood and hope you've found solace here.

[Patrick] Yeah, we're fine.

And how about you, Louise?

Is everything all right with you?

[Engine starts]

[Gasping breaths]

Deirdre?

- Are you...
- There you are, my pet.
- I'm going home today.
- Is she OK?
Fine, thanks.
- Now...
- [Deirdre] I can't wait to go back.
I know, lovely. It's gone so fast.
Um, uh...
There. For the sunglasses.
Come on, darlir.
[Clunking wood]
Alice has a lovely voice.
- Tell me my daughter's name.
- I don't know.
- Tell me. Tell me my daughter's name.
- I don't know, truly.
Her name was Alice.
Now, how did you niece know that?
What goes on in Wakewood
is not for everyone.
And what goes on?
Please, make another baby to love.
I can't.
I know how you feel.
No, I don't think you do.
Deirdre's not your niece.
So, then, tell me.
You want to get your daughter back,
don't you?
Is that possible?
[Phone rings]
I can't say, and that's the truth.
[Ringing continues]
- Hello.
- [Patrick] Hey.
I've gotta go over to O'Shea's.
Can you help?
- I can't.
- Pick you up at ten?
- [Mooing]
- [O'Shea] Go on, go on. Get in there.
Go on, get in there.
Go on, get up there.

- That's a bitch of a fever he's got.
- Yeah, he has all right.
I'll give him a shot.
Can you prep 35 mil?
And maybe get
an anti-inflammatory as well.
[O'Shea] Go on, get up.
Get up here! Go on. Get up there!
- [Patrick] Move up. Move him up.
- [O'Shea] Go up there.
- Go on, get up. Get up, get up!
- [O'Shea's son] He won't move, Da.
[O'Shea] Come on!
[Son] Come on!
- What are you doing?
- Let me see.
- Shush, woman!
- I'll try and get him where he is.
Keep still.
We're gonna have to get him
up to the restraint. Go on! Go on!
- Bad idea, Mick.
- Don't be upsetting yourself.
- [Patrick] Get out of there, Mick!
- Come on! Come on!
- Come on!
- [Son] Da, please! Da, please.
[Patrick] Get out of there! Pull him up!
Pull him up! Pull him up!
Open the front gate!
[Louise] I can't! It's stuck! Push it!
Da! Da!
Da.
You did everything possible.
I think you'd better find someone else
to run the practice.
We're leaving Wakewood.
It's been a shock to you.
We'll talk tomorrow.
Arthur.
We're not staying.
Tell me about your daughter.
- This isn't the time.
- I think it is the time.

- Arthur...

- Listen to me.

Listen to me.

I can bring your daughter back to life
for a short time,
so you can see her, hold her again
and say goodbye properly.

- Would that ease your pain, hm?

- That's not funny.

If she's been dead for less than a year,
I can bring her back.

It's only for three days.

For most people it's enough.

That is ridiculous. It is nonsense.

All right. All right.

But do one thing for me, Patrick.

Before you deride my offer...

...ask your wife.

She knows.

- I told you already.

- You didn't tell me anything.

- Please, just stop this.

- Stop this? Stop what?

- What is it you think I'm doing?

- Come on, babe.

Please, come on, be straight with me.

What did you see?

What did you see?

I saw something like...

What?

A birth... maybe.

And?

I believe him.

Patrick, I believe what Arthur said.

If we do this, will you stay?

Louise?

I just want her back.

OK.

But it's not so simple, is it?

If we have to lie, isn't it won'th it?

- What was your daughter's name?

- Alice.

Alice Hannah Daley.

Alice Hannah Daley.

- Did she prefer mornings or evenings?
- [Both] Mornings.
- Was her skin moist or dry?
- Moist.

Would she have liked
cats, cows or horses?

Horses, ponies, definitely.

- Was her hair thick or lank?
- It was fine. Wasrt it?

Quite fine.

- What time of the year was she born?
- October. 22nd.

How long has your daughter
been in the ground?

Patrick, how long has your daughter
been dead and buried?

It's been eleven months,
two weeks, two days.

[Mutters]

This is what we can do.

Your daughter will be brought back.

Make the most of the time.

And after she'll go back to the woods.

- She's just on loan.
- Will she be normal?

Yes, quite. Her heart will beat,
her breath will breathe
and she'll remember the time
she had with you, some of it.

It lasts for three days only,
during which you must keep Alice
within the townland of Wakewood.

The wind turbines lie beyond
our boundary. Let them be your guide.

This is a physical necessity.

Why only three days?

We tap the life force
of a fresh cadaver.

Three days' won'th is all we get.

Perhaps it mirrors the stages
of existence, birth, life, death.

I don't truly know.

