

Five Nights at Freddy's™

TALES FROM THE PIZZAPLEX

#1 LALLY'S GAME

BY

**SCOTT CAWTHON
KELLY PARRA
ANDREA WAGGENER**

Scholastic Inc.

If you purchased this book without a cover, you should be aware that this book is stolen property. It was reported as “unsold and destroyed” to the publisher, and neither the author nor the publisher has received any payment for this “stripped book.”

Copyright © 2022 by Scott Cawthon. All rights reserved.

Photo of TV static: © Klikk/Dreamstime

All rights reserved. Published by Scholastic Inc., *Publishers since 1920*. SCHOLASTIC and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc.

The publisher does not have any control over and does not assume any responsibility for author or third-party websites or their content.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission of the publisher. For information regarding permission, write to Scholastic Inc., Attention: Permissions Department, 557 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data available

ISBN 978-1-338-82730-9

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 22 23 24 25 26

Printed in the U.S.A. 131

First printing 2022 • Book design by Jeff Shake

THE NIGHT WAS COLD. RAINDROPS SCATTERED ACROSS THE ROAD LIKE TINY PELLETS. THE FLASH OF RED AND BLUE EMERGENCY LIGHTS REFLECTED OFF THE WET PAVEMENT AND THE WRECKAGE OF A CRASHED SEDAN AGAINST A BROKEN TREE.

“Come on, kid. Stay with me, stay with me,” Jack, the EMT, whispered. Drops of rain rolled off his face while he pumped his hands against the rib cage of a teenaged boy.

“Clear!” his partner, Dave, yelled.

Jack raised his arms as Dave charged an electric current into the boy’s heart. The boy’s body jerked on the wet gravel road.

Jack started pumping the kid’s chest again. “Come on, kid. Come back to us.”

“Still no pulse, Jack. It’s been too long. We got to call it.”

“Once more. Come on, kid.”

Again, they tried to revive the boy, but to no avail.

“Dang it.” Jack sat back, wiped rain and sweat off his nose with his wrist. “Call it.” After a moment of regret,

Jack covered the kid with a tarp. He stood up, gave himself a minute. It was always painful to lose someone so young.

He heard a rock skitter across the ground.

Jack swiveled his head toward the black brush from behind the tree. *Was someone there? Maybe an animal?* He couldn't see anything through the curtain of rain. He rolled his shoulders, picked up a medical bag, and turned away. "Let's pack up and get the coroner here."

"Kid didn't make it?" Officer Manor asked him on his way back to the ambulance.

Jack shook his head. "Not this time."

"Too bad. This road is dangerous, let alone during a storm like this."

"Don't I know it with the calls I've had here in the past . . ." Jack trailed off as he placed the bag into the van.

Officer Manor nudged his flashlight toward the dark. "And right here, near a cemetery of all places. Bad vibes, I think."

"Just a coincidence," Jack said.

TALES FROM THE PIZZAPLEX

A sudden movement caught his eye. Jack squinted against the rain and shifted his attention toward the body. There was a dark form in the rain. Was someone leaning over the corpse?

For a split second, the hairs on the back of his neck raised; then he shook the feeling off. He blinked to make sure his eyes weren't playing tricks on him.

There was someone. Short, slim, frail. The form hovered over the dead boy's body, doing some kind of motion with its hands, back and forth. Then he saw it.

A knife.

Jack stepped forward. "Hey! Get away from him!"

The dark form jumped up, long wet hair covering a face, light glistening off the weapon, and something swinging from the figure's hand. Then the little thing ran away back into the darkness of the brush.

"What happened, Jack?" Officer Manor asked, scanning the darkness.

Jack pointed toward the dark brush. "I saw someone. Leaning over the body. It—uh—it was a-another kid, I think. Maybe a girl."

Officer Manor walked around, shifting his flashlight around the scene. He came back with a slight twist on his lips. "You sure about that, Jack? A young kid walking around in this? How long's your shift been?"

Jack shrugged a shoulder. "Going on twenty-four. Yeah, I need some sleep."

"Maybe I shouldn't have mentioned the cemetery. Got you thinking of spooks in the night. I was only kidding around, you know."

Jack went back to the kid's body and picked up the last medical bag. Maybe he *was* imagining things.

The tarp moved.

Jack jumped. "*Holy heck, Dave—we got a live one!*"

"What?!"

"The kid! He moved! Get the gurney!"

"You sure?"

"Just get over here!"

Jack tore the tarp from the boy. He saw the kid's face smeared with blood, watched as the kid coughed, sucked in air.

The kid moaned. "H-help . . ."

