After Hours - BMK

Officer Kenneth took a long drag from his cigarette as he sat in the empty station. He glanced at the clock as its hands showed sometime after 12. He put his cigarette out as he glanced around the empty office. Everyone else went home for the day, made sense, it was midnight after all. Kenneth stretched and heard his old bones crack, filling the silence of the office. He reached for the new folder on the right of his desk. *"It's gonna be a long night"* he thought to himself. He begun to read this new folder; he was already familiar with the rumours but thought a refresher would be nice. "Three students from Willow Tree College have gone missing. Parents report they haven't been home for days. The school's cleaner reported a limb on the second-floor corridor." This was familiar to Kenneth. The cleaner saw the arm and fled to call the cops, looked female which matched the description of one student, but it'll take a few days for the lab to confirm the arm. Kenneth put the folder down and picked up the camera enclosed with it. A simple and cheap go pro found in the school when police searched through, supposedly owned by one of the missing students. Kenneth had already downloaded the footage onto his laptop and was only now getting a look at this video. With any luck this'll lead to the kid's locations.

Kenneth started to play the footage and hoped for a lead. The video started with some sloppy camera work as a student pointed the camera right at their torso. "Aha! I got it!" said a male voice from Kenneths laptop. The student proceeded to point the camera to his face and Kenneth got a clear shot of his nostrils. *"Gross"* Kenneth thought, but this confirmed the

identity of at least one student, Alexander Byrne, a 5th year at Willow Tree. He's easily identifiable by his long dark hair and nose piercing. The camera turns up to the second student, Calum Fitzgerald. Shorter than Alex and has shorter hair. "Say hi to the camera Cal!" Alex says. Calum shows the camera a look of confusion. "Why're you filming me?" Alex sighs. "In case something happens!" Remember, we're exploring the school at night to see if it's really haunted!"

"This is stupid." a girl's voice came from the back. *"There's out third student"* Kenneth remarked, so far, the rumours check out, three students go ghost hunting after hours at school. The camera pans to Elizabeth Byrne, the third student and Alex's older sister, a 6th year with similar long dark hair to Alex and dark glasses. Kenneth remembers broken glasses being found in the school. The students all line up, so far, the videos proven to be legitimate. Kenneth gathers the group have heard rumours of a ghost who can be heard scratching walls and lockers at midnight, supposedly the spirit of a teacher who had a heart attack in the school years back. Rumour has it if it catches you, it'll drag you into darkness and your body will never return. Just a stupid local ghost story. Alex is recording in hopes of catching paranormal activity and becoming famous. The first 20 minutes are uneventful. It's clear this was all Alex's idea; Calum is following him for quote "The craic" and Elizabeth is only there out of concern for her brother.

"Cmon Alex, nothing is happening, lets got home." Elizabeth sighed. "Shut up Lizzie, listen out for scratching, it'll happen." Just as Kenneth started dosing off, he heard the horrendous sound of metal being cut on metal come from the video. He focused in on the video, specifically Calum's face of bewilderment and Elizbeth face of pure horror. "Oh my god guys! That came from upstairs! Cmon let's go!" The

camera shook as Alex sprinted up a flight of stairs. Only faintly could Elizabeth's voice be heard. "Wait Alex, please no, this is a bad idea!" Alex reached the second floor and started sprinting down. All that could be heard was his footsteps and panting. He ran alongside classrooms to his right and lockers to his left. He stopped and pointed the camera at a locker.

"Aww dude! This is Calum's locker!" The locker had a big slash run diagonally through it, ruining the blue paint and exposing the silver metal. Kenneth heard Alex's sister come up behind him. "Alex what are yo-" Elizabeth stopped and gasped at the sight. She didn't share her brother's enthusiasm. "Alex please this is serious, we need to go report this!" Alex laughed "Ha, you worry too much, I thought you were meant to watch over us, hey where's Calum?" The camera pointed down the dark empty corridor. "Huh" Elizabeth started. "I thought he was behind me..." Alex pointed the camera to Elizabeth, she looked to be near tears. "Hey, its ok Lizzie, we'll go find him, ok." The footage showed the two go downstairs and call out for Calum. "Cmon Calum where are you? This isn't funny man." Alex called. Alex pointed the camera at the school's archive room, Kenneth sat forward in his chair. *"Was that room checked!?"* He thought. "Good one Cal!" Alex called as he started opening the door. "You *really* got us." Alex opened the door to Calum's body, his stomach carved opened up and his eyes missing.

Kenneth felt like vomiting, he almost stopped the video, but he couldn't, he had to know what happened next. He heard a visceral scream come from behind Alex as the camera turned to Elizabeth, running away. "Elizabeth! Wait!" Alex called out but his sister kept running. Alex panned back to his friend

before cursing and pursuing his sister. He followed his sister upstairs before he stopped at a locker. It was his locker, his sisters beside it, both lockers slashed open. All Kenneth could hear was Alex's panting until he was cut off by his sisters scream down the hall. He sprinted but stopped abruptly, he panned the camera down to a severed arm on the floor. Alex paused for a while until he heard his sister scream yet again. Alex cursed and started running back to try escape, leaving his sister for dead. He didn't get far before tripping. The camera fell through the air and the screen cracked. Kenneth could still make out Alex on the floor. Kenneth froze as he saw a dark figure come from behind Alex. Before he could even scream Alex was dragged into the darkness. Kenneth jolted up from his chair and put on his jacket. He picked up his phone to ring the captain as he was leaving, but before he was out the door, he heard the sound of metal scratch behind him...