Now, for this to work, we need a body,
and, as you are more than well aware,

we have recently had a tragedy
in the community.
Perhaps we should prevail on the family.
The ritual of the return
binds you to Wakewood.
You will settle here permanently
and you will tend animals without fail
whenever this town needs you.
Do we have an agreement?
We just wanna see her again.
Then you shall.
You were there. The vet's wife.
Yes.
- Sit down.
- Thank you.
Mrs O'Shea,
I'm very sorry for your loss.
In my mind, he's the young boy I met.
[Footsteps on stairs]
Our daughter was killed last year.
She was our only child.
When she was born, it didn't go well.
I can't have any more.
I know this is
a terrible time for you, but...
...I need to ask you
if we can use your husband's remains
to help bring her back.
- You don't know what you're asking.
- No, you're right. I don't.
But I need to see her again.
You live in Wakewood now, don't you?
But it's not part of you.
You're just visiting maybe.
I can't imagine what that's like.
We're all born here.
Mrs O'Shea,
we're very happy in Wakewood.
Stand up for me.
- No, it's not right.
- What?
I don't know what it is,
but it's not right. I won't do it.
Peggy, they have to ask.

You're upset.
There is something I don't like.
They have to ask you,
but you have to be amenable, Peggy.
That's the only way this can continue.
Do you not want
to see Mick yourself, hm?
You wouldn't deny me Mick's return.
They need your help.
You'll need to provide a relic of Alice
for the ritual.
[Patrick] Like what?
In this case,
we're close to the time limit.
Her favourite teddy?
The relic needs to be
more closely connected. A lock of hair.
[Louise]
We don't have anything like that.
Whatever you provide,
it needs to be personal to Alice.
In a corporal, physical way.
Very much so.
D'you understand?
[Thunder]
[Patrick] You think Peggy knows?
You're ready?
[Louise grunting]
You're very welcome.
Come.
[Motor starts]
We have to crush his thorax first.
In times past,
they did this with a lump hammer.
Right, that'll do!
Patrick, lend a hand.
Now we cut the spinal cord.
You do it for me, would you, Patrick?
We need the relic.
Very good.
On the wild wind thee fly,
'tween this world and the next,
from that twilight realm
you see o'er your perch

the trials of the living
and the wake of the dead.
Help us now call Alice,
and bring her here for three days
and afterwards return.
Go to the trees. Lie among the roots.
Go to the trees. Lie among the roots.
Take these hands.

[All] Alice.

- Take these bones.

- [All] Alice.

- Take this heart.

- [All] Alice.

And, Alice, take these eyes.

Bring him down.

Now we need living blood.

Female blood would be better.

Cut me.

[Arthur] Come, come.

Stand back, stand back.

Feel now the power of transformation
course through your true selves.

Look away, look away!

Avert your gaze!

Here she comes. Here she comes.

Here she comes.

Here she comes. Here she comes.

Here she comes.

Oh, my baby. Oh, my baby.

My baby. Alice.

[Louise] Your hair's grown so long.

I had such a strange dream.

It's over now.

- Her eyes are brown.

- Yeah, Mick had brown eyes.

- Where's Alice?

- Getting dressed.

- Hey, sweetie.

- Did you sleep well?

The house seems strange.

- It...

- Yeah, it is. Um...

- We came here for a break.

- I must have slept the whole way.

[Patrick] Is this for real?

After you.

No, you're not gonna get me.

[Patrick] Oh, Alice.

- [Patrick] Come on, start counting.

- One, two, three, four,

five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten,

11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

I'm coming, ready or not!

- [Patrick yells]

- [Louise laughs] I got you!

I found your father!

He's my prisoner! You're next!

Alice!

Come on, baby! Where are you?

[Patrick] Alice!

Alice?

Alice!

Al!

[Patrick] Alice!

Come on!

[Flies buzzing]

Alice.

Oh, sweetie. Are you OK?

What's that doing there?

I don't know. Maybe somebody put it there to ward off the other birds.

- Hey, I found something.

- What?

Pick a hand.

- Pick another hand.

- Wrong.

Do you remember when you got it?

You gave it to me sometime.

Come on, baby. Time to go.

Mum, did you hear music last night?

- What kind of music?

- Voices, singing my name.

We'll take him home

and I can stitch him.

He doesn't have a collar.

[Whines]

- Dad.

- Uh-huh?

