

Stop The Press

By

Mark Hickman

Mark Hickman
23 Sivilla Road
Kilnhurst
Rotherham
South Yorkshire
S64 5TY
UK

+44 (0)7515 398301
mark@ultimacomputers.co.uk

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

POV - ALAN

EYES CLOSED - BLACK

ALAN, 31, slim, stirs from a deep sleep.

EYES OPEN

Alan lays in bed.

A large, heavy built, masked INTRUDER towers over him in the near darkness.

Alan tries to scream.

The Intruder puts his hand over Alan's mouth before he can make a sound.

Alan struggles.

The intruder jumps onto the bed. Straddles Alan, prevents him from getting up.

One hand still over Alan's mouth. The intruder raises a metal pipe he is holding in his other and brings it down hard on the side of Alan's head.

Alan's head jolts from the blow.

The intruder raises his hand again. Delivers a second blow to Alan's temple.

Blood sprays from Alan's head. Splatters the intruder's clothes.

The intruder delivers a third blow.

Alan's eyes close. He loses consciousness.

INT. PRINTING WORKS - NIGHT

JIMMY, 21, slim, walks down a long quiet corridor with several doors on either side.

He stops at one with the sign 'EDITOR' on it.

Jimmy takes a deep breath.

INT. EDITOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

BOB, 46, overweight, sits behind a large messy desk in a tired looking office. Writing on a piece of paper.

The door to the office opens. Jimmy enters.

Bob doesn't acknowledge Jimmy's entrance. Carries on writing.

BOB
What is it?

JIMMY
We've got a problem!

Bob puts down his pen. Looks up at Jimmy.

JIMMY
It's wrong boss! We've got it wrong!

Bob chuckles. Picks up his pen again to continue writing.

BOB
Look Jimmy, it's a bit late for an attack of conscience now. Besides you were all for it at the production meeting this afternoon.

JIMMY
No, I mean we've got the number wrong. It's 32 not 23.

Bob puts his pen back down on the desk.

A look of anger on his face.

BOB
Fukin ell Jimmy!

Bob stands up. Bangs his fist on the desk.

BOB
Are you sure?

JIMMY
I've checked it three times, I'm sure.

BOB
How the fuck did this happen? Biggest story of the year and we fuck it up.

Bob pauses. Composing his thoughts.

BOB
What time is it?

JIMMY
About one thirty.

BOB
Ok, we've still got time. We can
start the run again and still
meet the deadline.

Bob reaches down and picks up the telephone on his desk. He puts it to his ear and punches two digits into on the keypad.

He glances back at Jimmy.

BOB
What are you still standing there
for? Go and get the new plates
ready.

JIMMY
Yes boss.

Jimmy scurries out of the office.

Bob stands with the phone to his ear.

BOB
Come on! Pick up the fucking
phone.

Bob waits another few seconds. Slams the phone down. He walks around his desk, out of the office.

Slams the door behind him.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alan lays on the bed. Blood trickles from the wound on his head. The intruder sits straddling his stomach. He holds the pipe high in the air. Ready to deliver another blow. His other hand still covers Alan's mouth.

Alan is unconscious. The intruder waits a few seconds to be sure. He removes his hand from Alan's mouth and lowers the pipe.

The intruder is breathing hard. He removes his mask. Gasps for breath.

The intruder takes a deep breath. Tries to compose himself.

He reaches into his coat pocket and retrieves a roll duct tape. His hands shake. He tears off a strip and places it over Alan's mouth.

The intruder wipes sweat from his forehead with his sleeve.

He gets off Alan. Stands up by the side of the bed.

He pauses for a couple of seconds. Stares at Alan.

He reaches over and grabs Alan. Pulls him off the bed onto the floor.

The intruder places his arms under Alan's armpits. Drags him out of the bedroom.

INT. PRINTING WORKS - NIGHT

Bob walks down a flight of metal stairs onto the factory floor of the print shop.

A huge, deafening, printing press churns out page after page of newsprint in the middle of the floor.

Bob walks around the press to an empty desk on the opposite side.

Bob is shocked to see no one sat at the desk.

He looks around the print shop.

Bob shakes his head. Walks over to the press.

He pushes a big red button on the side of it.

The press grinds to a halt. The print shop falls silent.

Bob looks around the print shop again.

BOB
(shouts)
Phil?
(pause)
Phil?

Bob walks to the end of the press. Takes out one of the sheets of newsprint. Begins to read it.

Jimmy runs down the metal staircase.

JIMMY
Plates will be ready to go in
five minutes boss.

BOB

OK, now go and find Phil, wake him up and tell him to get his fat arse back to work and get my press running again.

JIMMY

Yes boss.

Jimmy runs back up the staircase.

Bob looks back at the newsprint in his hand. Shakes his head.

BOB

(to himself)

Bloody hell, that was close.
Could've really fucked up there.

Bob walks over to the empty desk and places the print on it. He turns and walks away back towards the stairs.

ANGLE ON NEWSPRINT ON DESK.

HEADLINE READS:

"PERVERT AT NO.23"

"There's a pedophile in the area and we've got his address"

CAMERA PANS ACROSS THE DESK TO A FRAMED SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPH OF TWIN 10 YEAR OLD GIRLS.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Alan sits unconscious on a chair. Naked except for a pair of bloodied boxer shorts. His chest and stomach also covered in streaks of blood.

His arms restrained behind him. His ankles bound to the legs of the chair with electrical tape.

Alan starts to struggle. Trying to get free.

He catches sight of himself in the bathroom mirror.

Alan stops struggling. Looks at his reflection.

He sees the wound on the side of his head. The Blood trickling from it down the side of his face. The piece of duct tape covering his mouth.

Panic hits Alan again. Resumes his struggle in the chair.

FOOTSTEPS IN THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM.

Alan freezes. His gaze fixed on the door handle. It starts to turn.

The door opens. The intruder enters the bathroom. In one hand he is holding a black bag. In the other a large hunting knife.

POV - ALAN

The intruder walks over to Alan. Alan begins sob.

The intruder opens the black bag. He reaches out to put it over Alan's head.

Alan twitches his head in a vain attempt to avoid the bag.

As the bag comes down over his head Alan's sobs turn into muffled screams of terror.

BLACK.

The screams of terror turn to screams of excruciating pain.

THE END