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The Intruders

R. J. Davies



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Contact through <https://rjdavies.ca>

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Alice froze when she heard a noise coming from the bedroom just beyond the bathroom door. Was it just her imagination? It was an old building after all. No, no it was just her imagination she chided herself. She had been feeling jumpy all day long and wasn't sure why.

"It's an old building," she reminded herself under her breath. If you jump every time, you think you hear something you are going to be a nervous wreck. Don't do it, she warned herself. Yes, yes, you are right, she replied back.

Slowly she continued to lather her hair. Rubbing her fingers into her scalp. It felt good, but she didn't notice because she was still listening for intrusive noises outside her bathroom door. She paused and strained her ears. There was a crash that sounded like one of her vases falling. That wasn't her imagination! Was there someone in her apartment? Quickly she rinsed the soap from her hair and poked her head out of the shower curtain again. Listening hard she held her breath. There were footsteps in the outer room! She wasn't crazy, well maybe a little bit but not regarding this issue!

Grabbing a towel off the rack on the wall she wrapped it around her and tucked it in. Looking around she grabbed the first thing that she could find, unfortunately for her it was the bathroom plunger. Creeping over to the door she pressed her ear against the door to listen. Her heart was pounding hard in her chest.

There was faint rasping sound or was that her? No other noise could be heard but that was because the intruder on the other side was doing the same. Biting her bottom lip hard she

said a quick silent prayer that she wouldn't die tonight. Any other night she begged but not tonight she had plans that she didn't want interrupted.

Still listening hard, that's when she heard him on the other side of the door, whispering to someone else. Her heart hammered inside her chest it felt like it was going to burst through. There were at least two intruders in her apartment! How dare they break into her place! They obviously didn't know what kind of trouble they were getting themselves into, she wanted to throw open the door and knock them out.

Seeing a foggy version of herself in the mirror she realized she was in no position to knock anyone out. Pressing her slim hip against the door she decided that she needed to do something before they tried to come into her bathroom.

The lock on the door was broken so that wasn't an option. Looking around the room there was nothing to barricade the door with. Her options were next to nothing in this department. Just then the doorknob began to turn slowly.

She jumped back and pressed against the wall a head popped in looking at the shower. The water was still running. A large figure dressed in black entered the room and his eyes were on the shower. A burglar, no way! This was unbelievable! What were the odds someone would break into her place? Not taking her eyes off him, she brought the plunger down hard across the back of his neck. He turned around and looked at her with his annoyed dark brown beady eyes. Bumping into the door she swung at him again, hitting him in the face. He grabbed her hands and shook her.

Kicking hard she aimed for his family jewels. With a grumbling moan he fell to his knees grabbing her around the waist. She used her knee and caught him in the stomach. She wanted to yell for help but thought, what's the point? This old building, you couldn't hear a thing. The

walls were too thick. A person could die in this building, and no one would notice until the body started to rot. That innocent thought distracted her momentarily; the image was like watching a traffic accident it was very hard to look away.

A large hand grabbed her around the mouth. She fought wildly and wriggled free. She lost her towel in battle, but she was free from the invader. He grabbed her ankle and she fell into the door as she tried to escape. Spinning around she kicked him in the face. She lost her balance and found herself scrambling to get hold of something. Fumbling with the doorknob she flung the door open and ran from the bathroom. Looking over her shoulder to see if she was being followed, she ran smacked into a brick wall. It felt like a brick wall, but it wasn't there when she went into the bathroom. Stumbling backwards, a pair of hands grabbed her shoulders to steady her.

Looking up she found another intruder gapping at her naked body with a perplexing grimace. "Hey I got her." Her capturer called to his partner. "My, my, my, little missy you are a twisted one, aren't you?"

She stared up at him and watched how his eyes never left her face. "Allen get your ass the hell out here fast!" he yelled at his partner in disgust.

Allen came out of the bathroom holding the wall. "She's something else, isn't she?" he chuckled.

"Yeah, well I get the feeling she's not our type."

"What? They're all my type," he laughed.

"You don't want this one," he nodded towards the hamper. "Take a look at what I found in the hamper."

She could help but smile as she noticed he shivered at the thought of his discovery.

Allen walked over the hamper and lifted the lid. His eyes bulged out as a shaking hand flew up and pulled his ski mask off. Gasping for air he fell back against the wall for support as he coughed. Allen held his stomach with one hand and covered his mouth using his ski mask with the other. Shaking his head, he looked up at her and then to his partner, “Oh god Mike that’s a head! What the hell is this?”

Alice chuckled as she felt a key inside her click, she was empowered. It was like turning on a light switch, the transformation was instantaneous. Smelling their fear was like waving raw meat in front of starving dogs. She was no longer their victim, they didn’t even know it, but the roles had suddenly changed. She was Alice the mighty, Alice the strong, Alice the judge and jury. Tonight, there would be no escape for them.

Her laughter grew momentum, it was a deep, evil, throaty and very sinister rumble. “Well gentlemen you really ought to know better than that. Digging through someone’s dirty laundry can become very messy. Very, very messy indeed. What do you two intend to do now?”

The blood drained from Allen’s face. She watched his throat bobble as he swallowed hard. Shaking his head, he staggered along the wall heading towards the doorway, never taking his eyes off her.