Jack whipped out the portable oxygen and slipped the air mask over the boy's mouth. "It's okay, kid, breathe, we've got you. Nice and easy. You've been in an accident. We're taking you to the hospital, and they're going to take good care of you. Do you remember the accident?"

The boy gave a slight nod.

"Driving a little too fast in the rain. Wrapped around the tree pretty good. Hang in there, kid. You've just been gifted a miracle."

Jessica pushed the wet mop across the hospital floor. *To and fro. To and fro.* She remembered that saying from somewhere before . . . She just didn't remember from where.

Something from the past.

A shudder ran through her as her hands trembled on the stick of the mop. She tightened her grip so it would stop. She felt the hospital staff walk by her. She felt them look at her. She tilted her head forward so her thick,

TALES FROM THE PIZZAPLEX

black hair curtained her face as much as possible. Not to be seen. Not to be noticed. No one said anything to her more than necessary. She did not speak to them unless spoken to. She performed her job each day after school and mopped the floors of the children's medical wing. She grew accustomed to the scent of sanitizing cleaner and the dismal odor of the sick. She listened to the murmurs of the staff. She paid attention to the beeps of medical machines hooked up to sick children. She studied the various footsteps she heard on the hard tiled floors. Sometimes soft steps, sometimes clicks of heels or stomps of bigger people. Sometimes the steps were rushed; sometimes they were slow. She was aware of each and every child in the hospital wing. She often heard crying and whispers of conversation as she cleaned the floors.

"The doctor says you're doing really well, Brian. You're eating better. Treatment is going well. That's wonderful, son," a woman's voice spoke from the patient's room that Jessica was near.

"Yeah, I guess so," Brian murmured.

"Hang in there, sport, You'll be better before you know it," a man said. "And then you'll get to come home and rest in your own bed."

"I have been feeling a little bit hungrier."

"That's so good to hear," the woman said.

"When will I get to go home?"

"I hope soon, son," the man said. "When you do, we'll get your favorite pizza from Freddy's Mega Pizzaplex. We'll make it a celebration. How does that sound?"

“Pretty good, actually,” the boy said.

The man laughed. “That’s my boy.”

“Bri,” spoke the woman. “What are all these strange flakes on your chest?”

“Huh?”

“Look, Harry. What are these? My gosh, what kind of hospital did we bring him to?”

“I don’t know. They look like little bits of silver,” the man said. “Relax, Jane, I’m sure there’s a reasonable explanation. They’ve been taking good care of him here. You even said so yourself. He even looks better today.”

“I know but . . .” The woman called out of the room, “Nurse Macy, please, can someone come to my son’s room?”

“Yes, Mrs. Ramon. Is Brian okay?” Nurse Macy asked.

“Yes . . . but what is this strange stuff on my son? I don’t want anything on him that is going to make him sicker.”

“Hmm . . . I don’t know what that is.” The nurse went in and checked Brian’s chest, and brushed the strange flakes off him. “I don’t think it’s anything serious, Mr. and Mrs. Ramon. I’ll have staff sweep it up and get some new blankets.”

“Please, I don’t want any cleaner or anything on him that is going to harm his recovery.”

“Yes, Mrs. Ramon. Don’t worry, we would never let that happen.”

Jessica pushed the mop slowly across the hallway.

To and fro. To and fro.

★ ★ ★

TALES FROM THE PIZZAPLEX

“She’s so strange, that one,” a nursing assistant murmured to Nurse Macy as they were stocking supplies on a medical cart.

“Hmm? Jessica, you mean? Quiet. Keeps to herself. Never makes any trouble.” Nurse Macy shrugged. “Nothing wrong with that.”

“Well, she’s so frail. Looks like a feather could knock her over. Hair always covering her pretty face.” He shuddered. “Creeps me out the way she lurks around. It’s not normal. She’s obviously alive, and yet she’s not *really* living.”

Nurse Macy shook her head. “You’ve been watching too many horror movies, Colin.”

“How do you think people come up with these scary movie ideas? They see things that freak them out and write about them.”

“I’m sure you were at an awkward stage at fourteen.”

“We’re not talking about me. Besides, I *talked* to people. I tried asking her something the other day and she just looked at me and blinked like I spoke an alien language or something.”

Nurse Macy sighed. “Oh, Colin . . .”

Clang.

Just then, something dropped from behind them, making them jump.

Colin let out a childish *eeek*.

Nurse Macy glanced down to see a rusted tin can lying on the hospital floor.

She frowned. “That’s odd. Where did that come

from?" she murmured. She glanced left and right, and spotted Jessica mopping not far from them.

"Oh, Jessica, would you mind picking up this can and throwing it away? I don't know where it came from. Must have dropped off a kitchen cart or something. I'll have to tell them to be more careful with their garbage."

