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Dream Boy

By James Bolton

Welcome. I hope
you'll come back to us.
We will.
Thank you, Brother.
So nice to meet you.
You too, sir.
What is it?
Nothing.
[Engine turns over]

NATHAN:

in Lake Charles,
but my dad got a job
where he moves around a lot.
We live by the lake on Poke's Road.
Well, welcome, Nathan.
And thank you.
It doesn't look like your daddy's
gonna make it home for dinner.
Father, we come to You
in the name of Jesus.
We pray for each other's needs
as we know them to be,
and, Father, as you know them to be.
Give us the courage and ability
to be a strong witness for You.
Why don't you come sit up here?
I got so much stuff to do
on top of my homework,
I'm about to go crazy.
You have to work?
I got chores to do for my dad.
I got a prayer group meeting
at church.
And I got this paper to write
in English,
and I don't want to.
I'm good at that kind of stuff.
You are?
I like English.
Well, I'll come over later,
and you can help me.
It's about railroads.
The paper is.

I could help you
with some other stuff, like math.
I'm pretty good at math.
Okay.
See ya.
Bye.
[Horse neighs]
Yeah, I wanna go.
I like Brother Will.
I like him better
than Preacher Rutherford.
All he does is talk about sinners
and going to hell.
I'm tired.
I was dancing all day.
You gotta let me come
watch you practice some time.
You want a ride?
Yeah.
We should probably go.
All right.
[Engine turns over]
You sure it's okay?
Yeah, I was just
finishing up my homework
while you were doing your chores.
Mrs. Johnson says
you skipped a grade.
You're supposed to be
pretty good at English,
even if you are younger than me.
I just hate to write stuff.
I like it okay.
I copied this down
from the World Book Encyclopedia.
There's a lot of information here.
You should really
narrow down your topic.
What about just "steam engines"?
All right.
I thought you boys might want
something to drink.
Thank you, Ma'am.
I guess I ought to be embarrassed,

getting a kid like you
to help me with my homework.
I take English with the juniors.
That's just one grade below you.
I'm not a kid.
Why, I didn't mean it bad.
I just mean you're a bit
younger than me, that's all.
I appreciate the help.
You'll like living out here
in the summertime.
It's real peaceful.
Nobody comes around.
Is it okay to walk in the woods?
Yeah, I go out there all the time.
There's some great places out there.
Camping grounds,
Indian burial mounds.
There's even a haunted house
and stuff.
I'll show you.
I bet you have a lot of work to do
because it's a farm.
Yeah. It's all outdoor stuff.
I like that.
What about you, Nathan?
Did you ever live on a farm before?
No. We lived in towns mostly before.
But my dad wanted to live
in the country this time.
So, why'd you move out here?
Nobody moves to St. Francisville.
Well, my dad got a job.
He's selling tractors in Shenandoah.
You sure do like this school stuff,
don't you?
It's all right, I guess.
I don't see how anyone
could like school.
Beats staying home all the time.
So you stay at home too much, huh?
We can fix that.

NATHAN'S MOM:

it's almost bedtime, sweetheart.

It's good.

Thanks, Nathan.

[Cow lows]

You want to hold on
to these for me?

Hey, Nathan.

Hi.

Hey, my dad's got a new Marlin.

She got some real kick to her.

We should check it out this weekend.

Do us some deer huntin'.

You ever been huntin' before,
Nathan?

No.

You should come.

Even if you don't kill anything,
hunting's fun.

We should go out for the whole
weekend and camp out.

I mean, we've been talking
about going campin'.

Yeah, it's all been talk
'cause someone can't get away
from the girlfriend for a weekend,
spend time with his buddies.

Yeah, you're the hold up, Roy.

What do you say?

[Bell rings]

Bye.

See ya.

[Door closes]

I told you I was coming.

Did you forget?

No.

Algebra's simple. You learn to work
from both sides of the equation.

So, Mr. Sawyer's department store
sells socks,
six pair for \$1.97.

How many nickels in \$1.97
if you have four quarters,
six dimes, and two pennies?

Well, first you subtract.