Can I do it?
Yeah, go and put
some of those gloves on.
OK, hold it. Hold it really tight.
Now, OK.
Now, open that. Take that piece.
Hang on. You pull that through and up.
Like that.
People shouldn't hurt animals,
should they?
No, they shouldn't.
And animals
shouldn't hurt people either.
Well, that's kind of different,
you know?
I'd heard you'd had a bit of trouble.
- Could say that, yeah.
- Mm.
- Dad, can we keep him?
- Well, I don't see why not.
- Mum said we could.
- Oh, she did, did she?
- I'm gonna call him Howie.
- Howie? Ooh, I like it.
Don't make it hard to say goodbye.
- Good night.
- Night.
- Got some blankets for us.
- OK.
Once upon a time, there was
a little tearaway called Alice.
- No, called Louise.
- This about me, is it?
OK, called Louise, and she lived
with her brothers and sisters.
- And her sheepdog.
- And her sheepdog.
And they lived in a big house on a hill
overlooking the city.
And the house had a field
and an orchard.
And every year the trees...
[knocking]
Hello, Alice. How are you?

How would you like
to come and ride our pony?
Dad, I'm going pony riding.
- Mrs O'Shea, it's very kind of you...
- Alice wants to ride our pony.
And it needs the exercise.
I'll bring her back later.
I'm sorry,
but, um, we made plans for today.
- No, Dad, I want to go now.
- Calm down.
- Mum, I've been invited pony riding.
- Oh?
Why don't you all come?
Tell you what, why we don't have
some breakfast and then we'll see.
OK.
[Mrs O'Shea] Keep her awake.
Now, would you like
to pop over a jump?
D'you think she's ready?
She's hardly ever ridden.
She'll be fine. She's a natural.
See that? No bother at all.
We have some tea and sandwiches
going inside. Would you like to come in?
- Alice, are you ready?
- [Mrs O'Shea] Let her finish up.
We'll come in when she's done.
She won't be long, I promise.
Alice, there's a game
you might enjoy playing.
- [Alice] What's the game?
- It's a quiz.
I ask the questions, you answer,
I keep score.
Now, Alice Daley, what is your name?
Right, I see the way it is.
Tell me, when you close your eyes
when you're tired,
what do you see,
more yellow or brown?
I see a big red shape.
Go on, have another one there, Patrick.

I think maybe we should check on Alice.

- Yeah.

- They'll be back any minute.

Let me see your hand.

And what's your date of birth?

I think I know, a little bird told me,
but if you're not more cooperative,

I don't think

you'll be riding that pony again.

Alice, are you a normal little girl?

Why would you ask me that?

- Why don't you look at me?

- I've seen enough.

- What's up, sweetie?

- I don't like that woman.

She's not right.

You've got to take her back.

- [Patrick] Alice.

- Al, wait a sec.

Alice!

Peggy knows. Let's take our chances
and get out of Wakewood.

Then we leave right now.

You go get the car.

Hey, Alice!

Mum's gonna come and pick us up, OK?

Did Mrs O'Shea frighten you?

Alice.

- Alice!

- [Screams]

Open the door!

- What happened?

- Open it!

What happened to her?

- Go back. Go back!

- Is she OK?

- What happened?

- [Patrick] We tried to leave.

What happened?

Howie, good boy!

We're trapped.

Did you hear something?

[Clunking wood]

We must put Alice back in the ground

where she belongs.

- Do it now.

- Three days. We have one day left.

- [Mrs O'Shea] We cannot delay.

- You tried to leave.

Now, wait a minute.

She made Alice very frightened.

- [Mrs O'Shea] It was necessary.

- It was cruel.

I'm disappointed.

You have to obey the rules, Patrick.

I thought I made that absolutely clear.

- Give up your last day.

- Do it now.

- [Man] Put her back, to be safe.

- You're not taking her.

- Louise, you'd better bring her now.

- You're not taking my baby.

- We want you to do this.

- Mum. Why are they here?

- It's OK.

- [Patrick] Three days, Arthur.

I'll fight you and every one of you
if I have to. Do you understand?

Patrick, we've come to talk,
and there are people here
who believe there's something amiss,
something not according to plan.

- Do you see any signs of that?

- No, I don't, none at all.

You must tell me
if you observe anything unexpected,
anything beyond what we discussed,
do you understand?

The smallest detail
could have disastrous consequences.

She's fine. She's our little girl.

For one more day.

[Whispering]

[Flies buzzing]

Alice, wait here.

Patrick?

Oh, my God.

I don't understand.

Why would they do this to Howie?

- Are we so sure that it was them?

- What are you saying?

Alice.

Show me your hands.

- Is this a game?

- Yeah, it's a game.

Alice, show me your hands.

[Knocking]

Alice, go to your room and play.

[Alice] Why?

- Louise.

- [Patrick] Go upstairs.

This is Alice's last day.

Today you must be strong for her.

But she'll want to go herself.

You won't have to persuade her.

Here's something for her to wear
around her neck.

We call it a clutch.

You'll find it gives her comfort.

Sure.

