

The Step Dragon

by Kevin M Reese

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Characters:

Beth (F) - Shy, she talks to herself a lot

Sami (F) - Tomboy, self-confident, loves sports

Lizzie (F) - Miss Priss, loves to shop, Eugene's new step-sister

Rusty (M) - Surfer dude, genuinely very cool, extreme sports.

Eugene (M) - Brain, Lizzy's new step-brother

– Scene 1–

Scene up on empty clubhouse. Beth enters with Rusty and Sami. Beth's finishing up on a really good, scary story.

BETH: ... and then went they got home, the guy got out of the car and went around to open her door. And when he reached for the door handle, there, hanging from the handle, was a ... green rake!

RUSTY: (being polite, but not scared) Cool.

SAMI: I think I heard that one before. Only instead of a green hammer, it was a bloody hook.

RUSTY: Yeah, I heard that one before, too. Only instead of an escaped prisoner from the insane asylum, it was Barny the purple dinosaur.

SAMI: Oh, yeah, that's right. That was a LOT scarier! (They both laugh at Beth)

BETH: Ha ha, very funny. See if I tell you guys a scary story again.

RUSTY: Oh, come on, Beth, we're just teasing.

SAMI: Yeah.

BETH: It's Halloween. I just thought it would be fun to tell some spooky stories.

SAMI: It would be fun– if they were spooky. That one was just silly.

RUSTY: Oh, come on, Sami, it wasn't that bad.

SAMI: Well, it wasn't scary.

RUSTY: It was still fun. (To Beth) I liked it.

BETH: Thank you, Rusty. At least somebody here has an imagination.

SAMI: What? I have an imagination.

BETH: Oh, really? You think so?

SAMI: Yes, I do– and what's that supposed to mean?

BETH: I don't think you do– I don't think you have an imagination– or at least, maybe you're just AFRAID to use it.

Rusty enjoys this challenge to Sami.

SAMI: What??

BETH: Sami, the best scary story in the world is useless if it's told to somebody who can't– or won't– use their imagination. That's the whole point of a scary story: the atmosphere, the quiet background, the tense, precise wording of the story– and then ... the ENDING.

RUSTY: Cool!

BETH: But if the listener is afraid using her imagination— it's a waste of time.

SAMI: I'm not afraid to use my imagination! Why? Why would I be afraid to use it?

BETH: It seems obvious to me, Sami. Rusty?

RUSTY: If you don't use your imagination, you won't be scared.

BETH: You're afraid to let yourself get scared.

SAMI: What?

RUSTY: You're scared of being scared.

SAMI: I am not!

BETH: Yes, you are.

SAMI: No, I'm not.

BETH: Yes, you are.

SAMI: No, I'm not.

BETH: Yes, you are.

SAMI: No, I'm not!

RUSTY: No, you're not

SAMI: (getting tricked) Yes, I am!!! (Realizes what just happened) Wait! No— I mean— you guys!

BETH: Well, then prove it.

RUSTY: Yeah. Prove it.

SAMI: How?

RUSTY: (to Beth) Yeah. How?

BETH: We'll tell you a story and we'll see if you let yourself get caught up in it.

RUSTY: Oooo, Yeah.

SAMI: That's stupid.

BETH: Is it?

RUSTY: Yeah. Is it? REALLY??

SAMI: (Thinks it over for a second) OK. Fine. Tell me a scary story.

BETH: Are you sure?

RUSTY: (teasing) Can you handle it?

SAMI: Try me.

BETH: OK, once there was a guy who owned a motel (then thinking better:) No-no-no— once there was a clubhouse. It wasn't the best place for kids to hang out in, but since it was out in the middle of nowhere, the few kids who lived around there would go every once-in-a-while. Well, one Halloween night, there was a party — and the next day, there mysteriously appeared a "For Sale" sign on the door. Soon, a bike pulled up. A kid was looking for his little brother who didn't come home after the party. He saw the "For Sale" sign so he started looking around. He looked in windows, checked all the doors, but couldn't find anything— or anyone. Then he looked in a basement window and he saw... a lone figure. It looked like he was cleaning up something. There had obviously been some kind of ruckus there, because everything was thrown about, broken glass— and he was moping up some kind of ... dark liquid... from the floor. The guy noticed the mysterious figure was walking strangely. His right leg was all bandaged up around the upper part of his leg, like he had been stabbed or something. He'd take a step, then drag his bad leg behind him. Take another step and drag his bad leg. Step— drag. Step— drag. Step drag.... It didn't take long for the guy to put two and two together. He was going to head for the sheriff. He got onto his bike, but when he started to pedal— his chain was jammed. He tried it again. This time it snapped. His pedal just went around and around. Now what will he do? He got off his bike, and while he was fiddling with the chain,

he heard a sound behind him: Step– drag. Step– drag. Step– drag.....

Suddenly, we hear that same sound coming from offstage. Beth, Rusty and Sami look wide-eyed at each other. The sound stops just outside the clubhouse door. We see the doorknob turning. The three kids panic. The door opens and we see....

LIZZIE: (enters dragging bag of stuff) You guys going to help me bring in the stuff– or just stand there staring at me?

RUSTY: Whoa! That was cool!

BETH: Lizzy, you scared us out of our minds!

LIZZIE: Oh, yeah, I'm really scary. Dog-gone it! I cracked one of my nails!!

SAMI: Now, THAT'S scary!

