

Rebeca

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REBECA always was funny. She never played with any of the kids on the block, she just stayed inside. When she did come out, she'd only play with me. She never wanted to play regular games; she liked to look at birds and trees and stuff. Mom didn't really like me to play with her. I heard Mom tell Dad she was possessed. I don't know what that means, but the way Mom said it, I didn't want to find out.

Rebeca was real good in school. All the teachers called her bright. She sometimes wrote poems about things she liked best, which was usually things outside. She sang good too. On nights when the wind was still and I opened my window, I could hear her sing. She sang happy songs.

Rebeca lived with her great aunt because her parents had died. Their yard was over grown and there were weeds all over. The house was real old and Rebeca's aunt, Mrs. Brell, looked as old as the house. All the kids used to call her the witch, and they would never go near the yard. They called Rebeca the witch's child. I tried to tell them that Rebeca wasn't a witch's child and Mrs. Brell wasn't a witch, but they never listened to me.

I remember the boy who started it all. Davey was older than us kids, and he was the one that started the story of Mrs. Brell being a witch. I think he did it because Mrs. Brell told him to stay out of her yard once. Well, Davey was a troublemaker; Mom said that he was a problem child and if I were like that she'd spank me 'till I behaved.

Davey's parents never spanked him; they let him do whatever he wanted. When Davey was eight, his parents bought him a dog because he wanted one. Davey named it Job. Job was a big dog, and sometimes he was mean. At recess Davey would always sneak home, get Job, and

bring him back to the playground to scare us younger kids. I was never scared of Job, but Rebeca hated him. Probably because she hated Davey. Davey knew Rebeca didn't like Job, so he had him chase her. She never cried like the rest of the kids, she just looked at Davey with an expression that I've never seen before. She just stared at him with cold, hard eyes as if to tease Davey. Davey's tricks never bothered Rebeca.

I used to tell Rebeca that Davey was the one who made Job so mean. Davey never fed Job and he was always hitting him. I don't think he really liked him.

One day at recess Davey brought Job to the playground and made him start chasing Rebeca. Rebeca started to run but all of a sudden she stopped. Job was right behind her and couldn't stop as quick as she could; he ran into her and Rebeca screamed. Job must have been scared because he bit Rebeca in the leg. He bit her hard; I could see the blood. Rebeca didn't cry, she just stared at Davey that same way until I was sure she could see right through him. I ran to get the teacher. When Davey heard that the teacher was coming he got worried and ran home. When he came back to school that afternoon the teacher told him never to bring Job to school again. She said if he did she'd call the men from the pound and have them take Job away.

That night I was up in my room looking out the window. From my window I can see Rebeca's house. It was late at night and everyone was asleep, but I had a bad dream and woke up. I went over to the window and looked out. I saw the strangest thing. Davey was walking up the street with his dog right after him. He stopped at Rebeca's house and then started cutting through her yard. All the way Job was right behind him. At the side of the house he must have stopped because he didn't come out for a long time. I wondered what he was doing at the side of the house. Then he came running out the back yard, but Job wasn't with him. I waited for the longest time but Job never came. I started to get sleepy and finally just went back to bed.

The next day was Saturday. When I woke up I heard Mrs. Brell's voice downstairs talking to my dad. She was crying. My mom told her to stop; she said my dad would bury it. Bury what I wondered. I knew if I went downstairs they'd stop talking, so I stayed upstairs.

Pretty soon Davey and his dad came over. Davey was screaming, Rebeca did it, Rebeca killed my dog. Davey's dad was yelling at Mrs. Brell, calling her an old witch. Davey said that Rebeca used magic to kill Job because she didn't like him. He said he saw her do it. Mrs. Brell said that was nonsense. Davey said that last night Job got loose and started running. He said the dog ran into Rebeca's yard and he followed him. Then he saw Rebeca standing there. When she saw Job she killed him. He said he saw her use her magic to do it. He said he watched Job drop over dead in front of his eyes. Mrs. Brell said she found the dead dog in her yard this morning but she was sure Rebeca didn't kill him. They kept arguing, but I couldn't listen anymore. I lay back on my bed. I knew what had happened.

It's been a long time now since Davey's dog was killed. None of the kids even talk to Rebeca anymore. They all make fun of her or stay away from her. She tells me she doesn't care. Sometimes at night when the wind is still I listen for her songs. She used to sing such happy songs. I listen, but I never hear them anymore. All I can hear is the wind.