

Larry

Larry and his family were the first to find out that the wall of utter darkness had not been a wall at all. The darkness was coming from all sides. That it was like the whole planet was being dipped in utter darkness like a cherry in chocolate, but this one did not have a nice boozy center. It had only death and loss.

While Claire was watching the wall approach, Larry and his family were fleeing. His father did not trust the dark. He had been in prison. He had seen demons in the dark. Human demons they had been, but still demons. The dark only brought suffering and sorrow.

And so the family left their home and fled for the dark. They took only the basics with them, some food and candles and little clothing. Larry took his lucky charm he got from his friend Claire. And then they left.

The family took a horse and carriage and Patrick, the father, was pushing the horse to its limits. They wanted to be well away when the dark would hit the shores. After a while Patrick thought they were far away enough to ease up a little. Larry took over the reins, and he thus was the first to see that they were not going into the darkness of the forest, but into something else altogether. He saw a grin floating in front of the horse that pulled the carriage.

'Hu! HU! Stop!' he yelled. The horse did not stop. 'The dark, dad, there is something in the dark,' Larry called. And then the horse slumped, its head lost in the dark. The carriage bumped into the corps of the horse and tumbled over crashing into a tree. Larry was tossed out. Mona en Moira hit the tree hard as did the mother, Fay. Patrick missed the tree by mere inches.

It took Patrick and Larry a couple of minutes to recuperate. The dim light added to the confusion.

'Larry! Mona! Moira! Fay! Are you alright!?'

'No, my leg is hurt and Moira is wounded. I can't see Mona,' Fay cried. Larry had never heard his mother cry. It added to the panic. Larry looked around and then saw Mona. She was hurt badly. Mona was impaled on a branch.

'Hi, scary Larry,' Larry heard the grin, he had seen in front of the horse, say. 'Better hurry to the house, scary Larry. Ya can't save your sis. She's a gonner!'

Larry looked around and saw a house.

'Dad, Mona is really hurt. There's a house there. She needs help!'

Fay picked up Moira and driven by fear she ran to the house despite her injuries. Patrick came running.' Run Larry, run!' He grabbed Mona and the branch and with a quick jerk broke the branch. He caught Mona and carried her away.

As Larry ran to the house, he realised that the dark had not progressed towards them before they started running. It seemed to have waited until they did.

When Larry arrived at the house Fay was banging on the door.

'Let us in! Let us in!'

Behind the curtains movement was visible, and a man appeared behind the glass of the door. He was very apprehensive.

'Please, please, leave, please leave,' he stammered.

Patrick came dashing to the door.

'Open up!'

'No, no, please, please leave,' the man prayed.

For a moment Patrick stood flabbergasted by the refusal of the man. They were clearly in distress and in danger and this man refused to help them. Blind anger erupted and Patrick took a step back to kick the door hard. The man behind the door jumped backwards and started to wave his arm.

'No, no! Don't! We'll all perish! Stop! Stop!'

Patrick did not stop. He laid down Mona and ran to the door full speed. He was going through the door one way or another. The glass did not hold and Patrick tumbled into the hall of the house. He ended up at the feet of the man of the house who was too bewildered to do anything. Before the man could gather his wits Patrick was up and grabbed the man by his collar. He dragged the man out of the house and threw him on the porch. The man tried to get up, but Patrick kicked him unconscious.

'Come on, we have to get inside,' he said to his family.

'John, John,' a woman cried from inside the house.

Patrick turned and walked into the house. 'Get inside,' he said before he vanished from view. Moments later Larry heard screams and cries from the room where movement had been. He and Fay carried Mona and Moira to the kitchen. Just before Larry closed the kitchen door he saw his father dragging a woman out with a crying child pulling her mother in a vain attempt to stop what was happening.

When Patrick had thrown the woman on to the porch, the woman jumped up and tried to attack him. Patrick did not hesitate and knocked her out. The woman fell back with her arms spread. Patrick shut the door and pulled a big closet from the hall to cover the hole where the window had been.

Panting he slowly walked into the kitchen. He did not look anyone in the eye and just stared at Mona, who was lying on the kitchen table. Fay had tried to stop the bleeding, but the blood was seeping through the towels. Tears welled, but Patrick did not have time to cry. There were sounds coming from the front door. The previous owners were trying to get back in.

'Larry, come.'

As father and son came to the front door, the closet was swaying. Patrick did not say a word, but took a sprint and jumped against the closet. The man and woman who were trying to get in yelled in anger and pain.

'Push Larry, push. We have to keep the door closed. Keep the dark out.'

