

DAIRY SCREAMER

(a.k.a. Milk'n'Toast)

by  
Walt N. O'Thor

BLACKNESS

AL (V.O.)

Good evening. My name is Owin. Al Owin. I know, my parents couldn't resist calling me Al. Anyway, I'm lucky. I have the most wonderful job in the world: I'm a milkman.

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET - HOUSE - DAYBREAK

An old white truck is parked in front of a large house. On its side, red large letters announce:

CASPER'S MILK'N'TOAST

The house front door opens and AL, a casual man in his mid-thirties, appears. He wears a white overall and a cap. In his hand, he has two empty milk bottles.

AL (V.O.)

My life is a succession of pleasures. You cannot imagine how many--

Through the half-open door, a YOUNG WOMAN is readjusting her blouse top button and smiles at Al.

AL (V.O.)

--desperate housewives are longing to be loved and cherished. Maybe it's the uniform. I don't know. Every day was exactly the same as the day before. My tour included thirty-three clients. Mostly women. It was a real dream job.

The young woman tosses her hair in a seductive way.

AL

(to the woman)

Have a nice day, Mrs. Clemens.

As the door closes, Al steps to his truck, happily whistling, puts the empty bottles in the back, and gets in the truck, slamming the door.

INT. TRUCK - DAYBREAK

Al takes a clipboard and checks it out.

AL (V.O.)

My life was real clockwork. Up at five every day, I was meeting my boss, Casper. Casper's great idea was to deliver bread along with the milk.

INT. CASPER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A small office. Facing Al is CASPER (55), his boss. Casper is a greasy big fat man, seated in his armchair, and chewing gum.

AL (V.O.)

Casper was looking like Jabba the Hut, except everyone could understand what he says.

CASPER

Here's your today schedule. Some changes.

He hands Al a clipboard.

Al checks it out and turns to Casper with goggled eyes. Casper gets up and takes Al to his office door.

CASPER

Jonathan's ill. You'll have part of his tour today.

AL (V.O.)

That day, I knew my desperate Mrs. Clemens' husband was away.

AL

But, Casper-- I-- I can't do mine and half of his?

CASPER

Sandy will do half of yours and of his today. That's all.

AL

But Cas--

Casper turns his back.

AL (V.O.)

Casper wouldn't hear anymore. I had no choice.

Casper walks back to his office, swaying like a mollusk, and chewing his perpetual gum.

Al stays wordless, staring at him. He looks down to his clipboard.

AL (V.O.)  
Mrs. Clemens, of course, was not  
in my tour that day.

Casper turns back to Al.

A smile lights Al's face up.

CASPER  
By the way, Al. You'll see the  
lady on 3311 Crescent Hill and  
ask her about her bill. She's one  
month late.

Casper closes his office door.

Disappointed, Al's face wears now a grimace, imitating  
Casper's characteristic way of chewing.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Al's truck slowly drives through foggy streets.

AL (V.O.)  
The morning was dark, cold, and  
foggy.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL HOUSE STREET - NIGHT

Al gets into his truck, switches the light on, and checks  
his list.

AL (V.O.)  
Next visit was for the lady who  
owed us a quite impressive bill.

EXT. LARGE OLD HOUSE STREET - NIGHT

Al's truck drives on a lonely street and finally faces a  
large old house.

AL (V.O.)  
No doubt, that lady was wealthy.  
And maybe--  
(kinky)  
--lonely. Who wouldn't be in a  
such place?

Al stops the truck and gets off. He opens the truck back door.

AL (V.O.)  
My luck was complete. Not only  
her place was out of the world,  
but she used to have a whole rack  
of milk. What could she do with  
so much?

Al pulls a bottle-rack with full bottles out of the truck and carries it. Pain can be seen on his face.

AL (V.O.)  
I knew now why Jonathan was ill.  
(chuckling)  
Ill but not stupid.

Painfully, Al walks the path up to the large house. Every light is on.

Al reaches the porch.

EXT. LARGE OLD HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

Al checks his note pad.

AL (V.O.)  
Instructions were to slip the  
bottle through a cat-hole.

Al puts the bottle-rack down on the porch floor and rings the doorbell.

AL (V.O.)  
But, today, she'll have to pay  
for her milk.

No answer.

Al rings again.

Still no answer.

AL (V.O.)  
Well. She surely won't pay today.  
What could I do? I just couldn't  
force the door, enter the house,  
and say: "Hi, Ma'am.

AL(cont'd)

I'm here for your \$236 bill." We,  
milkmen, we do have ethics.

Al squats and takes the bottles out from the rack to slip them through the cat-hole. But he hears a glass noise and cannot push the bottle any farther.

