

APARTMENT 4A



⚠ WARNING:
MATURE CONTENT

PJ Gray

A black and white photograph of a snowy landscape. In the foreground, there are several evergreen trees covered in snow. In the background, a building is visible through the trees. The sky is bright and overexposed.

APARTMENT 4A

Bree stood at the window of apartment 4B. She was looking down at the dirty alley. She wondered where her older brother, Andre, was.

Sometimes her brother would be gone for weeks. Sometimes he would come back and ask for money. Sometimes he would come back just to sleep. Her brother did not like to talk.

Apartment 4B was in the back of the building at the end of the hall. Bree shared it with her aunt and brother. They had lived there a long time. Since Bree was a little kid.

Bree and Andre moved into apartment 4B with their aunt after their mom died. “Your mom had a hard life,” their aunt always said.

Bree was almost three years old when her mom died. She did not remember her.

Bree's aunt was old and sick. She was too sick to work. Her aunt sat in the apartment all day. She watched TV until she fell asleep.

"Call the landlord," her aunt would yell.
"Those people next door woke me up again!"
She would say this every day before Bree went to work.

"I never hear anything next door," Bree would tell her. "You don't know what you're talking about."

Bree never saw anybody next door at apartment 4A. It was the only other door at the end of the hall. Bree never saw anyone coming or going. She saw very few people in their building. Nobody else lived on their floor. Most of the other people moved out long ago. They moved when the landlord raised the rent again.





ON THE JOB

Bree left high school last year. She did not finish. She had to make money to pay the bills. She got fired from a fast food job. She had broken up with her boyfriend. The manager was her boyfriend's friend. He fired her. Bree lost her job and left her boyfriend on the same day. She did not trust men.

Bree found a new job at a messenger company. The company delivered letters and packages for money. The boss paid Bree with cash for each delivery.

Mona worked at the front desk. She took phone orders. She was Bree's only friend. And the one person at work who was nice to Bree. She liked to talk to Bree when Bree was in the office.

“Does your aunt still hear people next door?”
Mona asked.

“Yes, I think she’s losing her mind,” Bree
answered.

“Can you call the landlord?”

“No, he lives out of town. We don’t want
any trouble.” Bree did not want to tell Mona
their rent was behind.

Bree saw a picture of Mona's kids on her desk. Mona liked to talk about them. "Mona's a good mother," Bree said to herself. This made Bree think about her own mother.

APARTMENT 4A

Bree was barely holding it together. Her brother was getting into trouble. Her boss was shady. And her aunt was sick. Then there was the empty apartment next door ...

APARTMENT 4A

Book 1

“Who are you?” Bree asked the woman.
The woman looked at the living room window.
It was closed. She ran across the room.
And jumped through the glass.

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