

IT WAS DARK AND STORMY

by

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[SFX: HEAVY RAIN AND WIND OUTSIDE. DOOR OPENS AND RAIN AND WIND GET LOUDER. DOOR IS SHUT AND SOUNDS OF RAIN AND WIND GO DOWN. CRACK OF LIGHTNING, FOLLOWED BY A ROLL OF THUNDER.]

DAVE
(breathing is ragged)
Let's see if generator is working...

[SFX: LIGHT SWITCH CLICKS ON.]

DAVE (Cont'd)
OK, the light works. Now the phone recorder... good, it's working. But still no bars.
(into phone)
Okay, I made it to the ham shack without drowning. The generator's low on fuel, so I better get on the transmitter.

[SFX: DAVE STEPS TO A TABLE AND FLICKS SOME SWITCHES: WHINE OF RADIO POWERING UP.]

DAVE (Cont'd)
I hope someone's on the ham band...

[SFX: DAVE CHANGES FREQUENCIES AND GETS STATIC, WHISTLING, AND HOWLING. FINALLY GETS A CLEAR CARRIER SIGNAL.]

DAVE (Cont'd)
(into radio)
CQ CQ CQ, this is KA9ZZ. CQ CQ CQ, this is Kilo Alpha Niner Zulu Zulu. Is anyone out there? Anyone?

[SFX: DAVE CHANGES FREQUENCIES AGAIN, GETS CRACKLING ELECTRICAL NOISE, THEN COMES ACROSS A QUIET FREQUENCY.]

DAVE (Cont'd)
CQ CQ CQ, this is Kilo-

[SFX: A BURST OF NOISE INTERRUPTS DAVE. BILLY'S VOICE COMES THROUGH STATICKY.]

BILLY
(filtered)
Hello, hello?

DAVE
Excellent! What's your call sign? You have to follow FCC procedures at all times.

BILLY
(filtered)

Hey, I'm just fooling around with my old lady's rig. If you want "FCC procedures," you'll have to talk to someone else. Bye.

DAVE
No! Fuck procedure. What's your name?

BILLY
(filtered)
I'm Billy. Who the hell are you?

DAVE
Dave Yanez. Yanez Technology?

BILLY
(filtered)
Never heard of it, or you.

DAVE
Yanez Technology is the country's largest builder of Faraday cages -- oh the hell with that. I need you to call the cops.

BILLY
(filtered)
Why? Don't you have a telephone?

DAVE
I'm in the middle of an electrical storm. The cell tower is down. The landline is down. Even my Tesla is down.

[SFX: A LOUD BANGING ON THE ROOF FROM A FLYING TREE BRANCH STARTLES DAVE.]

DAVE (Cont'd)
Shit. Must've been a tree branch...

BILLY
(filtered)
Sounds like you're sorta cut off from the world, Dave Yanez of Yanez Technology. Uh, what's a Faraday cage?

DAVE
It's an electromagnetic-proof enclosure. They protect sensitive electronic equipment. That's how I got into this mess. Look, just call the cops, will you?

BILLY
(filtered)

I don't know you. You may be a crackpot.

DAVE
Yeah, well, listening to my story isn't
likely to convince you otherwise.
(sighs)
I bought an old mansion...

[SFX: CRACK OF LIGHTNING FOLLOWED BY A ROLL
OF THUNDER, LOUDER THAN THE FIRST TIME.]

DAVE (Cont'd)
...and constructed a Faraday cage in each room
of the house.

BILLY
(filtered)
You had fancy equipment in those rooms?

DAVE
Nothing but old furniture, and lots of dust.
(beat)
And a ghost.

BILLY
(filtered)
A ghost.

DAVE
Yeah. I worked on the theory that ghosts get
their energy from electrical fields in the
environment. The Faraday cages were meant to
trap the ghost in one room.

BILLY
(filtered)
Did it work?

DAVE
Oh, yeah.

BILLY
(filtered)
You said it was trapped.

DAVE
The electrical storm knocked out power to the
house and the Faraday cages.

BILLY
(filtered)
But no power, no ghost, right?

DAVE
The ghost got its power from the lightning,
just like in Frankenstein. And now it's after
me. And it's really pissed off. It was
throwing all kinds of junk at me. I think I
got a concussion.

BILLY
(filtered)
Guess he was irritated, alright. By the way,
what were you going to do with this ghost?

DAVE
I was going to put it in an infomercial for
my company. I could've made a killing,
trapping ghosts and selling them.

BILLY
(filtered)
Sounds better than a circus, doesn't it?

DAVE
Absolutely! So that's the story, Billy. Now
would you please call the police?

BILLY
(filtered)
Hold on, partner.

[SFX: LIGHTNING CRACKS AND A THUNDER BOLT
ROCKS THE SHACK. A FEW BEATS OF SILENCE IS
BROKEN BY BILLY'S VOICE, NOW COMING IN
CRYSTAL CLEAR AND VERY NEAR.]

BILLY (Cont'd)
(filtered)
Why don't you answer the door, Dave?

DAVE
What?

[SFX: KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.]

THE END