Alice smirked. “You could just walk away and let bygones be bygones? What do you think Mike?”

He still had a hand on her shoulder holding her in one spot and he looked so uncomfortable he wanted out. She could tell he wanted out any way possible. She also could tell he was the smart one out of the two and he had already wagered his chances of getting out of there alive.

“Or you could kill me, or I could kill you? Tell me which do you prefer?”

“Allen,” Mike shuddered.

“Oh, shit Mike let’s just get the hell out of here!”

Her lips curled into a malicious smile; she lowered her head slightly so she could look up at them through her lashes looking frail and innocent, of which both she was not. She wasn’t fooling them either. “Well Mike what do you want to do?”

His fingers loosened on her as he licked his hot dry lips. He glanced over at Allen it was the first time he had taken his eyes off her and it was only for a moment. “We’re going lady. Relax we’re going.”

He started to back away from her and that’s when she saw it, her silver solid steel letter opener laying on the dresser next to her phone bill. She had been looking at that just before she decided to take a shower. He was around the bed and heading for the door as she took two steps grabbed the letter opener and bounced across the bed jumping into the air and landing on him. He stumbled backwards and she slammed the letter opener into his neck. His eyes widened in horror she felt him grabbing her for support and she helped him down to the floor, kissing his cheek gently.

Allen was gone. Licking her lips, she savored the salty taste of fear from Mike’s cheek. Alice leapt to her feet and was down the hall calling out for him. “Come to Auntie Alice Allen. It won’t hurt much.”

She found him trying to climb out of her fire escape. Her dishes were still air drying in the drain board where she left them after dinner. Grabbing the cast iron pan, she heaved it in the air and brought it down hard on his head. His body crumbled laying half in and half out. She whacked him again for good measure and smiled, satisfied that he wasn’t breathing. She dragged his body back inside.

Knelling down over his body she checked his pulse and smiled. “See unlike a common thief I always, always keep my promises Allen even to someone like you.”

A loud knock at her door interrupted her party. Frowning she rose to her feet and called “just a minute!” Stopping off at the kitchen sink she rinsed their blood off her skin. Then stopped in the living room where she pulled another clean towel out of her laundry basket, which was sitting next to the sofa, she hadn’t put that away since last night. She was getting sloppy it was unlike her. Wrapping it carefully around her, she grabbed the door and opened it with a big smile.

“Mrs. Hilroy what a pleasant surprise, how can I help you?”

“I thought I heard someone screaming,” she tried peeking inside her apartment.

“No, it’s just me. I had the television on in the bedroom, maybe it was something from that you heard? I don’t like to have a shower in this old building without having the television on. I’m forever hearing noises and thinking that there is someone moving around in here. I was in the middle of having a shower is there something I can do for you?”

“Yes, dear I agree. I feel the same way I won’t shower unless Mr. Hilroy is in the bedroom. Alice my dear you’re bleeding!” she pointed to Alice’s head.

“I slipped in the shower when I heard you knocking. It’s nothing.” She tried to close the door.

“Oh wait, I want to let you know that you should keep your windows shut tonight dear. There is word that there was another break-in here last night just down the hall. If it’s not break-ins it that mad man running around killing people what has this world coming to?”

“Honestly I don’t know?” Alice shook her head as if agreeing with the old lady. “As if anyone in this building has something worthy of stealing or something to hide,” she chuckled and shook her head.

“I don’t know what they were thinking either, but I just wanted to warn you and check to see if you were alright.”

“Well thank you for always looking out for me, I appreciate that. Good night.”

“Good night, dear.”

Stepping out of the shower for the second time that evening she dried off and slipped into her soft cotton nightgown. The hamper with the decapitated head had to be thrown out. It was for the best; the thing was starting to smell. She didn’t need to attract unwanted attention. As for her two uninvited guests she had disposed of them after her chat with the nosy Mrs. Hilroy. Pushing her basket of clean laundry aside she sank down into her soft sofa and flicked on the news.

It was going to be sunny tomorrow, which was good she wanted to get out for a drive anyways.

“Live breaking news, two more victims of the Madison’s Serial Killer have just been discovered! Mike and Allen Brown, two brothers who were under suspicion of being the cat burglars were brutally killed tonight ...”

“Brutally my ass,” Alice spat. “You guys are on the ball tonight; it had only happened a few hours ago.”

“The only identification that was left behind was their fingerprints. The serial killer has taken on a different twist here tonight. This is the first time he has killed two victims in one evening. But the police are certain that it’s the same guy, off the record. Why these two men? Who knows? Harold Matthews found their bodies when he was taking out the garbage. Just like the other bodies, Mike and Allen were cut up and their heads are missing!”

“How else would they fit into the bags,” she scoffed. Feeling a little smug she leaned over the side of the sofa. Beside the sofa the Brown brother’s heads were staring up at her

blankly within two green plastic garbage bags. The bags sat in an old beaten-up cardboard box.

“Now did you gentlemen even feel a thing?”

Shaking her head, “No, no I didn’t think so. Maybe you should call up the cops and tell them.” She laughed at that one as she sipped her hot chocolate. She began a file in her head for Harold Mathews she would be seeing him soon. She wondered if he saw anything, she was careful. Wasn’t she? Yes, she was always very, very careful. Well, she would soon find out. Alice smiled as she settled in for a cozy evening with the boys.