

The Night Terror:
MD

Written by
Madison Ballard

EXT. VERANDA - DAY

AN 80's JAM PLAYS.

Orange and purple set on the sun's blue sky, and a flock of birds fly in spiral murmuration.

Half-dressed stud ASHER (23) and his beauty queen girlfriend CASSIDY MACON (20) enjoy the sunset on their balcony.

CASSIDY

This is nice.

ASHER

Yeah...

CASSIDY

You never see a sky like this:
purple.

ASHER

And pink.

CASSIDY

It's **so** pink, so vibrant. I don't understand how the sky turns into these colors.

ASHER

It's reflected light.

Cassidy rolls her eyes.

CASSIDY

I think sunsets like these are supposed to be good luck... You know, when I was a kid, whenever I'd draw something, I'd color the sky pink. All of my coloring books, my drawings. Always pink.

ASHER

What did your parents think of that?

CASSIDY

They thought it was cute. What do you think of it?

ASHER

I think you're an idealist.

Cassidy likes that.

CASSIDY
And stubborn.

ASHER
Yeah, that.

CASSIDY
What do you think of pink skies?

ASHER
Uhh, I think they're good luck...
You nervous about the pageant?

CASSIDY
I just wish you were coming.

ASHER
I have class. And I'm picking up a
couple shifts at Molly Lehane's.

CASSIDY
I know! I know!

ASHER
Plus, I'm saving up for something.

They both know he means an engagement ring.

CASSIDY
If I win that title, maybe I can
buy it for you with my prize money.

ASHER
(smiles)
Then win that title.

Cassidy laughs, and Asher kisses her. It gets hot.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Asher and Cassidy have sex.

Their apartment is cluttered and messy, a combination of
Cassidy's clothes and costumes and Asher's books and work.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Asher watches a game while Cassidy takes a shower.

KNOCK, KNOCK! At the door.

Asher checks the peephole. No one there.

He opens the door and steps outside. No one in sight.

Asher stares into the darkness, winds rise, and --

SLAM! The door shuts.

He turns around, startled, and rushes back inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Asher examines the room, searching for an intruder. Cassidy walks out in her robe.

CASSIDY
What's wrong?

ASHER
I just... I don't know. It felt
like someone shut the door.

He locks the door and continues to scan the room.

ASHER (CONT'D)
God, Cassidy, this place is a mess.

CASSIDY
I know! I'll clean it before I
leave tomorrow!

She leaves the room, and Asher turns around to check the peephole again.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Asher and Cassidy spoon in deep sleep.

KNOCK, KNOCK! Asher wakes up, groggy and uncertain.

ASHER
Cassidy? Cassidy?

CASSIDY
What?

ASHER
Did you hear that?

CASSIDY
What?

ASHER
That knocking.

Fear aggressively rouses Cassidy.

CASSIDY
Knocking? What knocking? Is someone
at the door?

ASHER
Shh...

He gets out of bed, grabs a bat, and heads down the hall.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Asher looks out the peep hole, but nothing is there. He moves to unlock the door but hesitates.

Behind him, a shadow runs across the wall.

CASSIDY
(quietly)
Asher?

Asher jumps.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
What is it?

ASHER
It's nothing. Just go to bed.

Asher secures all the windows and the veranda door.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

6:00 AM. Asher's clock radio alarm PLAYS THE WEATHER AND TRAFFIC, and he's out of bed right away.

Cassidy is slower to rise and doesn't wake up until Asher is almost finished with his morning routine.

He sits on the bed and kisses her.

ASHER
What time are you guys hitting the
road?

CASSIDY
Chloe's going to pick me up around
noon.

ASHER
Doesn't she have school?

CASSIDY

She's suspended. Mom didn't tell me why, but she's going to take me home and we'll leave from there.

ASHER

That's a little late to head out.

CASSIDY

I still have to finish packing.

ASHER

I'll skip physics this afternoon, so I can see you before you leave.

CASSIDY

Aw, baby.

She kisses him until he pulls away.

ASHER

I gotta get to class; I'll see you soon.

Asher grabs his school bag.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

On his way out of the house, Asher sees a figure under the blanket on the couch. He stops in terror.

Cautiously, he approaches the couch.

Asher picks up the bat from the night before and creeps closer. He grabs the blanket and pulls it off to reveal...

Just a pile of clothes and other blankets.

He sighs and drops the bat on the couch.

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Asher labels the chest for an anatomy class quiz. His pre-med coursework is draining and tedious.

He struggles naming the Glenohumeral Joint, and calls it an Acrohumeral Joint. FUCKING IDIOT.

PROFESSOR

Pencils down.

Asher isn't pleased with himself, but he joins the congregation moving toward the desk.

He finds his friend MIKE (23).

ASHER
Hey, man.

MIKE
Hey, Ash. How'd you do?

ASHER
Alright. Couldn't focus.

MIKE
Yeah, I should do pretty cool.

ASHER
Are you going to Physics today?

MIKE
Yeah.

ASHER
Can I borrow your notes? I gotta take off; Cassidy's leaving today.

MIKE
Leaving?

ASHER
Yeah, state title.

MIKE
Oh, shit! Tell her good luck!

ASHER
Thanks, man! Will do.

They drop off their quizzes and leave.

EXT. VERANDA - DAY

Asher reads a medical journal in preparation for an essay.

PLAYFUL HONKS! Asher stands as a red AMC Gremlin pulls up.

ASHER
Hey there, Chloe!