If she becomes agitated,
you can fasten it about her wrists.

Mary, I need

to talk to my husband for a sec.

I can't do this. I'm not ready. I can't.

We could run.

- [Patrick] This is all wrong.

- [Phone rings]

Hello?

Yeah, look, I'll come tomorrow.

OK, 20 minutes.

- No.

- I've got to.

You want them all here again,
banging their sticks?

You just keep her away from Alice.

[Mary] I'll come back before midnight
and we'll go to the woods.

[Hushed voices]

Alice?

[Hushed voices]

[Sobbing]

Hey.
Whers the baby coming?
What?
[Louise] Alice?
Where are you?
- [Man] Anything you can do?
- We can put him out of his misery.
[Man] Injection, is it?
No, he's too big.
Alice. Alice! Baby...
Alice! Alice!
[Shot echoes]
[Thunder]
It's time to go to the woods.
[Radio static]
Interesting.
[Doorbell rings]
[Knocking]
[Mutters]
Arthur.
[Arthur] Get out of this house.
Don't look at her.
Ben, don't look at her.
Look away.
Don't look at her. Look away. Ben!
Go back to the trees
and lie among the roots.
Go back to the trees
and lie among the roots.
Go back to the trees
and lie among the roots.
Back to the trees
and lie among the roots!
[Alice] I'll see you later.
Now...
That won't work on me.
Alice?
Patrick, is Alice here? Is she with you?
Listen, I think
Alice has done something...
- Listen to me.
- No, you listen to me, Louise.
Patrick, I'm pregnant.
No, you're not.

- No, you can't be. That's impossible.

- I know, but I am.

Alice found out.

I... I mean, she already knew.

I've looked everywhere for her.

I thought maybe she'd come here.

Yeah, yeah, I think she did come here.

Come and look.

Oh, my...

Where would she have gone?

Home, sooner or later.

What the hell have we done?

[Clunking]

- What's wrong with it?

- I don't know.

There's some stuff on the road.

[Louise] Oh, my God.

Oh!

[Patrick] Get in.

[Alice] Mum!

Alice?

- You were going to leave me.

- We didn't know where you were.

I'm right here.

Dad, am I dead?

I've got something for you, Alice.

Do you want me to fasten it on for you?

Thanks, Dad.

- Love you.

- Love you, Dad. And you too, Mum.

I love you too.

[Alice yells]

I wanna stay with you.

- What is it? What's happened?

- We found her in the woods.

- It's all gone wrong.

- What have you done?

- I think she's stopped breathing.

- She'll not stay that way.

- You have the clutch I gave you?

- No, it's not here.

May we all survive.

[Whispers] Please put me down.

I don't wanna go back.

I don't want to be on my own again.

Why are you making me do this?

[Coughs]

We're almost there.

Patrick?

[Mary] Come now, Alice. It's time.

Alice!

Stop!

Mum.

11 months, two weeks and two days.

- Well, you fooled me, Patrick.

- We wanted to see her again.

- You wanted to keep us here.

- How long has she been dead?

A year...

A month, a couple of days.

Let me go. I can help.

The clutch will release you
when she's back in the ground.

- [Alice] Mum!

- Arthur, she'll kill my wife!

[Alice] Where are you?

I hope not.

[Alice] Mum!

Dad!

Alice!

Alice!

Alice!

Mum!

Alice, it's me!

Hey, sweetie.

Why did you run away?

I was scared.

Are you still scared?

- Not really.

- I bet you are.

- Maybe just a little bit.

- You could come to me now, though.

I know, but...

...I'm a little tired.

Mum.

Yes, sweetie.

Can I have a hug?

Course you can.

[Screams]
I'm sorry.
[Clunking wood]
It's OK. Off to bed.
Off to blanket street.
Almost there.
I'll just make up the bed.
There we go.
Are you comfy?
Once upon a time there was a little girl
who went for a long walk in the woods.
She walked and walked
until she discovered
she had lost her way,
and although the darkness
was drawing near,
the little girl knew
she didn't have far to go.
The cottage and safety
were only a few steps away.
A few short steps and she would be happy
for ever and ever.
The door opened...
...and her mum and dad
took her into their arms...
...and into the warmth.
And the door closed
on the cold and the darkness...
...and the night.
Louise.
[Louise screams]
- [Patrick] Help me!
- [Louise] Patrick!
[Patrick] Help me!
[Patrick yells]
No!
Louise! Louise!
[Yells]
Louise!
They've gone, Patrick.
You won't find them.
I tried to warn you
there'd be consequences.
So, how is it?

It's OK.

- And Alice?

- She's great.

We miss you.

She's hoping for a baby sister.

Really?

How much do you remember?

I don't really know.

I'll be there in a minute.