

BURIED

Written by

Ananya Shah

SAMUEL - WILL DEVARY  
MARGARET - DANAYA  
SD - DEXTER  
WHISPERED VOICE - WILL MANNING

EXT. OLD COUNTRY HOUSE - NIGHT

The camera opens to an old country house. The exterior is worn, the yard unkempt, and a soft light shining out of a window. If you listen closely, it sounds like someone is whispering.

INT. OLD COUNTRY HOUSE - NIGHT

~~The camera drifts to the interior.~~ The walls are lined with framed photographs, the tops of which are collecting dust. A large grandfather clock ticks steadily in the background. The camera zooms in on a pair of frail hands lighting a match. The hand and match move shakily to the wick of candle. We zoom out and see candle is place on an small altar-like structure, complete with a photograph of a three-person family, and an old torn watch. ~~Camera zooms in on the flame on the candle.~~ A soft whisper is heard in the background.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A top down view of a man restlessly turning in bed. We get a glimpse of the man's face, later to be known as SAMUEL.

CUT TO:

INT. SAMUEL'S CAR - COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

The camera shows Samuel's car driving through the winding, empty country road. He glances at his rearview mirror, as if something might be following him.

He finally pulls up to the old country house, ~~turning off the engine and~~ sitting in silence for a moment before getting out.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

MARGARET, a woman in her 60s, sits at the kitchen table, staring into the steam rising from her tea. Her face is worn, tired, and weathered. ~~Her movements are slow and methodical.~~ Her fingers lightly trace the rim of the mug. The candle is still burning in the background, but considerably shorter than it was previously.

Suddenly, the sound of a key rattling in the front door lock ~~echoes throughout the quiet house. Margaret's head jerks up, her eyes wide with disbelief. She slowly stands up and starts walking to the door.~~

~~The lock is still rattling, and after a few moments, we hear a key turn, and the door creaks open. SAMUEL, matching the picture on the altar and the man we previously saw, stands in the doorway.~~

~~They stare at each other, both shocked. Neither says a word.~~

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

~~Margaret opens her mouth, as if to say something, but the words never come.~~

SAMUEL

Mom?

~~Margaret swallows hard, her eyes start welling up, but no tears fall.~~

SAMUEL

I didn't know if you would still be here.

MARGARET

Where else would I go?

~~The question hangs in the air, heavy and loaded. Samuel glances around, taking in the house that's barely changed since he last left it years ago. Cobwebs cover every corner, and the furniture is practically falling apart. Samuel runs his hand on the back of a chair, but inspects the dust on his fingers.~~

SAMUEL

It's ... just like I remember

~~Margaret gives a slight nod, unsure what to say next. She's gazing off into the distance, not making eye contact with Samuel.~~

MARGARET

It didn't think you would come back.  
(distantly)

~~Samuel meets her eyes, which isn't reciprocated.~~

SAMUEL

Neither did I. But...  
(he cuts himself off)

MARGARET

Tea?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

~~Samuel and Margaret move into the living room, the dim light from a table lamp barely illuminates the room, casting long shadows on the walls.~~

Samuel sits in an armchair by the window, staring out into the darkness beyond. Margaret stands in the adjacent kitchen, slowly moving and fixing a cup of tea.

~~Samuel glances around, taking in the degrading house around him, absorbing the decay—the peeling wallpaper, the worn furniture, the musty smell that seems to cling to the air. He feels uneasy - shaking his leg, and picking his nails.~~

MARGARET

I kept the room the same. *(she hesitates, almost as if regretting it)* Your room. Just... in case. In case you ever wanted to come back. You could stay there, tonight? Maybe?

~~Samuel's looks down at the teacup, and back up at Margaret, smiling.~~

SAMUEL

You didn't have to.

~~A heavy silence fills the room again. The clock ticks, Margaret avoids his gaze, looking instead to the small altar. Samuel notices it too. The candle is flickering rapidly, even though there is very little breeze in the house.~~

~~Samuel's expression softens, a mixture of sadness and confusion crossing his face. He hesitates before speaking.~~

SAMUEL

I had a dream about him. Last night. Felt so real, like he was... here.

~~Margaret glances at him for just a second, and then goes back to her stoic gaze.~~

MARGARET

*(defeated)*

He is.