Then you divide
to find the value of x.
There's a graveyard over yonder.
Can we go there?
You sure you want to?
I want to.
The Kennicutts used to own
all this land,
that's what people say.
There were two
Kennicutt plantations,
one that burned down,
and another one off in the woods.
Why is it called Poke's Road?
Poke's Road stretches a long way.
There must have been some Pokes
on it once upon a time.
Bring my books in the morning.
I'm going on home.
Where'd you go?
Out back.
There's a graveyard out there.
By yourself?
No, with the boy next door, Roy.
Oh. He's a nice boy.
There's a Western on the TV.
You ought to come watch it
with your dad.
No, sir.
All right. Go on to bed.
PREACHER ROBERTS:
John chapter 13,
verses 21 through 26.
"Jesus was deeply troubled,
and He testified,
'One of you will betray Me.'
The disciples looked at one another,
at a loss as to whom He meant.
One of His disciples,
the one Jesus loved,
was reclining at His side.
John leaned back on Jesus' chest
and said,
'Master, who is it? '

Jesus answered,
'It is the one to whom
I will hand the morsel
after I have dipped it.'
So he dipped the morsel,
and he handed it to Judas,
son of Simon the Iscariot."
Let us pray.
You comin' in?
Yeah.
What are you doing after?
I've got homework,
and I've got to run an errand.
You want some company?
No, I've got to pick up
a prescription for my mom.
She's waitin' on it.
Is she okay?
Yeah, she is.
Do you want to go inside?
[Vehicle approaches]
Touch me.
Did you ever do this before
with anybody?
You promise?
I promise. I've never done this
with anybody.
'Cause it's okay
if it's just me and you.
- Hi, Roy.
- Hi, Mom.
- Hi, Nathan.
- Hi.
Roy tells me you just moved here
from somewhere,
but for the life of me,
I can't think of where.
Lake Charles.
Yeah. We used to lived in Slidell
before that.
And Pearl River.
Pearl River's a nice town.
Don't you get tired
of moving around so much?

Sometimes.

But it's all right, though.

Your family go

to the Baptist church in Clinton?

Yes, Ma'am.

You know, we go

to the Holiness church in Jackson.

And I just wanted to tell you

that your daddy

and your momma and you

are welcome to join us anytime.

Thanks, Ma'am.

Well, I better go

look after Roy's daddy.

If you boys want anything,

let me know.

Thanks, Ma'am.

It was nice meeting you.

Nice to meet you.

You wanna go riding

around town tonight?

I have to ask my mom.

I'm sure she'll say yes

if you come with me.

Hey, Mom.

Please, Ma'am, I was hoping

you might let Nathan

come out riding with us tonight.

Well, you know your daddy

don't like you to run around,

and we got

that church supper tonight.

I don't have to go this time, do I?

Well...

No.

Him and me in church

is plenty for one night.

Thanks, Mom.

Thanks, Ma'am. I'll have him back

by 11:

Get ready.

I'll meet you by my truck.

Nathan?

Yes, Mom.

Do you need some money?

I got \$5.

You know, your daddy's been
real nervous lately,
and I couldn't get him
to lay down last night.
He didn't rest.

NATHAN:

We're gonna go meet

Randy and Burke.

You drink beer?

Yeah.

You reckon' you can keep quiet
about it?

It doesn't bother me
that you drink beer. It's okay.

Answer my question.

I can keep quiet about it.

I can keep quiet about anything.

We're going swimming.

That's where we're going.

But I can't swim.

You can watch me.

BURKE:

[Laughing]

- BURKE:

- RO Y:

What'd you think about that?

It's pretty high.

It's high, all right.

I bet you won't do it.

I bet I won't either.

I'm with you, Nathan.

I ain't jumping off
that top part either.

I got no need to break my neck.

Well, I do.

Whoo!

[Laughter]

Glad you came out here
with us, Nathan.
Let him alone, Burke.
He can't swim.
Well, maybe he'll learn
if I throw him in.
Don't bother him, Burke.
I mean it.
Are you man enough
to jump in the water right now,
or am I gonna have to
throw you in?
- I don't want you to throw me in!
- Then you better jump!
I want you to let me go!
Leave him alone! Let go of him!
I didn't throw him in the water.
I should have, though.
Nice ride, buddy.

RAND Y:

What do you think?
It looked like something was
chasing you all the way down.
I wish I could swim.
I'll teach you.
Next time, it'll be just us.
You wanna go somewhere now?
Wanna go to a movie or somethin'?
I don't mind.
Do you mind?
What?
Comin' out here.
No, I don't mind.
Well, we could go
to a movie sometime, too.
I ain't tryin' to hurt anybody.
You ain't hurt nobody.
Touch me.
[Grunts]
Where'd you learn screwing
like that? Huh?
Who taught you to screw like that?
Answer me!

Nobody.
You're a liar.
No, I'm not.
[Engine turns over]
Roy?
Roy, please.

NATHAN'S MOM:

Come on downstairs.
[Sighs]
Nathan.
I'm talking to you, Nathan.
I know you're awake.
I saw your eyes come open.
Did you have a good time tonight?
You better answer me,
or I'm coming in there.
Yes, sir.
Your mom was the one who said
it was all right for you to go out.
It wasn't me.
Where'd you boys go?
Swimming.
Did you go swimming, too?
No, sir.
That's right. You don't know how.
Open your eyes, Nathan.
Look at your dad.
I'm sleepy.
Open your eyes.