LIZZIE: (not finding it funny) Ha Ha. You can all come and help me get the rest of the stuff for the party. I brought a wagon full of stuff. It won't take long if we all help. Eugene's already over there. *They all exit to get the rest of the things for the party.*

– End of Scene 1 –

– Scene 2–

Scene back up on empty clubhouse. Door opens and everybody enters, carrying bags of stuff. Decorations, food, ... Stuff. They're all laughing about something.

LIZZIE: You guys should have seen your faces when I walked in. It was great!!

RUSTY: It was perfect timing! That was cool!

BETH: All we were trying to do was scare Sami.

EUGENE: Well, I'd say it worked.

BETH: Yeah?

LIZZIE: It did?

RUSTY: How?

EUGENE: She had to go home– to change!!

LIZZIE: What???

EUGENE: Yep, I'd say she had a "little accident."

RUSTY: No way!!!

EUGENE: Didn't you notice she hasn't been carrying stuff in?

RUSTY: Cool!

BETH: Ha! Got her!

RUSTY: You're the master.

BETH: Step– drag. Step– drag....

RUSTY: I can't wait till she gets back. She's so busted.

LIZZIE: You better go easy on her, Rusty, you know Sami has a temper.

RUSTY: Yeah, well, this will serve her right. She's always bragging about how brave she is.

EUGENE: Hey, shhhh, here she comes.

LIZZIE: Rusty, go easy.

RUSTY: Don't worry, Lizzy. I know just what to say.

Sami enters. She's wearing different pants than before. A moment passes. We get the feeling she's just waiting for somebody to smart off to her. Rusty opens his mouth to say something smart to her, but just before the words come out of his mouth, Sami stops him:

SAMI: No. Don't say anything. I know what you're going to say, so consider it said. For your health and safety— consider it said.

RUSTY: Ok, fine. We'll consider it said.

SAMI: Very wise choice.

RUSTY: Thank you. (Then quickly:) By the way, I like your pants. (Everybody but Sami laughs)

SAMI: Ha. Ha. Very funny.

RUSTY: You are so busted!!

LIZZIE: Rusty, that's enough.

RUSTY: Beth, that was the best story. Wasn't it, Sami? (Sami just stares at him) Step— drag. Step— drag. Oh-oh! Gotta go change again, Sami?

SAMI: Get a life.

EUGENE: I'm sorry I missed it.

BETH: It was the one about the “step— drag” guy. But I changed it to a clubhouse to make it scarier.

RUSTY: That was a good one. If it's any consolation, Sami, that was a good one.

SAMI: (sarcastically) Oh, well, that makes me feel MUCH better.

LIZZIE: Ok, let's get back to business. We have to decorate yet. Where's the punch bowl? It's not in any of these bags. I bet it's still in the wagon. Rusty?

RUSTY: Let Sami get it. She hasn't brought anything in. She was a little “busy.”

SAMI: Very funny. I'll get the punch bowl.

She exits. The rest of them start unpacking the bags and generally setting up for the party.

RUSTY: Beth, that was such a great story.

BETH: Thanks. That's my favorite scary story.

EUGENE: Beth, you say you changed it to a clubhouse?

BETH: Yeah, I thought it would make it scarier for her.

EUGENE: (pondering) Huh.... The way I heard it, it WAS about a clubhouse.

BETH: When I first heard it last year, it was about an old deserted motel.

EUGENE: I heard it a long time ago— and it was a clubhouse.

BETH: Really...?

RUSTY: That's weird.

LIZZIE: Yeah, you changed it back to its original version.

RUSTY: And you didn't even know it.

BETH: (pondering) Huh.....

LIZZIE: What's taking Sami so long. The wagon's just around the side of the clubhouse.

RUSTY: I'll go see what's taking her. Maybe she decided to change her shoes, too. Ha! (exits)

BETH: (after a pause) Lizzy, have you ever heard the story about the step— drag guy?

LIZZIE: Yeah. A long time ago.

BETH: Do you remember it?

LIZZIE: Yeah, I remember.

BETH: Was it in a motel— or a clubhouse?

LIZZIE: Well, I heard it was in a clubhouse. But it doesn't really matter, it's still a scary story.

EUGENE: I can just hear those footsteps. Step— drag..... step— drag..... That would give me the

willies.

BETH: Yeah....

LIZZIE: What's taking them so long? Do I have to do everything myself? I'll be right back. Don't touch anything till I get back. (Exits)

BETH: That's just so weird....

EUGENE: Beth, what's the big deal? A motel or a clubhouse. It's just a scary story. A motel is scary and a clubhouse is scary— what does it matter?

BETH: It's just weird that I heard it one way and when I change it, it turns out to be the original story. I just said it was a clubhouse because we were in one.

EUGENE: Beth, it doesn't matter.

BETH: Yeah, I guess you're right. But to think it was REALLY a clubhouse— now that's spooky!

EUGENE: Yeah.... Where is everybody?? I'm going to go see what's going on. (exits)

BETH: (tries to stop him) No, Eugene, wait!

EUGENE: I'll be right back.

But he's gone. An awkward pause as Beth tries to figure out what to do next.

BETH: This must be a trick. Sami's probably behind this. Yeah, she was the first one to go, and now she's gotten everybody else to go along with her. She's trying to get me back for telling the story to begin with. Well, I'll show her. (Opens door) OK, Sami, here I come. Step— drag. Step— drag. Step— drag..... (she exits)

There is a slight pause. Suddenly, we hear the sound of "step- drag, step- drag, step- drag" and then we see the shadowy figure of someone carrying or dragging what appears to be a body in a large bag or wrapped in a sheet or blanket. The figure disappears into the shadows.....

The End

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