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Paradox Killer

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The lavender and lilacs fragrance in the air, felt relaxing and comforting. Something caused him to wake, he didn't know what it was, but his heavy eyelids fought it. It had been a long day, work was stressful they were working on a big deal, if it went through, they would be on easy street, and if it didn't, they would be homeless. Jack didn't have to worry, it was what he did for a living, he could do it in his sleep, he was just that good. Sighing heavily, his eyes sliding close, he noted there was a body lying next to him, it was his wife. They have been married for 12 years and had a daughter that was five. Judy was the love of his life, and their sweet daughter Lily gave them both more joy than either of them expected. The room felt cool and inviting, slowly he drifted back to the edge of sleep.

Something dropped on his head and began crawling inside his left ear. He swatted at it to knock it away but then his eyes popped wide open as he felt it borrowed itself aggressively inside his ear. Sitting up he dug his finger in after it. Too late, he screamed as it broke his eardrum and continued its mission to his brain.

His wife jumped up in alarm. The world around him went dark.

Jumping up he dug a finger in his ear, nothing. He turned his lamp on. Jack frantically searched his bed, brushing his body to make sure there wasn't a bug on him. Swallowing hard, he realized it was only a dream.

“What the fuck?” he whispered to himself. Shaking his head he got up and went to the bathroom. Turning the light on, the bright light burned his eyes. He tried to calm his nerves, it was just a dream, not real. He was never a fan of insects but that felt so real.

Flushing the toilet and washing his hands he looked in the mirror, checking for a bug or bugs, on his head or clothes. Nothing. It was just a dream he tried to calm himself down.

“It was just a dream.” Sucking air in and looking at himself in the mirror he shook his head. “Just a dream,” he mumbled.

Stumbling back into his bedroom he checked the bed, lifting the pillows and searching the sheets. Nothing. He was never married, nor had any kids. He slept alone.

“Just a dream,” sighing he sat on the edge of his bed. Reaching for the light to turn it off he paused. His hand dropped back to his body, rolling back into bed, he left the light on as he restlessly drifted back to sleep.

“Babe, they said the Paradox Killer struck again.” His wife called him. “Jack did you hear me?”

“Yeah babe,” he poked his head out as he brushed his teeth to show Martha that he was listening.

“This guy they estimated has killed over 400 versions of the same guy in parallel universes. That is insane, I bet the number is higher.”

He ducked back into the bathroom to rinse and spit in the sink. Placing the toothbrush back in the holder he gave himself the once over and wiped his mouth on the towel. Flicking the light off he came back into the bedroom. “I get that they think he’s crazy. And his motive is to make himself stronger. That’s all subjective. There’s no proof. Where do they get these ideas?”

“They have proof babe. Scientists have looked into it. The guy might be on to something. It’s too bad he won’t be able to prove it.”

“Once the Inter Polo get him, he’s done for. He has broken so many laws.” Jack shook his head. The Inter Polo was the nick name for the Interdimensional Police Force, that monitored and tried to keep things in order. It had been decades ago that they had discovered interdimensional jumping, travelling from one universe to another was like walking into a room. It was a bit of mayhem at first, people traveling to other universes, but government soon put a stop to it and halted all interdimensional travel when they claimed such travel was causing a rift that would fracture our very existence if it continued.

“Yes, but it’s brilliant in theory.”

“He murdered over 400 and probably more that they haven’t even counted yet.”

“Maybe.”

He crawled into bed next to his wife. “Do you really think the theory has any merit?”

“I do.”

“Why hasn’t anyone tried it before now?”

“Who says no one hasn’t?” she raised an eyebrow.

“We would have heard about it.”

“Would we?”

He looked over at his wife. She was in a mood tonight. It had to be with this Paradox Killer; she loved these stories. A bit morbid for his taste.

“I told you about my grandfather, right?”

He remembered the story, her grandfather was supposed to have jumped dimensions and killed ever version of her, and it made her stronger in this dimension. She was a sickly child and

outgrew her childhood illness. She attributed it to her grandfather making sacrifices to save her. Did her grandfather kill a bunch of people to save her? He doubted it was possible. Obviously, the Paradox Killer had a similar theory as her grandfather had. All science fiction, no fact.

“Yes, you did.”

“Did you take your meds?”

“Yes, before I brushed my teeth babe.” He leaned over and kissed her cheek.

“Get some rest love.” She bent over and kissed his temple. “You know I would do anything for you babe.”

“I know,” he mumbles as his eyelids closed.

Jack woke up again; this time he felt like there was someone in his room. First the nightmare about a bug, then some crazy Paradox Killer on the news. Why was he having these nightmares.

He didn’t have anything nearby that he could use as a weapon. He lay there quietly and tried to breathe normally. Maybe he was being paranoid? He cautiously looked around his dark room. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary.

Then out of the corner of his eye by the bedroom closet he noticed a shadow moving. He turned the light on and jumped out of his bed as the shadowy figure launched themselves at him.

Wide-eyed, a slim figure dressed all in black wearing a ski mask looked up at him with their clear blue eyes. His racing heart urged him to flee. Stumbling over his own feet he raced for the bedroom door. The intruder was hot on his heels as he raced down the hall pausing in the kitchen he grabbed a large sharp knife from the knife holder.

“Who are you?”

The intruder paused, then lunged at him ducking and jabbing him in the stomach with something sharp and unseen.

He grabbed the counter for support and felt warm liquid leaking from his body down his leg.

“Why?” he gasped as he sunk down to the cold tiled floor.

The intruder bent over and wiped her knife on his shirt. “Because. Just because.”

Her voice sounded familiar, but where? Where did he hear that voice? In a dream, a dream where he had a wife who was watching the news about a killer. No! Was it real? The world slowly went dark.

He crawled into bed beside his wife.

“Did you take your meds?”

“Yes, babe I did.”

“You’ve been looking better lately. How do you feel?”

“I don’t know, it’s weird I’ve been feeling stronger.”

“Must be those smoothies I’ve been making you.”

He nodded, they were horrible and he drank them every morning because his wife insisted.

“Get some rest husband.” She leaned over and kissed his temple.