~~Samuel looks at her, confused, and then chuckles.~~

SAMUEL

Yeah, Mom. I know. He's here in spirit, or whatever.

~~Margaret does not change her expression.~~

SAMUEL

Mom, he's gone. It's been years. I mean... you know that, don't you?

~~Margaret's expression hardens slightly, her hand clutching her own teacup tightly.~~

MARGARET

(Coldly)

Maybe that's easy for you to say. You left. You— you had somewhere to go.

~~Samuel's face tightens.~~

SAMUEL

You just... you shut down. It was like you weren't even there anymore.

~~Margaret's eyes flicker, the hint of a tear forming. She looks away,~~ her gaze settling on the altar.

A creak sounds from the corner of the room, faint but distinct. ~~Margaret shudders, but Samuel doesn't notice.~~

SAMUEL

You think I didn't care? I did, Mom. I still do. But I couldn't just... stay and watch you bury yourself in all this.

MARGARET

(slowly, almost whispering)

You don't understand... it wasn't like I wanted to... It's just, I couldn't—I... I needed him.

Another creak sounds, this time from the staircase, sharper and closer. Margaret glances upward, her face tense. Samuel looks at her, starting to pick up on the tension.

SAMUEL

(trying to reach her)  
Mom, you have to let this go.

~~Margaret gives him a cold, resigned look, her expression one of profound sadness mixed with a strange acceptance.~~

SAMUEL

But, Mom, living like this... This place is barely holding together.

~~Margaret stares at him, her expression unreadable. She nods slowly, a hollow, almost resigned look crossing her face.~~

MARGARET

Then go. If that's what you want. I... won't stop you.

Samuel stares at her, taken aback by her response. It's as if all fight, all resistance, has drained out of her. There's no plea in her eyes, no attempt to hold him back—only a chilling calmness.

SAMUEL

(almost hurt) That's it? You don't even care? I mean I came because I..I felt something. Something was off. But ...

~~He looks at her pleadingly.~~

SAMUEL

(softly)  
But nothing ever changes with you.

~~Margaret doesn't respond. Her gaze shifts back to the altar, lingering on the photograph. Samuel shakes his head in disbelief, standing up as if to leave.~~

~~Just then,~~ another creak echoes through the house, louder this time, coming from directly above. Samuel freezes, looking toward the staircase.

SAMUEL

(frowning) What was that?

MARGARET

Its the house...Old houses make noises.

~~But there is a slight trembling in her voice that betrays her.~~

Samuel starts walking towards the staircase.

SAMUEL

Mom, what's going on with you?

~~Margaret's face hardens, her gaze snapping back to him with a glint of defiance.~~

MARGARET

You wanted to leave, Samuel. Go ahead. Leave.

(softly)

Please.

~~She turns her back to him, refusing to meet his gaze.~~  
Samuel's frustration morphs into something else—a creeping unease, a sense that something is deeply wrong.

Another creak sounds from above, louder, almost insistent.

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Samuel pulls away from Margaret and starts up the stairs, his footsteps heavy. Margaret stays frozen at the bottom, back still turned. Camera turns to her face, and we see her eyes wide, almost paralyzed by fear.

MARGARET

Please, Samuel. Don't. Please

But Samuel isn't listening anymore. He's halfway up the stairs, He reaches the top of the staircase and looks down the dim hallway. The door at the end is slightly ajar. He moves toward it, cautiously. Margaret stumbles up the stairs behind him.

MARGARET

Samuel, don't go in there!

~~Her voice is defiant for the first time. It's almost as if she is trying to protect him.~~

SAMUEL

(Almost to himself.)

What are you hiding?

He pushes the door open and steps inside.

INT. UPPER BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark except for a sliver of moonlight filtering in through the curtains. The air is thick, almost stifling. In the center of the room stands a large wardrobe, its door slightly ajar.

Samuel hesitates, then approaches the wardrobe, his hand reaching out to open it. Behind him, Margaret stands in the doorway, shaking her head.

MARGARET

Please, Samuel. Please.

Samuel pulls the wardrobe door open. Inside is... nothing. Just old coats and moth-eaten blankets. He exhales, half relieved, half confused.

SAMUEL

(Turning to Margaret.)  
What is all this?

But Margaret's eyes are fixed on the wardrobe, her face pale as a ghost. She doesn't respond. She can't. Samuel looks at her, then back to the wardrobe, as if he's missed something.

