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“How and Why to Summon Slenderman”

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Abbey Tauati, Karen Foskett, and Sophie Foskett

The Foskett's Living Room, West Jordan, Utah

November 15, 2017

“How and Why to Summon Slenderman”

Folk Belief

Informants:

Abbey is sixteen years old and a sophomore at a public high school. She is a friend of Sophie Foskett's, and grew up near me, though I only knew of her growing up, as she is quite a bit younger than me, and I wasn't close to her family. She is part Samoan, and previously attended a school that focused on the arts. She is outgoing and talkative, and likes video games a lot.

Sophie is the fifth child in the Foskett family, and I've known her her whole life, being close to their family. She is fifteen years old and a sophomore in high school. She loves music and performance, and is usually doing a musical or something similar, so she's a natural performer. She's a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and is one of the most outgoing members of her family.

Karen Foskett is a mother of six children, and works at an elementary school in West Jordan. I've known her my whole life, and spent a lot of time with her family. She seemed really excited when I contacted her about collecting some Slenderman folklore from her kids, and arranged for some of her daughters' friends to come act as informants as well. Karen is very even-tempered, and almost always calm and down to earth, possibly the result of her upbringing in semi-rural Idaho. She likes to read in her spare time. Like the rest of her family, she is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Context:

I had spoken with, Karen, Sophie's Mom, about coming to West Jordan to collect some Slenderman Folklore from her kids and their friends, so she had informed them all and arranged me to meet with them after school. I agreed to pick Sophie and her friend Abbey from school with my wife, and had been chatting with them comfortably on the drive home. I had just finished collecting Abbey's story about when some classmates took her blood for Slenderman, and Karen, who was listening to all these recordings, began to ask why kids would want to offer blood to slenderman. I turned on my recorder, realizing I was getting a good natural shot at folklore, though I was sitting far away from Karen, and she's pretty quiet. I have reproduced the conversation from what I managed to record to the best of my abilities. As I recall, Sophie was bringing up the example of the Waukesha stabbing when I began to record.

Text:

Sophie: ...like that girl who got stabbed like fifteen times.

Abbey: It's, it's a way to how to summon him.

Sophie [I think]: [inaudible, possibly: 'yeah it is']

Karen: So, blood comes [inaudible]

Abbey: If you [unintelligible].

Abbey: You have-- Karen: (Why, why do people--)

Abbey: --You have to have a sacrifice, to get him near you, you have to serv--sacrifice something, of the body or of the mind, so, say it's a trinket you hold dear, like. Your great grandma, who's dead, and she has, this, wreath, that's so, like so-called, keeps away evil spirits, I have a bunch of friends who have those wreaths, and hang them above their doors, because superstition superstition. We're all spooked here [laughter, probably Karen]. I'm part Samoan, so I easily get spooked by these kinds of things. Um, and, I guess you could say that kind of sacrifice is of the mind, but if you want to sacri someth--sacrifice something of the body, uh, like, that, what happened to that girl, she was stabbed multiple times, and left to die. For me, they took my blood.

Karen: What's the point though? They're trying to get him to come to them?

Abbey: Yeah.

Karen: Why do they want him there?

Abbey: Because they're obsse-- Karen: (he sounds), he sounds really creepy.

Abbey: I know, because they're obsessed with him for some reason. They think he's cool, because they think, they give him a sacrifice you might be able to use him to your own extent.

Me: So, do you guys believe in Slenderman?

Abbey: [snorts] no. [Sophie shakes her head].

Me: No? You just think kids are being weird, huh?

Abbey: Kids are being weird.

Me: So where do you think the stories came from then?

Sophie: creepypasta.

Abbey: Probably, creepypasta.

Texture:

This conversation was quick, with Karen asking questions, and Abbey jumping to answer her questions before she had a chance to finish asking them. Abbey appeared to want to show that she was the expert on the topic still, with Sophie yielding to her more dominant story telling.

Karen and I had talked a bit before about the actual origins of Slenderman, if I recall, but she seemed to really want to know why anyone would want to summon him if he was so scary.

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