

MIDNIGHT MANGLER

Written by

David Berkowitz

OVER BLACK:

RADIO DJ (V.O.)

Another hot night out there, but hopefully you all kept their doors and windows locked anyway. Police are no closer to finding this Midnight Mangler, so I hope you stayed home and kept safe.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAWN

A WOMAN (25), club wear glittering in the streetlights, walks quickly past rows of tenements, the click-click of her heels echoing in the quiet of pre-dawn.

Far behind her, a MAN in a trench coat leaves the shadow of a stairwell and follows, matching her pace.

The Woman turns slightly as if sensing his presence. Her pace quickens further.

The Man widens his steps, matching her pace.

The Woman hastily crosses the street. She races up the steps of a tenement and turns. The Man is nowhere to be seen.

She retrieves her keys and unlocks the door. She opens it and steps into--

INT. TENEMENT HALLWAY - DAWN

She peers out one more time. Satisfied, she closes and locks the door and walks down the dimly-lit hallway to her door.

INT. APARTMENT - DAWN

The Woman enters and closes the door behind her, locking the dead bolt and the door chain.

She collapses into a threadbare stuffed chair, kicking her shoes off.

Behind her, the street-facing window silently slides open. Oblivious, she rubs her feet as the Man climbs through.

The Woman closes her eyes and smiles at some memory. The creak of a floorboard makes her eyes snap open in alarm.

Too late. A carving knife plunges into her stomach, buried to the hilt.

She gasps as the Man over her withdraws the knife and stabs again and again, faster and faster, turning her garment into blood-soaked tatters.

The Man, breathing heavily, leaves the knife lodged in her chest. He falls back, leaning against a stained wall, and we get our first good look at him. Good physique, bald, crooked teeth, scarred hands from long-healed cuts.

He smiles, euphoric, enjoying the feeling.

He sees a red scarf hanging from a hook on the door. He wraps it around his hands and pulls it taut, like a garrote. He nods in satisfaction and goes to the window.

WOMAN (O.S.)

You picked the wrong woman, hon.

The Man turns, bewildered. The Woman stands before him, knife still in her chest.

WOMAN

Midnight Mangler, huh? It's almost dawn.

The Man opens his mouth to speak but the Woman presses her bloody finger to it.

WOMAN

Shhh. Doesn't matter. The Midnight Mangler's going to be around for a good long while.

She smiles. Vampire fangs.

WOMAN

But you won't be.

She lunges, tearing into him. Blood spurts across the wall as the deep grunts of her feeding fill the air.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAWN

Sunlight touches the tops of the buildings on the empty street.

NEWS ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Another night is over as the city holds its breath, waiting to hear if the Midnight Mangler has claimed any more victims.