He steps closer again, looking deeper inside. Suddenly, a distant whisper echoes through the room—just faint enough to make him question if he heard it.

He freezes.

Margaret backs away, slowly retreating into the hallway.

SAMUEL

(Whispering.) What is  
that?

~~The whisper grows louder, more distinct, like the voice of someone unseen.~~

VOICE (O.S.)

(Faintly.) Samuel...

Samuel's eyes widen in shock. He spins around, looking into the wardrobe again. Empty. Yet the whisper continues, faint but persistent.

VOICE (O.S.)

(Whispering.) You came  
back...

Samuel stares at the wardrobe, breathing heavily. His mind races, trying to make sense of what he's hearing.

~~Suddenly, the whisper stops. Silence. Absolute silence.~~

Samuel turns, running out of the room. As he reaches the hallway, he hears something again. It's a low, deep creaking sound, not from the wardrobe, but from within the house itself.

SAMUEL  
 (Panting, turning to  
 Margaret) What was that?  
 What did you do?

~~Margaret turns back to face Samuel. She stands there,  
 trembling, looking at Samuel with a mix of guilt, terror,  
 and resignation.~~

MARGARET  
 You hear it, don't you.

~~Samuel steps closer, eyes wide with confusion and fear.~~

SAMUEL  
 (fighting it) I hear  
 something. But it's...  
 it's not real.

MARGARET  
 Samuel. (pause) It's real.

~~She looks at him, defeated.~~

MARGARET  
 It's real. Real enough to make you  
 feel like...*(she trails off,  
 struggling to find words)*  
 Samuel, it's... strong enough to  
 keep you if you let it.

VOICE (O.S.)  
 I need you, Samuel...

~~The voice changes, sounding almost childlike, pleading.~~

Samuel's expression softens, and he reaches out to the  
 emptiness, as if caught in its pull.

MARGARET  
 No Samuel. I-I couldn't let go. I  
 couldn't lose him too, not after  
 everything. (pause) I thought I  
 could keep it. But it doesn't leave  
 you.

SAMUEL  
 (whispering)  
 Mom, what are you saying?

VOICE  
 (in a soft, needy whisper) Stay,  
 Samuel... please...

The whisper grows, ~~sounding more childlike, innocent yet chilling, like a soft plea from someone who refuses to let go.~~

Margaret's expression becomes almost panicked, realizing Samuel is slipping into the same pull that's trapped her.

SAMUEL  
(breathing harder, torn)  
You can't stay here,  
Mom. Please. C'mon,  
let's, let's go.

MARGARET  
Samuel, look at me. (urgent) Don't  
get caught here like I did.  
I...(she struggles)

VOICE (O.S.)  
(sweetly coaxing)Come  
back, Samuel..

Samuel takes a step forward, drawn by the voice. ~~But his mother's words hold him back.~~

MARGARET  
(pleading)Please, Samuel.  
Go.

~~He looks at her, a final moment of understanding dawning between them.~~

SAMUEL  
(in disbelief) You're as  
much a part of it as it  
is of you.

~~Margaret nods, her face contorted in shame, her eyes pleading with him to understand. The voice grows faintly desperate.~~

VOICE (O.S.)  
(whispering)Don't leave  
us, Samuel..

Samuel walks slowly out the bedroom, and down to the foyer. Margaret stares into the empty bedroom, and slowly turns to follow him.

She walks down, and stand halfway up the staircase. Samuel has his hand on the doorknob, and looks back up at her, distraught.

Margaret takes a slow step down.

MARGARET

I just wanted him back, but it... it  
took everything

Samuel turns back to the door, ~~grappling either decision he has to make~~. Suddenly, the house creaks, larger than ever before. The walls hum with an unseen force, and the shadows seem to shift as if they are their own. Margaret's eyes widen, but she doesn't move. She is no longer the mother Samuel knew—no longer a woman in control of herself.

The camera shifts, and for a brief moment, we see the shadows in the corners of the room twist into indistinct shapes, almost like they're reaching out. The temperature drops, the atmosphere thick with a suffocating presence.

Samuel stares in disbelief, unable to take his eyes away from his mother, but his knuckles growing white around the doorknob.

The shapes start reaching toward Samuel, and he can't move.

FADE TO:

Camera zooms in on the candle, flickering, about to go out...

CUT TO BLACK