AL (V.O.)

Something weird happened. The  
bottle knocked against something.

Al takes the bottle out of the cat-hole, kneels, and looks through the hole, his face on the floor.

AL (V.O.)

There were already other milk  
bottles.

Al stands up and rings again. He checks something on his clipboard and puts it on the bottle-rack.

AL

(calling out)

Mrs. Shuey!! Mrs. Shuey!! I'm Al  
from Casper's Milk'n'Toast! Al,  
your milkman!

He bangs on the front door.

AL

(calling)

Mrs. Shuey! I'm here for your  
milk!

Suddenly, a noise can be heard inside the house.

AL

(calling)

Mrs. Shuey! I know you're here!

No answer.

AL

(calling)

Mrs. Shuey! If you can't pay your  
bill, no big deal! We can wait a  
bit longer!

Another noise inside the house.

AL

(calling)

Are you okay, Mrs. Shuey?!

Al starts to worry.

AL (V.O.)  
 She started to freak me out. The  
 place was really sinister.

One bottle of milk still in hand, Al turns around the old large house and reaches the kitchen back door. He puts his nose on the door window, and tries to discern inside through the lace curtain.

AL (V.O.)  
 Everything looked quiet.

Suddenly, the door slightly opens.

AL (V.O.)  
 I didn't realize the door was  
 open.

Al pushes the door and stays on the threshold.

AL  
 Mrs. Shuey?

INT. LARGE OLD HOUSE - NIGHT

Inquisitive, Al enters the kitchen.

AL  
 Mrs. Shuey?!

Everything is perfectly in order, well-groomed, and of good taste.

AL (V.O.)  
 The house was quiet. But I felt a  
 spooky presence. As if someone  
 was watching me. Someone I  
 couldn't see.

Al stops in the center of the kitchen, scanning around.

SOMEONE P.O.V. IS WATCHING AL IN HIS EVERY MOVE

Al steps to another room.

AL (V.O.)  
 The living room was lighted.

In the large living room stuffed with out of time furnishings, an old rocking chair is turned to a extinct fireplace. Al peeps inside the room.

AL  
 Mrs. Shuey?

Al hears a cracking in his back.

AL (V.O.)  
Suddenly, I felt someone in my  
back. I turned back and faced--

A lovely KITTEN is toddling along to him. The kitten mews  
and begins to rub against Al's leg.

AL  
(gently)  
Hi kitty. Where's your mom? Are  
you alone in the house?

The purring kitten keeps rubbing and Al lowers his hand to  
caress him. Quicker than Hell, the kitten hisses and claws  
him.

Al takes his hand out, screaming.

AL  
Take it easy, pal. I won't hurt  
you.

Al looks at his hand. A deep scratch is starting to bleed.  
The kitten keeps rubbing his body against Al's leg. Then,  
as if anything had never happen, the animal beelines in the  
staircase.

AL  
Hey!

He's gone.

Al steps closer to the rocking chair.

AL  
Mrs. Shuey?

His hand slowly reaches the chair back and turns it to him  
to find: a coiled up SLEEPING CAT.

The animal barely opens an eye and stares at Al. His black  
and white fur is moiré under the electric light.

Suddenly, another noise is heard on the second floor.

Al raises his head to the ceiling, intrigued.

AL (V.O.)  
I was sure something was going on  
upstairs.

After a careful wait, his bottle of milk still in hand, Al  
crosses to the stairs, starts up, slowly, guardedly,  
placing a foot squarely on each step to test it for squeaks  
or groans before placing his full weight on it.

He looks up to the upper floor.

AL  
Mrs. Shuey? I'm your milkman. Al.

Al is coming up the stairs. As he climbs, he is startled by the creaks and groans of the old wood of the steps.

With his feline walk, the black and white cat is silently padding behind him.

AL (V.O.)  
I was halfway up, when I smelled something.

Al frowns and knits his nose, but keeps on climbing.

He pauses at the head of the stair. The door on his right is closed. To his left is another door, half-open.

Directly before him is a third door, closed. He holds a long moment, trying to picture in his mind which room would look out, decides, chooses the correct door.

AL (V.O.)  
I figured myself in the tale,  
expecting to find a tiger behind  
one of these doors.

Al goes to the half-open door and knocks lightly.

AL  
Mrs. Shuey?

There is quiet for a moment, then Al pushes the door. He stands on the threshold, looking in at the bedroom, instantly disturbed by it.

It is ornate, damask-and-mahogany, thick and warm and ripe, an olla podrida of furnishings and bric-a-brac of the last century.

Almost chilled, Al's expression indicates an impulse to close the door and go away from this room forever.