Jessica gave a silent nod, and, dragging the mop, picked up the can, and threw it in a nearby trash can.

"Thank you. Oh, and, Jessica?"

Jessica slowly lifted her head, her hair parting to reveal her delicate features. Her eyes were dark. *Didn't they used to be a brighter brown?* wondered Nurse Macy.

One small beauty mark was dotted high on her left lovely cheek, but her skin seemed to have lost some of the rosy flush it once had. Her lips were delicate and full. Her face was slim and so pretty. She really could be featured in magazines.

"You're doing a good job for us." Nurse Macy gave her a small smile.

Jessica smiled, and it seemed to brighten her despondent features.

"I'm glad." Jessica spoke quietly, but the *glad* didn't reach her eyes.

"I bet you're a big help at home with your family. Do you help with cleaning around the house with your mom or dad?"

Nurse Macy watched Jessica merely nod and turn away to continue mopping down the hall.

"I'm telling you—creepy," Colin said under his breath.

TALES FROM THE PIZZAPLEX

Nurse Macy just waved her hand at him. “Oh, hush. She’s just a young girl and you’re a grown man. I think you could take her on if she attacked you.”

Colin shuddered. “Don’t be so sure.”

Even though Nurse Macy joked with Colin, she could admit to herself, and not explain why, that peering into Jessica’s dark gaze nearly broke her heart.

On her break, Jessica walked into the hospital chapel. The room was empty of grieving family members. She liked it that way, to have the chapel all to herself. It was rare, but it was peaceful and quiet and allowed her to pray. She ran her hand softly over the wooden pews that lined the walkway to the altar, and chose the first seat. At the front of the room was a large wooden cross hanging on the wall. She smelled the fresh white flowers set out for display on both sides of the room. There were three rows of small candles waiting to be lit. Quiet instrumental music played through a wall speaker.

She pulled the thick silver chain that hung around her neck from beneath her shirt and lifted it over her head, placing the pendant in her palm. The pendant had once been a whole heart, much larger and thicker. Now it was slightly bigger than a crescent moon, about the width of her thumb, with rough scratches embedded on one side.

Nearly finished.

She clasped her hands around the pendant and closed her eyes.

Please help me do good and continue with my purpose. Please help me make a difference. Please help me help others who are

sick. Give me the strength to right my wrongs. Give me the courage to do what's right.

Thank you—

“Hello, miss, are you doing okay?”

Jessica blinked and stopped praying. She hadn't heard anyone enter the chapel. She looked over to see the priest standing beside the pew. He wore a black suit with a white collar. His hair was dark with streaks of gray, and his eyebrows were thick over kind brown eyes. There were tiny lines beside his eyes when he smiled.

“I'm fine,” she responded quietly.

“My name is Father Jeremiah. I've seen you here before. What's your name, miss?”

“Jessica.” Jessica cast her gaze down and rubbed her thumb across the pendant.

“Is there anything I can help you with, Jessica?”

Jessica shook her head. “No, thank you.”

Father Jeremiah took a seat on the pew across from hers. “You look pale, Jessica. Are you feeling okay? Is there something I can get for you? A snack? Some water? Should you be resting?”

“I feel fine. I think . . . I probably look better when I'm working.”

“Working?”

“Here at the hospital, in the children's wing. I help keep the floors clean.” *To and fro. To and fro.* “Nurse Macy says I'm doing a good job,” she added.

She hoped she was doing a good job. This job had been the perfect opportunity to get closer to those who needed her help. It was rare for her to come across others who

TALES FROM THE PIZZAPLEX

were sick in the outside world. She'd heard the car accident last night by chance. A miracle, some might call it. She'd heard the terrible screech of tires, the harsh crash of the car against the tree. It had taken her time to get there through the heavy rain. She had watched the ambulance come and the EMTs try to save the boy. They hadn't been able to save him. But she had.

She was glad she'd been there to help. She'd cut it close, though, and nearly been caught. She could never allow that to happen.

"Ah, yes, I know Nurse Macy. A very caring nurse." Father Jeremiah nodded. "I'm sure you're doing a good job." He cleared his throat. "You know, Jessica, some people come here asking for help in their prayers, and I often listen to those who have burdens to release or healing to experience. Expressing our worries, our problems, helps us to let go of what is heavy on our minds and hearts."

Jessica simply said, "That's nice."

She felt she was already letting go of something very important in her own way. She never shared her thoughts with anyone because no one would be able to truly understand what she was going through.

"If you ever feel the need to talk to someone, I am here nearly every day to speak with, should you choose. I'm happy to help in any way I can."

Jessica nodded her head, keeping her eyes downcast, as she rubbed the pendant with her thumb.

"What is that lovely charm you have there? It must be very special to you."