Untitled

Hunter Jones

Night. Around three o’clock. A young woman sharply awoke from her slumber. A noise. A muffled voice permeating the walls of her formerly tranquil sanctuary. Alone in the house, she crept forth into the hall, less confident than the noise itself. Shy- though in her own house. Her safe haven. Now, her fear. She did not know what would lie ahead. The whisper grew louder. She was nearing the source, and she could tell. Not solely because she could hear the whisper loudening, but because she could physically feel it. An overwhelming, oppressive feeling. Like she was underwater in a sea of malice. She felt a sense of evil. Of anger not her own- as though something was in her mind, inflicting its wrath from within. She resisted the fear and crept on. Down the stairs she went.

The whisper became more and more defined as she went on. Sharp words. Hurried. She could not yet understand what was being said, said from within the shadows. As she grew closer to the shadows from which the fury came, the words became clear. The voice itself, she discovered, was child-like in tone. Two voices speaking at once. Their ravings facsimile, though their tones not. Whispered, sharp words. As though the shadows were accusing her of something. Drawing closer to the shadow, she began to realize that it was moving. Pulsing. Almost rhythmic with breath. It rose, fearless, to face her. She saw a creature born from chaos, a demonic entity built from fear. Cries for help failed, caught in her throat.

The creature whispered its words forcefully, almost hissing them, spasms haunting the creature, twitching as it struck emphasis upon its words. Some hissed louder than others. She suddenly broke from the cloud of fear that encircled her mind. She realized what it was hissing so furiously. Latin. Gregorian chants. The creature hissed the words of monks. Holiness from within evil. Reciting the words which pain its existence, hissing in fury as it preaches its own suffering. It stumbled forward, slowly, but with intent. Its knees misshapen, backward, cracking as it moved. It knew she was there. It was its house, not hers.

She was watching him suffer. Intruding. It lurched forth from the shadows. Its large, slim body leaping forward like a predator onto its prey. She closed her eyes in fear. It had taken her. She struggled beneath his weight but to no avail. She opened her eyes and was staring into its face. A face wrought with anguish. Two circular, black pits that were once eyes. Now bottomless pits stained with blood. Two black circles on a pale, white body. Its mouth was a jagged, bleeding smile that was carved up the sides of its face. It opened its bloody maw, screaming. Black liquid poured from its mouth like rain, infecting her very soul with its evil. Before the darkness overtook her, she saw the creature’s body melting into hers. Dull pain. Blackness. Nothing.

She awoke, slowly. Quiet. Tranquility piercing the chaos broiling inside of her. She was unaware of the evil. It had become unnoticeable, concealed within the normality. Nightmarish. She was convinced it wasn’t real. She touched her face, attempting to feel reality. She touched something. That something touched back, crawling quickly away and into a nearby crack in the wall. Its identity was a vague concept of something organic. She hadn’t felt it until after the scurrying beast departed, but there was a thin film of a formerly liquid substance on her face. She got up. She walked to the bathroom. The light was on. Convenient. She looked in the mirror. It was a dark, thin layer of dried liquid. She turned on the faucet and cupped her hands, allowing them to fill with cleanliness. Her head bowed, she splashed the water upon her face and peeled off the dark substance. She stood upright and back into her reflection. She was clean. She saw something else. A small, red scratch in the corners of her mouth. She watched in fear as the scratches deepened, becoming cuts through her pristine cheek.

They lengthened, bleeding profusely, until they reached just below her eyes. Eyes. They had become entirely black. As she watched, her reflection became that of the bleeding man. It was just a dream. Just an illusion. Just a hallucination. She turned around to exit the bathroom and there was a noose hanging from the ceiling above her bathtub. It was frayed, as if it had been used. She looked down into the bathtub and it was stained red.

Frantic, in her mad dash for the exit, she caught a glimpse of something hanging from the noose. A man-like figure. Eyelids gone. Unblinking eyes staring into hers. Blood pouring from his mouth. In an instant, it was gone. She had turned her head back around to where the noose was, but it wasn’t there. The bathtub- pristine. As though never used.

Her mind broken, her thoughts sporadic. She felt a growing warmth coming from within her. It began as a dull heat, steadily increasing in severity. It was an unbearable pain. She dropped to the ground, writhing in agony. She could feel her heart beating rapidly, as though it were trying to force its way out. She could hear two simultaneous voices hissing their demonic holiness. Louder and louder as they grew near.

Upon the striking of each emphasized syllable, her torso lurched. As though something was trying to break free. Voices loudened. Hisses sharpened. Heartbeats strengthened. The growing heat inside of her overwhelmed her body and broke free. Black liquid spewed from her mouth, her back arching as the darkness sprang forth. Pale. Dying. A shadow crept over top her body.

The evil within her, feeding off of her being, manifested at last. The creature. The pale, soulless body, spawned from malice. It approached to feed. It had grown, her essence fueling his, her entirety plunging into the infinite darkness. It fed. It took the last of her body and engulfed it.

The sight – her last – of the man’s bloody smile, the gaping pits that would have been eyes. He faded. Back to the purgatory from whence he came. Enshrouded in mystery, only to return to reap the living for their essence. His hedonism, cloaked in death, took her. Nothing was left of her. She was gone.