Feeling once again a presence on his back, he turns his head and faces the black and white cat. He's an old male weighing about twenty pounds.

He gazes at Al with his almond-like green eyes, looking like sizing him up.

AL (V.O.)  
His eyes were fascinating me. I  
was like hypnotized. Don't ask me  
why, I followed him.

His tail up, the black and white cat toddles along the hallway to an ajar door at the end of the floor. Al follows him.

The smell seems increasingly unbearable.

Al calls a harsh, frightened whisper.

AL  
Mrs. Shuey?

The cat disappears behind the door. Al pushed it. He is standing in the doorway, staring at the bathroom in sick dismay.

On the tiled floor, an OLD WOMAN is laid down, her face turned to Al. Her face now truly rotted and ghastly, is covered with a spiderweb of deep dried bloody cuts.

She has no more eyes and a part of her cheek has been eaten. She's pretty much dried out, a third of her face gone revealing a grinning skull.

Her blouse is torn open and her guts has been eaten too.

Her hand is still holding a small pillbox.

She is surrounded by about twenty cats. Some are sleeping against her. Two of them are fighting for a piece of human flesh.

AL (V.O.)  
Now, I understood the awful  
smell.

Nauseating, Al steps back to vomit and drops his bottle of milk on the tiled floor. The glass shatters and the white liquid splashes everywhere.

Every cat now stares at Al. The black and white seems to be their leader. He hisses.

In a surge of panic and his struggle to contain it, Al keeps stepping back in the hallway. He slowly turns back when he realizes his way out is blocked by another bunch of twenty threatening cats.

From both sides, cats wildly screech and bound onto Al as one.

Al takes his cap and waves it in front of him to chase to cats away. One of them jumps up his leg, grabs it, thrusting his claws in the trousers.

Al screams and kicks in the air to make him leave.

AL (V.O.)  
They were everywhere.

Al succeeds taking the cat out his leg and rushes through the feline bunch. He reaches the top of the stairs.

But, there, his foot bumps against the kitten and he staggers down the whole of the staircase. He frantically gropes for the balustrade as he goes down the stairs.

Al hasn't the time to recover that the cats hurl onto him, yowling.

One of them claws Al at the face under the eye.

Al screams and gets up in a jump. Limping, he rushes down the rest of the steps and crosses the hall.

Running scared, he cannot stop when his feet roll on the full bottles of milk left the days before.

Al crashes on the floor, smashing some of the bottles. One piece of glass is thrust into one of his hands, piercing the flesh. Al screams in pain.

His blood mixes with the pool of milk.

Al hears then the clink of the cats' claws running down the stairs and coming to him. He gets up and takes a bottle shard, facing the cats.

AL  
Come on suckers! Come to daddy!

Cornered against the locked main door and surrounded, Al clenches the shard in his bloody hand.

Facing him, about forty hissing and ruffling cats are slowly getting closer.

AL (V.O.)  
I was doomed.

On his lacerated face, sweat is mixed with blood. One of his eyes is nervously winking. He desperately scans the hall.

On his left, the living room. Facing him, the stairs and the hallway leading to the kitchen. On his right, a closed door.

Al makes one step ahead. Guessing he is trying to make his way to the kitchen, the cats hiss and gather, blocking his way.

AL (V.O.)  
I had one last chance.

Al suddenly kicks one bottle towards the cats and rushes to the closed door on his right, kicking some cats on his way.

His bloody hand grabs the knob, turns it, and--

the door opens.

INT. LARGE OLD HOUSE - DAYBREAK

Al enters a small library where a piano is standing in the middle. He closes back the door, but several paws prevent him to close it completely.

Al stabs the paws with his shard and finally succeeds in locking the door.

He can hear the claws grating on the wooden door and the cats' meowing.

Al sprints to the piano and pushes it against the door, blocking it.

AL  
(triumphantly)  
Screw you, you degenerate mouse  
eaters!!

That's at this precise moment that Al notices the smell and something on the floor, emerging from behind a large plant.

A FOOT

Horror can be read on Al's face.

He slowly advances to discover a whole body in the same state as the corpse upstairs. This time, this is a YOUNG MAN with a gray-blue mailman uniform.

His face and a part of his leg have been eaten.

Trying to get over his fear and his repugnance, Al rushes to the windows.

They're all barred.

Outside, the first sunlight appears in the sky.

Then, slowly, Al turns to the door with horror.

Under the piano, one by one, the cats are entering the room through a cat-hole.

AL (V.O.)  
By the way. Did I forget to tell  
you--

FADE OUT:

BLACKNESS

AL (V.O.)  
--I was dead?

The end