

# No Entrance

By John Coogan



This had to be the strangest Saturday morning ever. We sat around the dining room table: my mam and dad and Father Logan. I watched them with curiosity as they stared blankly at their coffee cups. Finally my mam said, "Father, would you like some more coffee?"

"No, I'm fine, thank you," he said, a thin smile drawn across his pale face.

The serious looks from my mam and dad were bothering me a lot. And why was Father Logan here? We were Presbyterians, after all.

"Cara," said my father, "I want you to listen carefully to what Father Logan has to say. This is important." He looked quickly at the priest.

"Your parents called me because some disturbing things have been going on around your house. As I told your parents, Cara, I researched it, and I believe an evil spirit of some kind has been sent to harass your family."

My mouth dropped open. "A...what?"

"Apparently," my father jumped in, "on our mission trip to the Maasai in southern Kenya last May, I angered the...uh...the local witch doctor, I guess you'd call him. And he cast a, well, a kind of spell, I guess..." he trailed off.

"So?" I said, too loudly. "That's just superstitious nonsense! You told me so yourself!"

Dad just looked down and frowned.

"So our house is haunted now, or what?" I asked.

"No," said Father Logan, "but...well, your folks finally called me when they found something...well, something not nice, hanging on the outside of your front door."

"What?" I asked.

"It's not important," my father said quickly.

"The important thing," said Father Logan, "is that the type of...uh...evil spirit that has been sent is trying to get into your house. But it can't unless you invite it in."

"Why would we do that?" I asked.

"Well, it may impersonate someone who says they were in an accident and needs to use the phone, or a woman with a baby in her arms, someone like that. Just don't let anyone like that in."

"Not family members?" asked my dad. "Friends?"

"No, it won't do that. Look, I meant to bring over a couple of crucifixes. I'll have to bring them back later. Is around 4:00 all right?"

"Sure," said Dad.

"You have to hang one on the inside of your front and back doors," he said, rising to go. "This is important."

A little after 4:00 I heard a car pull in the driveway. I looked out of the window and saw Father Logan reach over to the passenger seat of his Subaru. Then he walked up to our door and knocked.

"Hi, Cara," said Father Logan when I opened the door. "I have those crosses I promised for your parents."

He opened his hand to reveal two small silver crucifixes on thin chains. "It's important that your dad gets these. May I come in?"

"Sure," I said, swinging the door open.

And just like that, it walked in.