

Lick

Douglas L McCue Jr

At exactly seven fifteen every night she would draw a bath for herself. This new life alone was not the easiest thing she had ever dealt with, but she reassured herself she would overcome it. Her husband ran off with another woman and it seemed that this was the only way she could cope with the guilt she made herself feel over the loss. At least she still had her brown and white spotted Doberman named Christian.

*The only thing left that loves me
Thank god he didn't take my baby Christian away*

She always took a forty minute bath to relax herself from the long stressful day at work. The evening seemed pretty uneventful except for the storm approaching.

*I hate storms alone
I hate the dark bedroom
No one to talk to
No one to comfort me*

She finished her bath and felt quite relaxed. Wrapped in a towel she walked from her master bedroom to the living room to check on the incoming storm. The wind had already picked up and the large oak tree in the front lawn was scratching away at the window.

The local news anchor announced that the weather would be on shortly but first some breaking news. A prisoner had escaped from the minimum security ward. His name, Michael Dodell. Not known as a violent offender. Sexual in nature. He continued on to warn families to keep their houses locked up and phones at ready.

A jolt of fear ran down her spine to which she immediately began to double check all the windows and doors while listening to the weatherman drone on about dew points and barometric pressure. She entertained the thought of calling someone over to stay on the couch to make sure she would make it through the night.

*Don't be paranoid
There's a storm outside
No one will be out and about in that mess*

She remembered the basement windows as she playfully imagined people being sucked up by a tornado outside. Running down the steps in her towel, she quickly double checked the locks. There was always one window that wouldn't close all the way and her cheating ex husband had never gotten around to fixing it. She pushed on it until it closed all that it would.

With no luck, she locked the top door to the basement. Satisfied she ran back up the stairs with her paranoia chasing right behind her.

She decided to change into her pajamas.

Christian is here to protect you

She always let him sleep under the bed because she didn't want to get his hair all over her and her sheets. Besides, Christian always hogged the bed and kicked in his sleep. As she clicked the bed side lamp to off and lay down, she let her arm dangle over the edge so Christian could lick her hand to comfort her during such a heavy downpour.

It was nine and in no time she was asleep. Dreaming of the strange things she was glad she couldn't remember upon waking. Although the storm was howling at her house and the trees scratched at the windows, she stayed asleep.

She quickly awoke, her cell phone was ringing. It was eleven. Glancing at the screen, her eyes troubling to focus, she noticed it was her neighbor Jeff. Answering it, she discovered that he was checking up on her because he thought he had seen a dark figure wandering around her house.

*I should ask him to come stay on the couch downstairs
You're just being paranoid
You don't need to bother him with that*

After reassuring him that she was fine and in bed sleeping, Jeff reluctantly hung up the phone. She placed her cell back home on the night stand. The storm was still banging away outside with no end in sight. She dangled her arm over the edge of the bed and Christian responded with several licks.

*The rain was still rhythmically tapping against the roof
The smell of the fresh rain*

She fell quickly back to sleep thinking only of the pleasant comfort of her big bed. Hours pass and she begins to dream of a babbling brook. The sensation of a dream too real washed over her subconscious mind and she suddenly opened her eyes.

It was midnight and the storm had passed but the wind still howled along the shudders and paneling. She suddenly became aware of a distant dripping sound coming from the bathroom.

*Turn your knobs off when you're done in the bathroom!
Just ignore it and go back to sleep*

She dangled her hand for Christian to lick and again she felt the slow licking sensation on the back of her hand. Comforted that all was well, she drifted back off to dreamland. This time her dreams had turned a bit dark and again she woke from a small nightmare.

*It was only a dream
Relax*

She reached for the light and it clicked, but the bulb flashed and went dark. Angry over her light situation and a little scared to get out of bed from the wake of her bad dream, she pulled her blankets over her head like a child hiding from invisible monsters.

The clock had read twelve thirty. The dripping sound seemed a bit louder. Her head still under the covers, she again dangled her arm for Christian to lick. And again she felt the warm tongue lick her hand. She lay this way for quite sometime trying to remember what she could have left on in the bathroom. As the images of her nightmare faded and the fear it caused left her mind she peeked her head out from the covers.

It was twelve forty five. She let Christian lick her hand again. She thought about pulling him up on the bed and letting him cuddle. Instead, she jumped out of bed and walked into the bathroom to investigate the annoying dripping.

As she turned the light on she immediately drew back in horror and disgust. There laying over the shower rod was Christian. Gutted across the stomach, his blood dripping into the bathtub. Fear overwhelmed her as she looked towards the mirror. There was blood all over it. It said something. Scrawled in what looked like a child's handwriting,

HUMANDS CANN LICK TOO

Screaming she ran out of the room into the hallway. Darkness surrounded her and she quickly slipped into the hall closet. She opened her phone and began to dial for the police.

*It won't connect
No Service
Fuck, not now*

She hadn't heard a sound for a while.

Was he still in my bedroom under the bed?

In a moment of desperation she lurched out of the closet towards the top of the stairway. As she turned to step on the first step she looked ahead and noticed a dark figure standing at the bottom of the stairs staring back at her.

Screaming wildly she threw her phone at him and ran back down the hall and slammed the door behind her in the guest room. She flung herself under the bed. Crying she peered between the hanging blanket and polished wooden floor.

Footsteps

Fuck

Fuck

Fuck

The footsteps stopped suddenly and she heard the sound of water splash on the floor in the hall. Her crying had become uncontrollable shakes accompanied by panic....

It was three in the morning when the police arrived at the front door. The scene before them was ghastly. A man stabbed to death in the upstairs hallway, a woman raped and mutilated in a bedroom and a Doberman gutted and hanging in the bathroom.

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It turns out the neighbor Jeff had decided to check on her. He found her front door unlocked and slightly ajar. He entered cautiously and stood at the bottom of her stairwell to listen for any movement. He spotted her at the top of the steps. She screamed threw something at him and he quickly traversed the stairwell to make sure she was okay. As he passed the first bedroom he was sprung upon by the man he had seen outside.