Cold Alone
by
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INT. UNIVERSITY - AUDITORIUM - DAY

Professor DAVID BLOCKER (45), geeky, bespectacled little man, commands the middle of the room, facing the scattered students.

DAVID
On that night take a black cat, reach an intersection of three roads and wait for a man in black. Hand him the cat, tell him your wish and leave. The wish will come true.

The class giggles.

David strides nervously to the left of the room as he speaks to the class.

DAVID
Yep, a fable, but people reportedly do it. The cynics even. Another one - my favorite.

Excited, he strides to the other end of the room.

DAVID
On that same night, October thirty first, the ones from the underworld come alive. But only for one night.

Dreamy look washes over his face.

DAVID
Yep, even the most cynical... We used to joke about it. My wife asked me to put a phone inside her casket... I did. I turned it off completely, so the night of the 31 she'll power it on and give me a call.

Muffled laughing in class.

DAVID
Pretty funny I suppose. Do I believe it? Of course not. It used to be an inside joke in our family. But joking aside, people believe it when cornered.

One of the boys, GUY (20s) sniggers.

DAVID
Yep, I'd laugh with you if I could. Guy, right?
Guy nods.

DAVID
You've got unusual name. You know according to some philosophies there's power in a name. Take Kabalarian - I'm David, my deceased wife was Carol. Both mean inventive mind and factual understanding of the mysteries of life. ...Yet I placed a phone inside her coffin.

The bell rings. Students rise.

DAVID
Your assignment is...

Students roll eyes and exit in a hurry. David rushes after them.

DAVID
Bring something I haven't heard of. Impossible, but do your best. Impress me.
(mutters under his breath)
God knows she did. Everyday.

INT. STUDY - DAVID'S HOUSE - DAY

David sips coffee in front of his computer. He's in the middle of posting a picture to his facebook page under a "Happy Halloween from Carol and me" status. It's a picture of a 40 something lady and himself.

The arrow hovers over "post". He clicks on it - the picture is out. His lips stretch in a smile. Someone writes "idiot" and "weirdo" under his status.

The comments keep arriving - Leena "My daughter passed away, how can you be so insensitive". David responds "She's my wife and I love her very much. Hence is the picture".

David sighs. He rises, walks to the door and opens it.

DAVID
Mom, do we have decaff? Are you home? Mother?

He hears laughter coming from the outside.
He walks to the window, glances out and sees a group of old ladies, dressed in Halloween animal costumes with trick or treat baskets in hands. They giggle and trot toward the neighboring house.

DAVID
Oh my God, woman. At this age...

He goes back to his computer, stares at it. Eventually he grabs the mouse, deletes the picture from his home page.

He's about to shut down his computer when a new post appears on his page. It's from Carol and it reads "Cold". He shivers.

DAVID
Carol?

Almost immediately comments appear under it "prick" "weirdo" and another one from Leena "leave her spirit alone, I beg of you".

David frowns. He writes "Hey, who's got the password to Carol's account? It's not me posting".

He stares at the monitor, his breathing intense.

Another "Cold" appears on his page. David's forehead sweats. He wipes it with the palm of his hand.

He dials a number.

DAVID
Mom? Hey. Do you have Carol's password to her facebook page? It's a network. Oh, forget it. Sorry, please continue with whatever you're doing.

He hangs up, stares at his homepage.

Another status from Carol "Dark". David dials another number.

DAVID
Hey, Leena. It's not me, I swear, I never had Carol's password. Listen, you know about the phone in her grave, right?

Leena shouts something at David, then there's a dial tone - Leena hang up on him. David whispers.

DAVID
Yes, I'm a moron.
He checks his facebook page again, sees several statuses from Carol. "Cold". "Dark"."Dave". "Dave?"

David closes his eyes, rubs his forehead. The land phone rings. David doesn't answer. It goes to the message machine.

DAVID AND CAROL (ON PHONE)
(giggling)
Hey, it's Carol and David. No David and Carol. Ok doesn't matter. We are not home. Or maybe we're just too busy making love. Either way, we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

Beep. It's Leena on the other end of the line.

LEENA (O.S.)
(shouting)
Pick up the phone, I know you're home.
And get rid of a damn greeting. My daughter is dead. As in gone forever!

David presses on intercom.

DAVID
Hey, Leena. You could call my cell.

LEENA (O.S.)
I erased your number. Why would you post for her? That tops it all.

David lifts the receiver, takes it off the intercom.

DAVID
Once again - it's not me posting.
I'm actually thinking it's you.

Leena shouts something back.

DAVID
Give me time, okay?

Leena hangs up on him.

David shrugs, puts the receiver down.

He grabs the mouse and thinks. Under Carol's comments, he writes "Carol? Are you there?"

His hand hovers over post. He sweats profusely. And posts. He waits, but there are no more posts from Carol.
His phone rings. The screen reads "Carol". David holds his breath. He answers.

    DAVID
    Who is it?

There's heavy breathing on the other side of the line.

    DAVID
    Carol? Is that you?

No one answers.

    DAVID
    I'm going to hang up now.

He hangs up. And waits. There's another call. From Carol. David flips the phone open and listens. It's just heavy breathing. Then a gurgle. That alarms David.

    DAVID
    Carol? What's going on?

There's another gurgle, as if someone drowns. David rises.

    DAVID
    Carol? Hold on, honey, I'm coming.

David rushes out.

INT. DAVID'S GARAGE – NIGHT

A new sedan parked inside. David opens the door. He finds several shovels in the garage. Shoves them inside the car. He shuffles in, reaches for the garage opener. The door slides up.