A young, vibrant CHLOE MACON (18) hangs out the driver door.

YOUNG CHLOE
Hey, Ash! You ridin' with?

ASHER
Nah. I'll get Cassidy for you,
though!

Chloe gets back in her car.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Asher sweeps through the apartment and finds Cassidy
stressing over two open suitcase and a pile of clothes.

ASHER
Whoa, babe! Chloe's here!

CASSIDY
Oh, shit. I know, I know, I know...

She tries to cram things in her suitcases chaotically. Asher
soothes her.

ASHER
Calm down, you don't need to
stress. Come on...

He helps her organize her suitcases. She hugs him.

CASSIDY
How am I going to win this without
you?

ASHER
Your mom is better with hair and
make-up, Cass.

CASSIDY
(laughs)
But she drives me crazy.

ASHER
You need that crazy for your
competitive edge. Plus, you'll have
your sister.

CASSIDY
Chloe's grounded. Just come with
me. Please?

ASHER
I can't miss five days of school!
And a last minute flight --

CASSIDY

Shh.

She kisses him. It's romantic until he pulls away and picks up the bags.

ASHER

You got everything?

Cassidy throws some things in her purse and they leave.

EXT. CHLOE'S GREMLIN - DAY

The sky is still vibrant pink and purple as Asher puts Cassidy's bags in the trunk and closes it.

CASSIDY

I'm going to miss you.

ASHER

I'll miss you too, babe.

He kisses her.

ASHER (CONT'D)

Bring back that crown!

He squeezes her ass as she turns to get in the car.

Cassidy pokes her head out for final goodbyes and proclamations as the car drives off.

The sky darkens as Asher watches the car disappear.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Asher studies on his exercise bike.

Then, he eats alone. The messy apartment is so quiet and empty without Cassidy.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Asher sleeps on his side on the right side of the bed. He rolls on his back and his arm twitches, expecting to bump into Cassidy.

Her absence wakes him, and he stares over at her side.

CREAK!

Asher looks over and sees someone in his room, features obscured by shadow.

ASHER

What the...

He blinks, and his eyes adjusts to the darkness. Apparently, it's just one of Cassidy's dresses.

What a sigh of relief.

Asher gets comfortable again when...

RING, RING! Asher pulls himself up and answers the phone.

ASHER (CONT'D)

Hello?

He turns on a lamp.

CASSIDY

Hey, we just got to the hotel.

ASHER

Good. Great.

CASSIDY

Did I wake you?

ASHER

Actually, I can't sleep.

CASSIDY

Aw, that's sweet.

ASHER

Yeah, yeah. Are you in your own room? Have you taken a shower yet?

CASSIDY

Ash! It's me!

(hushed)

My mom is in the room.

ASHER

It'll help me sleep!

CASSIDY

Yeah, well, you can handle that. I've gotta get some sleep.

ASHER

Love you.

CASSIDY
Love you, too.

He hangs up and turns off the light, but he can't sleep.

HOURS PASS.

And he still can't sleep.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Asher puts a Busty Whores porno tape in the VCR and starts masturbating.

As he gets closer, he leans back. The back of his head presses against a cold, black shadowy torso, and he screams as he cums.

ASHER
Oh, fucking shit!

He turns around, but there's no one there.

But he did make a mess that he needs to clean up.

ASHER (CONT'D)
Shit...

He starts wiping the spunk off the cushion.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

HOURS PASS and Asher is still awake.

He looks over and imagines Cassidy in bed beside him. Her make up is sexy, her clothes are revealing, and her eyes are... Dark. Void.

Asher stares into those dark eyes as he falls asleep.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

At 6:00 AM, Asher's alarm wakes him up.

He didn't sleep well, but he still begins his morning routine immediately. When he stands, his hallucination of Cassidy lays in bed, watching him leave.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Asher sits at a desk studying for a medical licensing exam.
Mike enters.

MIKE
Hey, Ash, what's up?

ASHER
Hey, man. Working on this fuckin'
shit.

MIKE
You okay?

ASHER
Just tired. Do you have those
physics notes?

MIKE
Yeah, hang on.

Asher recites the muscles of the chest as Mike sits down and
retrieves his notebook.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Asher returns home and -- THUMP -- hears something from
within the apartment.

He grabs the bat off the couch and advances.

He notices the refrigerator door is ajar.

ASHER
Who's there?

He brandishes the bat and advances.

CHLOE (O.S.)
Asher, it's me!

Chloe emerges from the bathroom. Asher lowers the bat.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry! It's just me!

ASHER
Chloe, what the hell are you doing
here?

CHLOE
I don't know... I needed, you know,
TAMPONS.

She steps out of the bathroom carrying a large purse.

ASHER
So, you come here?

CHLOE
It was on the way home.

BOTTLES CLINK as Chloe moves. Asher grabs her bag and opens it to reveal the last of his beers.

ASHER
Are you kidding?

CHLOE
Oh, those aren't tampons!

Asher takes out the beers.

ASHER
Is this why you were suspended?

CHLOE
No! Are you going to tell my dad?

ASHER
I feel like I need to.
(sigh)
Just go home.

CHLOE
I will, I promise.

Asher shakes his head and finally puts down the bat.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

ASHER
No. Go away.

Taken aback, Chloe takes her bag. She looks in his eyes and sees emptiness.

CHLOE
Okay. Sorry.

She senses The Night Terror emerging and leaves. The Night Terror pursues her in the shadows.