NATHAN'S MOM:

Harland, what're you doin' up there?
I'm talkin' to Nathan.
Come on downstairs.
Leave him alone. He's tired.
Let me check on Nathan
for a moment.
I'll be down there in a little while.
You promised me
that you wouldn't bother him.
I told you it's all right.
I'm checking on him
to see if he had a good time.

You shouldn't let him
go out like that.
He ought to come to church
with us.
He can come to church with us
on Sunday.
Come on downstairs.
Please.
Come on.
[Harland screams]
Did he touch you?!
Did he touch you?!
Nathan?
You out here?
I called you a couple times.
Everything all right?
Yeah, everything's fine.
I was kind of hoping
I'd get to see you on Friday.
I had some stuff I needed to do.
I know that there's something wrong.
Why don't you just tell me what it is?
What is it?
Did I do something?
No, nothing.
I just got to get home.
Roy, wait.
Please.
Nathan!
Nathan!

RO Y'S MOM:

Come back!
[Snoring]
[Sobbing]
How long have you been out here?
Since after supper.
You were out here last night, too.
Yeah.
I gotta go inside pretty soon.
My parents will be wondering
where I am.
Hey, it's okay. I'll be fine.
You can't stay out here.

Yes, I can.
You should come to my house.
Your parents will send me home.
You can sleep in the barn tonight.
I'll show you a place.
You and your folks have a fight?
Yeah, somethin' like that.
You'll be safe in here, okay?
Thanks.
Good mornin'.
Did you sleep?
Yeah.
I think your mom is awake.
The light's on in your kitchen.
I'll hide these.
You get ready for school, okay?
Don't run from me!
Get away from him!
So I talked to Burke and Randy.
We're gonna go camping
this weekend.
All right.
About time you lazy assholes
got here.
I see you got your ma to let you
come with us. That's good.
Nathan ain't no baby.
So, where we goin'?
It's a secret place
my uncle showed me.
A good long walk into the woods.
Pretty far from everything.
- What the fuck's here?
- You'll see.
We'll see?
Hush up, Burke.
Enjoy the walk.
So much for nice weather.
You don't want none for yourself?
No.
What's the matter?
You want some more?
I'm good.
All right.

You tell me when, partner.
A lot of people killed
in these woods.
Don't start now, Roy.
No, I mean it.
Two men just killed here
last summer, wasn't it?
That's right. Two of 'em.

RO Y:

from East Baton Rouge.
They found one of them hanging
upside-down with his nuts cut off.
You two sonofabitches
don't scare me.
You know a lot of stories, Roy,
don't ya?
What do you say, Randy? You want
to hear some ghost stories?
Suit yourself.
All right.
So this man from Madisonville
was goin' out with this girl
he shouldn't have been
goin' out with
'cause she was married.
She didn't want to leave her husband
'cause he was a rich man,
and they lived
in this huge mansion together.
So this man, Jimmy Hicks,
decides he's gonna kill this guy
'cause he wants this girl
all to himself.
So he drives up
to this huge mansion
with doors, like, nearly twice
the size of him,
and he knocks on the door
three times.
[Knocks three times]
The woman's husband comes out,
and he pulls a hatchet
from behind his back.

The guy tries to plead with him,
but it doesn't make any difference.
So he turns and runs,
and Jimmy brings the hatchet
right down on the guy's back.
And he doesn't stop there.
He keeps on swinging,
and he chops the guy up
into little bits.
With that last swing,
he cuts the guy's hand right off.
Now he decides he's gonna bury him
in his own backyard.
So he takes him out back,
digs a grave,
tosses the body in
piece by piece.
Then, when he's finished,
he remembers
the bloody hand
with all the fingers.
Dammit, Burke! Cut it out!
But he goes back,
and the hand's not there.
So he figures he must have buried it.
He goes home, takes a shower,
washes all the blood off.
When he comes out,
it's dead quiet.
He hears a knock at the door.
[Knocks three times]
So he goes up to the peephole.
No one there.
So he figures his mind's
just playing tricks on him.
So he turns, goes to bed.
Now, sometime
in the middle of the night,
he wakes up.
He can't breathe.
He reaches out,
but there's nobody there.
There's a weight on his throat.
And he tries to get up,

and he goes to the mirror
by his bedside,
and he sees the hand
wrapped around his throat.
Now, every now and then, police
in Madisonville find two lovers dead.
They don't even bother
questioning anybody,
'cause they know it's the curse
that was brought on by Jimmy Hicks
that's done 'em in.
You scared yet, Nathan?

No.

[Thunder rumbles]

Do you hear that?

A storm's coming in.

We better get some more wood
for the fire.

Come on.

- Need some help?