    DAVID
    Come on.

David finds his phone. He dials a number.

    DAVID
    Guy? It's professor Blocker. Might sound weird but listen, could you help me dig something up? Like a hundred bucks, two, two hundreds. Grades guaranteed, whatever. Westchase cemetery. ...Scary? Aren't you twenty or something? Well, thanks for being totally useless.

He hangs up, starts the car.
EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

Eerie dark.

David digs next to a tombstone that reads "Carol Blocker (1973-2014). Beloved wife. If tears could build a stairway, and memories a lane, I'd walk right up to heaven and bring you home again".

David works methodically. He stops and looks down the dug up hole. It appears to be almost done. He plunges the shovel again - it hits the casket. David kneels down, smiles.

He hears footsteps and looks up.

A deformed Man stands across the grave from him. The man bends toward David and smells him. David shudders.

He staggers up to his feet, steps back away from the Man.

DAVID
What are you? What do you want?

David flinches from foul smell coming from the Man.

The Man grabs David's shoulder. David looks at the hand - the bluish nails are filled with dirt.

DAVID
Hey, get away from me.

David tries to get away, but the Man doesn't let go. His nails plunge deep into David's shoulder. The shoulder bleeds.

David screams, falls.

DAVID
Goodness, I'm bleeding.

The Man takes off his mask. A friendly face smiles at David - it's Guy.

GUY
Relax, it's fake blood.

DAVID
What do you want here?

GUY
I came to help. What are you up to?
DAVID
You're late, I don't need you anymore. Go, scram. I mean it.

Guy shrugs.

GUY
Is it because I scared you? I'm sorry about that.

He points at the dug up hole.

GUY
Is that your wife's grave?

DAVID
Go away. Please. Leave us alone.

GUY
Us? Who else is here?

David's hand grips the shovel. He lifts it. Guy's eyes open wide.

DAVID
Leave. I mean it. I'm serious, do as I say.

Guy lifts hands in mock surrender.

GUY
Okay, chill, dude. I'm going.

Guy leaves.

David waits for Guy's footsteps to die down.

David wipes the sweat off his forehead and descends inside the hole. He cleans up what's left of a little dirt off the top of the coffin.

DAVID
I'm here, Carol. Hang on there.

He tries to move the lid open but can't. He tries again and... The lid gives in. David opens it up and sees...

Nothing inside except for Carol's phone. The foul smell makes him flinch. He picks up the phone. It's powered.

DAVID
Carol?

He buries his head into his arms and groans.
He hears a rustle. He lifts his head, listens. Another rustle. David peeks out of the hole, but sees nothing.

DAVID
Who is there?

He climbs out, then...

Sees her. CAROL (40s) stands above the grave. She's pale, her hair gray and sticky, her dress stained and dirty.

He gives her a look over.

DAVID
My goodness. I thought I'd never see you again.

He stares at her for a moment. Then... strokes her cheek. He inches to embrace her but she pulls away. She looks at his bleeding shoulder with dead-like eyes.

DAVID
Don't worry about it. One of the students played a joke on me.

She appears frail and almost falls. David sits her down. She obeys. He points at her phone.

DAVID
You posted. Thank heavens for that.

Carol's phone is on. Her finger hovers over her posts on FB homepage. "Cold", "Dark", "Miss you".

DAVID
If it's been a text, I wouldn't believe it. I'd think someone's got your phone or something. But posting on social network - you know I know that no one knows your password - it's brilliant.

She stares at him with her cold eyes and he flinches.

DAVID
You're brilliant.

He looks her over, grabs her hand and squeezes it. She leans in to smell his shoulder.

DAVID
It's not blood, lets not waste on it what little time we have left. There's so much to talk about. I...

(MORE)
DAVID (CONT'D)
It's been rough six months. I had a fight with your Mom. Seriously, Leena is nuts. She monitors my internet activity. Last week she visited me at work asking me to find someone.

Carol doesn't seem to be listening. She points at his phone. He flicks it on.

She goes to his facebook page and points at her posts. "Dark".

DAVID
I couldn't believe it was you at first. I should have.

She doesn't answer, doesn't even shake her head. Her finger moves to another post "Cold". David takes of his jacket and wraps it around her shoulders.

DAVID
Here. Better now?

He gazes lovingly at her.

DAVID
When I saw the empty casket my heart dropped. It's like... like you cheated on me. ...You never did. And I promise I'll never be with anyone--

She cups his mouth with a palm of her hand, he pulls her hand away and continues.

DAVID
I can never love another. ...What If we go home for the night?

She nods. David smiles and leans in for a kiss, but she pulls away. Then, Carol garbs her phone from his hands and throws it away.

DAVID
Just you and me, no messaging, no calls. You're brilliant, as always.

He throws away his phone and rises. He helps her up.

Carol points toward the open casket. David doesn't know what to make of it.

She points toward the casket again.
DAVID
I don't understand...

Carol pushes him inside the casket.

He falls flat on his face.

DAVID
Ouch. What's going on? Carol? We were supposed to go home.

Carol jumps in and lands on top of David. She shuts the lid of the casket.

DAVID (O.S.)
Let me out. No. Carol, please. I'm not ready. I... I love my work, I live for it. In fact, Guy here just came to help me dig you up. I was teaching them historical value of fables and...

There's a hiss inside the casket.

DAVID (O.S.)
Come on, Carol, please. I don't want to die. Help! Help me! Guy, you there?! Somebody, please!

CAROL (O.S.)
(hissing)
Cold alone.

David's muffled screams can be heard inside--

Until the sounds die down.

FADE OUT.