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When the Animals Began to Pray

The fog came in the evening, covering the fields like a huge, grey blanket. It moved slowly between the trees, hiding the old fence and the narrow road leading to the farmhouse. The air was cold, and the wind blew softly through the empty fields. Everything looked strange and unfamiliar, as if the world had changed overnight. The trees stood like dark shadows, their branches moving in the wind like thin fingers. The moon was pale behind the clouds, giving almost no light.

The farmhouse stood alone in the middle of the fields. Its windows looked like dark eyes watching the road, and its old wooden door moved slightly in the wind. Somewhere in the distance, a dog began to bark, but soon it went quiet.

As I looked towards the barn, I noticed something unusual. All the animals were standing completely still, facing the same direction. The horses, sheep and even the chickens seemed to be staring at something in the distance. I followed their gaze, but there was nothing there. Only the thick fog and the empty fields.

Feeling confused, I decided to approach them. I slowly walked towards the horses, calling their names, but none of them reacted. They stood perfectly still, staring into the fog. Then, one of the horses slowly turned its head towards me.

I stopped.

Its eyes were no longer their usual dark colour. They had become a deep, unnatural red. Beneath them, dark red tears seemed to run down its face. Its expression never changed. It did not blink, move or make a sound. It simply stared at me.

Then another horse turned.

And another.

One by one, every horse slowly turned its head in my direction. Their eyes were all the same bloody red, and the strange, frozen expressions on their faces never changed. I could hear my own heartbeat, but nothing else. Even the wind seemed to have disappeared.

I wanted to scream, but I couldn't make a sound. For a moment, I felt as if I were looking into something that was not supposed to exist.

Then one of the horses opened its mouth.

A low whisper came from inside it.

"He's coming."

I ran.

I didn't stop until I reached the farmhouse. My hands were shaking so badly that I struggled to lock the door. Even after I reached my room, I could still see those red eyes whenever I closed mine. I knew I would never forget that sight.

For days afterwards, I couldn't bring myself to enter the barn again. But the worst part was not knowing what the horses had seen.

It was knowing that whatever they were looking at had finally noticed me, too.

The first strange thing happened just before midnight. I heard a loud noise coming from the barn, followed by the sound of animals moving around. I grabbed a lantern and went outside. The fog was so thick that I could barely see a few steps ahead. As I approached the barn, I noticed that the chickens were gathered in one corner. They were not moving or making any noise. Their heads were lowered, and their bodies seemed strangely still.

Then I heard a sound.

A whisper.

It was coming from the sheep.

I stepped closer and noticed that they were standing in a perfect circle, all facing the same direction. Their mouths moved slowly, almost as if they were repeating the same words. I could not understand what they were saying, but the sound reminded me of a prayer. I stood there, confused, wondering if I was imagining things.

Suddenly, every animal turned its head towards me.

I froze.

Their eyes seemed empty, yet they were all looking directly at me. None of them made a sound. Then, from the darkest corner of the barn, I heard something that sounded almost like a human voice.

"Forgive us."

I dropped the lantern.

The next morning, I tried to convince myself that the previous night had been a dream. However, when I entered the barn, I noticed that the animals were still behaving strangely.

The horses refused to leave their stalls, the chickens would not eat, and the sheep continued gathering in circles. Some animals had disappeared, while others seemed frightened of one another.

As the days passed, the situation became worse. The animals began turning against each other, acting as if they no longer recognised their own kind. I witnessed them fighting and behaving in ways I had never seen before. The farm was filled with strange noises, sudden movements and an awful silence that followed every disturbance. It was as if something had changed the natural order of the farm. The creatures that had once lived peacefully together now seemed controlled by an invisible force.

One evening, I found strange marks in the dirt outside the barn. They formed a large circle, with symbols I had never seen before. In the middle of it was a small wooden cross, turned upside down. I remembered the old stories my grandmother used to tell me about evil spirits and false prophets. She always warned me that not everything that looked holy came from heaven.

That same evening, I noticed a trail of dark red stains leading away from the barn and towards the forest. There was also a terrible smell in the air, like something that had been left to rot for days. I knew I should have gone back inside, but curiosity got the better of me.

I took my lantern and followed the trail.

The deeper I walked into the forest, the quieter everything became. There were no birds, no insects, not even the sound of the wind. It felt as if the entire forest was holding its breath. The trees looked taller and darker than usual, and their branches seemed to reach towards me.

After a few minutes, I reached a small clearing.

Something was lying in the middle of it.

It was a dead black sheep. Its body was lying in a strange position, and all four of its legs were bent in unnatural directions. They looked as if they had been broken and twisted into positions that no living animal could possibly stand in. Its head was turned almost completely backwards, facing directly towards me. Its wool was covered in dark, wet-looking stains, and its eyes were completely white. Its mouth was slightly open, almost as if it had been trying to scream before it died. I stood there, unable to move. The worst part was that its face seemed strangely peaceful, as if it had not been afraid at all.