- Naw, it's okay.

VOICE:

Nathan.

What are you looking at?

Nothin'.

Just listening to the wind.

[Animal howling]

Listen to that. Wild.

It sounded like someone's voice.

It's the rain. Come on.

[Rain falling]

Thank you for bringing me out here.

I used to go camping

when I was little

with my dad all the time.

We don't do much

stuff like that anymore though.

I've never been camping

with my dad before.

I don't like your dad much.

He came out to the barn

the other day to talk to me.

He talked about you some.

He said he noticed we were getting
to be good friends.
He was glad you were
getting out of the house.
He said you were too quiet,
you live in your head.
You stayed home too much.
He said that you make up things
that never happened before.
I think he figured out
I knew where you were sleepin'.
Do you mind when I don't do
the same thing back to you?
No, I don't mind.
Careful, it's slippery.
Oh!
Now we go this way.
Let's rest for a while.
We still got a ways further to walk.
It's hot out here.
Sure is.
Well, this place is a little spooky.
People don't come out here
much anymore.
My Uncle Hebon used to take me
out here when I was little.
Where? What the hell's out here?
There's a farm at the end
with a big house.
Nobody lives there anymore.
No, thanks. Not yet.
- Roy.
- Nope.
Fine, more for myself.
Let's walk.
This is what I wanted to show you.
It's a plantation house.
My dad told me about this place.
He saw it one time
when he was huntin'.
I didn't know there was ever
any plantation out here.
The Kennicutts owned it.
They were kin to some of the people

that owned our farm,
where you live, Nathan.
The place is supposed to be haunted.
My Uncle Heben says he saw it
in a book about Louisiana ghosts.
The last full-blood Kennicutt
who lived there
got killed by one of his slaves.
And they cut off his head.
Legend has it he still walks
around the place looking for it.
My uncle Heben told me that every
family's that lived there since
has had a tragedy.
It's been happening
for over 30 years.
Roy, it sounds like you're tellin'
ghost stories again.
This is true.
I say we go get a closer look.
That figures.
Let's go upstairs first.

VOICE:

You awake, Nathan?

BURKE:

What is that?

RAND Y:

What's that down there?
That's blood, ain't it?

RO Y:

What's that smell?
It's sulfur.
How do you know?
They said the Devil
used to smell like sulfur.
Oh, that's real funny.
Shit!
What is that?
Did you see that?
Yeah.

BURKE:

Shut up!

- He's there.

- Where? Do you see him?

BURKE:

There's nothing out there.

Be quiet!

No, man! He's trying to scare us!

Sonofabitch! Give me the flashlight!

No, I'll hold on to it!

Come on, Randy.

Let's see what's up there.

Come on.

That sure scared
the shit out of me.

Did you really see something?

My uncle told me

he saw a ghost here one time.

You think that's what we saw?

I don't know.

But if it is a ghost,

I bet it's that old man.

If someone cut my head off,

I'd want it back.

There's more ghosts than that.

How do you know?

I don't. It just...

It just feels like

there's all kind of ghosts.

Are you trying to scare me now?

No.

But this place does feel like
there's people in it.

Don't you think so?

I don't know.

Have you ever been to a place
where it feels like
you've been there before?

No.

You feel like you've
been here before?

Not quite.

More like I'll never leave.

VOICE:

What is it?

Nothing.

I thought I heard something.

It's probably the guys.

Do you remember what we did
when you were a little boy?

What is it?

What's wrong? What do you see?

I thought I saw somebody.

Don't look.

I don't know what it is you see,
but don't look anymore.

What are you doing?

So, this is what you guys do?

Get the hell out of here!

- You see that, Randy?

- Yeah.

Looks like Roy sucks dick
pretty good.

Jesus, Roy.

You do that to him?

Get away!

VOICE:

I saw you. Roy had your dick
in his mouth
when he was in front of you
on his knees.

Do you suck his cock?

He wasn't doing that.

It wasn't like that.

Yes, he was.

[Muffled screaming]

Do you like me doing it?

You ain't goin' nowhere.

[Groaning in pain]

RAND Y:

Jesus. He's dead, ain't he?

Go catch up with Burke.

You think it happened

like Burke said?

I don't trust nothin' Burke said.

Go on, now.

[Sniffles]

[Sobbing]

[Indistinct chatter on police radio]

He's over here, Mr. Davis.

PREACHER ROBERTS:

"...dwell with them,

and they will be His people.

And He will be their God.

And God shall wipe away

all tears from their eyes,

and there shall be no more death,

neither sorrow, nor crime,

neither shall there be anymore pain

for the former things

are passed away.

And He that sat

upon the throne said,

'Behold, I make all things new.'

[Engine turns over]

[Sniffles]

Nathan!