

The Signal / From Nothing... to even less

“Bro... she’s being such a bitch.”

Kyle’s words hung in the air.
Everyone in the room turned to look at him.

Clarice frowned. “You’re really calling your girlfriend that?”

Kyle rolled his eyes, leaning back.

“Yeah...”

He trailed off.
Something outside caught his attention.

“...uhm.”

Across the field beyond the house, a shadow moved.

Not cast by anything.
Just... moving.

Slow.
Too wide.

The TV crackled.
Static swallowed the room before a news broadcast cut in.

“Local teenage girl found dead at a subway in Michigan.”

Nobody spoke.
The room felt smaller.

“Forensic teams have identified the body as Megan Macalester...”

Kyle’s head lifted slightly.

“The daughter of Joshua Macalester. Authorities—”

The TV cut.
The lights went out.
Silence.

Then—
A cold wind pushed against the house.

When they looked outside, the sun was gone.
Not setting.
Gone.

Replaced by something dull and colorless.
Clarice pulled her knees to her chest, shaking.

“I don’t like this...”

The TV flickered back on.
But there was no broadcast.

No anchors.
No sound.
Just one face.
Staring through the haze of static.

“...father?”

No one moved.

“...father?”

All of them spoke at once.

“...father?”

Seven hours passed.
No one blinked.

Eighteen hours.

Their bodies trembled from the cold.
Still watching.

Eighteen days later—
Police were dispatched to a two-story house after reports of teenagers acting... wrong.

Unmoving.
Unresponsive.
Feral.

But when the first officer opened the door—
The house was frozen solid.
In the middle of summer.

Ice clung to the walls.
The air burned to breathe.
The officers hesitated.

Then—
Without a word—
They all raised their guns.
And fired.

At themselves.
All at once.
Except one.

He didn't remember walking inside.

But suddenly—
He was in the basement.

"...Clarice."

His voice shook.
She stood in the corner.

Still.
Too still.

"...that's your name, right?"

He stepped closer.

Slow.
Careful.

Then—
Crunch.

He froze.
Looked down.
A leg.

Human.
Snapped clean.

“Clari—”

The door above slammed shut.
His scream never made it out.

Outside, everything went quiet.
Inside—
something changed.

Whatever had taken Clarice didn’t kill him.
No.
It didn’t need to.

His body stiffened.
His breathing slowed.
His eyes locked forward—
just like the others.

Empty.
Watching something that wasn’t there.

Or maybe...
something that was.

So maybe—
he had everything.

Just not himself.