I stepped closer and noticed dozens of small animal bones arranged in a perfect circle around it. In the centre stood a wooden cross, buried upside down in the ground. Strange red symbols covered the nearby tree trunks. At first, I thought they were random marks, but then I noticed that every single one looked like an eye.

Then I looked up.

I wish I hadn't.

There were more animals hanging from the trees. Their bodies were suspended from the branches by thick ropes, as if someone had deliberately placed them there. Some were sheep,

while others looked like smaller farm animals. Their heads hung down, and their bodies moved slightly in the cold air. What frightened me most was that their stomachs appeared to have been opened, leaving dark, unnatural-looking marks across their bodies. I could not understand who could have done something like this, or why anyone would leave them hanging in the forest.

I took a step backwards, nearly dropping my lantern.

The animals had not simply died.

It looked as if someone had arranged them there for a reason.

And whatever that reason was, I had a terrible feeling it had something to do with the symbols on the trees.

I suddenly felt as if something was watching me from every direction.

Then I noticed something even stranger.

The sheep's shadow was pointing in the opposite direction from the light of my lantern. I moved the lantern, but the shadow did not change. Instead, it slowly stretched towards my feet.

I stepped backwards.

Then I heard a quiet whisper.

"You came to see Him too."

I looked at the dead sheep. Its mouth had not moved.

Suddenly, hundreds of whispers came from somewhere deep between the trees. They sounded like animals, but they were speaking in human voices.

"He is almost here."

I turned around and ran as fast as I could. I could hear branches moving behind me, even though there was no wind. I did not stop until I reached the farmhouse. When I finally closed the door, I noticed something strange on my clothes.

There was a small red symbol on my sleeve.

It looked exactly like the symbols I had seen on the trees.

I returned to the house and searched through my grandmother's old books. Most of the pages were yellow and damaged, but one passage caught my attention. It spoke of a false saviour, a being that would arrive looking like a symbol of hope but would bring fear and destruction instead. It mentioned the Antichrist.

I laughed nervously. I had never believed in such stories. Still, I could not stop thinking about the animals.

That night, the praying began again.

This time, it was louder.

I heard it coming from the barn, but it was not the sound of ordinary animals. It sounded like hundreds of voices whispering together. I slowly opened the barn door. Inside, every animal had gathered in a circle. Their heads were lowered, and their bodies were completely still.

In the middle of the circle stood a small, dark figure.

I could not see its face. It was covered by the shadows, yet I felt that it was looking directly at me. The air became cold, and the lantern in my hand began to flicker. The animals continued whispering, repeating the same words again and again.

Then the figure raised its head.

For a moment, I thought I saw a familiar expression, almost like a human smile. But there was something deeply wrong about it. It seemed peaceful, almost kind, yet its presence filled me with a fear I had never experienced before.

I remembered the passage in my grandmother's book.

A false saviour.

Something that would pretend to be holy.

I suddenly understood why the animals were praying. They were not asking for protection. They were welcoming it.

I tried to step backwards, but the animals slowly turned towards me. Their whispers became louder, and the figure stretched out one hand. I could not move. It was as if the entire barn was holding its breath.

Then, for the first time, the figure spoke.

"Do not be afraid. I have come to save you."

Its voice was gentle, almost beautiful. But behind those words, I heard something else. A second voice, much deeper, repeating the same sentence in a strange and unfamiliar language.

I ran.

I did not stop until I reached the farmhouse. I locked every door and closed every window. Outside, the animals continued praying. Their voices grew louder until they sounded like one enormous choir. I covered my ears, but I could still hear them.

Then everything went silent.

The next morning, the fog had disappeared. The fields looked normal again, and the sun shone through the clouds. For a moment, I thought everything was finally over. I slowly opened the front door and looked outside.

The farm was empty.

There were no sounds, no movement and no animals anywhere. The barn door stood wide open, swinging gently in the wind. I walked towards it, hoping to find some explanation for what had happened.

Inside, the ground was covered with strange symbols. At the very centre stood the small wooden cross I had seen before. But this time, it was standing upright.

Beneath it was a single sentence written in the dirt:

"He has already been welcomed."

I felt my blood turn cold.

I looked towards the farmhouse window and saw my reflection. Behind me stood the same dark figure from the barn.

I turned around.

Nobody was there.

When I looked back at the window, my reflection was no longer copying my movements. It was standing perfectly still, smiling.

And then I heard a familiar whisper coming from somewhere inside the house.

"Let us pray."

I never saw the animals again.

But sometimes, when the fog returns, I can still hear them.

And I have begun to wonder whether they were ever praying to something evil...

Or whether they were praying because they knew it was coming for all of us.