LIGHT IN THE TUNNEL

By Juanice Myers

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Valerie Simpson, a suburban housewife, has begun seeing visions of murders, kidnappings, suicides and even family members threatened with impending accidents. But the most incriminating vision may concern someone close to Val herself. She hesitates to go to the police because her husband works for a conservative firm and because she has spent some time in a mental institution. Is she losing her grip on reality again? Enter Val's brother, a caring neighbor and a psychic researcher, all of whom offer support and understanding. But why is her husband so violently against exploring what might be a telepathic gift? And what is all the notoriety doing to their young son? A seasoned police lieutenant is determined to cut through the psychic mysteries to get to the truth. This mystery-thriller has more than one frightening twist at the end.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1: The present. Morning.
Scene 2: Later that afternoon.
Scene 3: About thirty minutes later.
Scene 4: Later that night.

ACT II

Scene 1: Two days later. Morning.
Scene 2: Later that afternoon.
Scene 3: Later that day.
Scene 4: Later that night.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(3 m, 3 w, 2 flexible)

VALERIE SIMPSON: Intelligent, attractive, suburban housewife who suddenly finds herself "gifted" with psychic abilities.

KEVIN SIMPSON: Son of Valerie and Doug. Typical preteen who enjoys sports but is frightened by his mother's visions.

DOUG SIMPSON: Rising young, career-minded executive. Fears Val's abilities because they threaten his lifestyle.

BOBBY REESE: Valerie's brother who is intelligent, witty and also a good ol' boy from Texas. He is devoted to her and determined to help her.

MARGE LACY: Sympathetic neighbor who loves to gossip over coffee and can't balance her checkbook.

ANNA FOLGER: A psychic investigator.

***LT. FOSTER:** Thorough, methodical police inspector.

***PATROLMAN HOFFMAN:** A rookie police officer.

***Both Lt. Foster and Patrolman Hoffman may be played by women, if necessary.*

TIME: The present.

PLACE: A bedroom community of New York.

SETTING

The action takes place in the kitchen of the Simpson home in a bedroom community of New York. The stage is basically divided into the kitchen area, SR, and the dining area, SL. USC is the door to the outside and USR is the door to the living room and rest of the house. A bar divides the kitchen from the dining room and, USC, the bar becomes a planter. Only one or two cabinet doors in the kitchen need to be practical. There is a window extreme DSR. SL of the outside door is a coat rack and a CD player. There must be a broom closet SR of the planter that helps separate the kitchen from the dining area and there must be access for actors to enter it from the back. The appliances in the kitchen and the dining table/chairs in the dining room are expensive-looking, in keeping with Doug Simpson's salary and ambitions. There is a Tiffany-style lamp hanging over the dining table. The rooms have a pleasant, well-decorated atmosphere reflecting Val and Doug Simpson's good taste.

PROPS

VALERIE: Newspaper, coffee maker and several cups, envelope, operatic CD, football jersey, liquor bottle, coat, dish towel, bag of groceries.
DOUG: Tie, coat, suit in plastic cleaner bag, two glasses, pill bottle, paper sacks from barbecue take-out and pharmacy, glass of water, small suitcase.
MARGE: Newspaper, cup of coffee.
KEVIN: Football, boxer shorts, T-shirt, ring.
BOBBY: Stetson hat, suitcase, deck of cards, note, cans of cola.
FOSTER: Identification, notepad, handcuffs.
ANNA: Tote bag, tape recorder, small box containing small gold bracelet, briefcase, coffee cup.
MISCELLANEOUS: Pitcher of milk, box of cereal, bowl, coat rack, CD player, dish of fruit, liquor bottles.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: VALERIE SIMPSON is outside on her kitchen steps. We hear her talking to her neighbor, MARGE LACY.)

VALERIE: *(Offstage.)* Marge, can you come over when Mike leaves? *(Pause.)* No, nothing's wrong. I just ... wanted to visit. *(Pause.)* Yes, OK. See you then.

(VAL enters kitchen. She has a newspaper and is scanning it anxiously. She crosses to the table as she reads the front page. The table is set for breakfast and includes a pitcher of milk and bowl of cereal. KEVIN, her son, enters from USR door.)

KEVIN: Hi, Mom. *(There is no response.)* Hi, Mom.
VALERIE: Oh. *(Closes paper, folds it. KEVIN sits.)* Hi, hon.
KEVIN: Something wrong?
VALERIE: No. No, Dad just asked me to check the market quotations.
KEVIN: *(Begins to eat.)* On the front page?
VALERIE: *(Pouring HERSELF coffee.)* No, Goofy. Just thought I saw a picture of someone I knew, that's all. Hey, why are you up and dressed before you have to be?
KEVIN: Mom, you forgot again. We have football practice before school. There's a game today.
VALERIE: There seems to be a game just about every day. I still think junior high is a little soon for cheerleading and football.
KEVIN: You sound like Vicki's mom.
VALERIE: *(Good naturedly.)* Do I?
KEVIN: Just because you guys didn't get into things like that 'til you were in college ...
VALERIE: High school ...
KEVIN: High school ... you think we shouldn't ...
VALERIE: *(Relenting.)* You're right. Sometimes the only good reason I can give you for not doing something is because I didn't do it. I guess there's nothing wrong with it.

VALERIE: *(Cont'd.)* But I do wish you could get a new place for the games. That stadium should be condemned. It's in a rotten neighborhood and it's near that creek bed ... *(SHE stops as if remembering something. KEVIN doesn't notice for a second.)*
KEVIN: It's all we've got, though, and we have to have a field to play on. *(Pause.)* Mom, what is it?
VALERIE: What? Oh, it's nothing, sweetheart. I was just thinking. *(Pause.)* Do you really need to go to that game today?
KEVIN: Sure, Mom. There's only one defensive line. We've all gotta be there.
VALERIE: I suppose it'll be all right. Just ... be careful ... OK?
KEVIN: Be careful? About what?

(DOUG SIMPSON enters from USR door tying his tie. He stops by KEVIN'S chair and ruffles his hair.)

DOUG: Hey, Sport.
KEVIN: Hey, Dad.
DOUG: Somebody's out front tootin' a terrible tune on her horn...
KEVIN: *(Jumps up.)* Oh, Mom. It's Vicki. Her mom's drivin' us to school.
VALERIE: Finish your milk.
KEVIN: *(Grabs a quick sip.)* Bye. I'll be home before we go to the game.
VALERIE: OK, hon. Be careful.
DOUG: Knock 'em dead!

(KEVIN exits through outside door as VAL tries to stop him.)

VALERIE: Get your jacket! *(After KEVIN has gone.)* It's chilly this morning. *(DOUG sits and opens paper. VAL crosses to coffee maker.)* Coffee?
DOUG: Umhmmm.

End of Freeview

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