Larry pushed for what he was worth. Now and again the closet moved and all the while Larry saw the dark grow. With the dark the fear in Larry grew. He looked to his father but his father was only pushing against the closet.

And then the grin was inside the house. It was looking from the other side of the hall, grinning its fanged grin.

'Hi, scary Larry. You want some help. I'll help ya. But it'll cost ya.'

Larry froze with fear. He could not move. And then the closet rocked again very hard.

'Yes, yes, help me,' Larry whispered.

Immediately a child started screaming.

'Rose! Rose! Where are you,' the man and the woman outside called. The screaming of the girl suddenly stopped. 'Rose!!' the woman screamed desperately. 'Constance! No! Stop!'

Patrick and Larry stopped pushing, because no one was pushing on the other side.

'Constance! Constance, come back!!'

For a couple seconds it was quiet outside.

And then the man was back at the door. He rocked the closet hard.

'You!! It's your fault!! I'll get you for this!'

'No! It's your own fault. If you'd let us in nothing would have happened!'

The man started push harder and harder. His anger, grief and panic made him very strong.

'Dad, I can't hold it much longer!'

Just as Larry said that the dark crept up to the house. All around Larry and Patrick the light lessened. The man outside suddenly screamed.

'Help, help me! Help me!'

And then it was quiet. For a moment, because a few seconds later screams came from the kitchen.

'Help help! Patrick!! Help!'

Larry hesitated, but Patrick ran to the kitchen. Mona was being pulled into the dark, that had entered the kitchen. Fay was pulling at the arms of the wounded girl. Moira, who also hurt, just stood frozen with fear against the kitchen wall. She was very pale and sweaty and obviously slowly dying.

'Moira! Moira! Wake up! Go to Larry!'

Moira did not respond, but just zombied away. Larry saw Moira enter the hall. Her eyes were completely empty. Larry looked at her and then at the place where the grin had been.

'Help me.'

The grin reappeared.

'Hi, scary Larry. Of course I'll help ya. But first you pay up.'

'How?'

'I already told ya.'

'Larry! Help!' Patrick the yelled.

Larry ran to the kitchen. Patrick and Fay were now both pulling on the arms of Mona to keep her where she was. Larry wanted to join in when Mona gulped up blood. It just erupted from her mouth.

'NO! No no no,' he cried.

'You gotta pay up,' the grin said from the shade.

Patrick and Fay suddenly fell backwards pulling the upper half of Mona with them. The dark followed.

Fay started screaming. Patrick kept his wits and grabbed Fay.

'Come on. We must go!'

'Where?' Larry asked trembling with fear and loathing.

'The living room.'

They ran into the hall. Moira stood motionless against the wall. The dark was just inches away from her. Larry wanted to pull her along.

'Leave her!' Patrick commanded. Larry hesitated. The dark advanced. Moira did not react and was lost in the dark. With tears in his eyes left.

The living room was filled with candles. The gloom they managed to maintain would not be enough when the dark wanted to enter.

In the midst of the room Patrick and Fay embraced each other. Larry stopped after two paces into the room. The dark had already entered the room and was now advancing from all sides. Larry felt his legs weaken from utter terror. They were not going to survive. He took hold of the cupboard next to him. He felt something there. He looked and saw a dragon wax candle. Next to it was a box of matches. Only one match was left.

'Dad, look,' Larry said.

'Good, light it!' his dad said.

Larry looked at him and saw the dark advance even faster. Quickly he took the match and struck it on the box. The match broke in two pieces and the head fell to the ground. Larry stared at the broken match and then at his parents. He met the stare of his father. All his father's will to fight had left him. His father's will had broken with the breaking of the match. Larry saw his empty soul, his empty gaze and the dark picking up speed. Within seconds his parents were engulfed by the dark. They only let out a grunt as whatever was in the dark killed them. Larry put up his arms to protect himself and waited with his eyes closed for the inevitable, but the inevitable did not come.

Larry opened his eyes after a while and saw the grin a few feet away from his face, hovering.

'Weeeelllll, scary Larry, here we are now,' the grin said. 'Soooo, how are ya doin?'

'Why?' Larry whispered, 'why did you not kill me?'

'Ah, scary Larry, that is a good question. Perhaps we were full. Ya sisters did taste good!'

The grin widened. At that moment something snapped in Larry. Larry clenched his fist and struck out with all his strength. The grin yelped and dissolved into nothingness. The dark retracted immediately. A cacophony of voices screamed to each other:

'He has it, he has it. No, no, he couldn't. Yes, he does. Keep away!'

Moments later Larry was alone in the house where everyone had perished. The sun now hesitantly cast his rays into the living room through the gaps in the curtains. And Larry was dumbstruck by it all. What had just happened?