

Horror

Arm A gotten

By: Dawn DeBraal



Dawn DeBraal

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“Run faster!” Kelly pulled her

friend Suzie through the long hall, watching the opening before them slowly closing. “Come on, Suzie,” she urged.

“I can’t. I’m so tired,” her friend whined.

“Do you want to die? Is that it? Run.” Kelly pulled her friend through the opening and kept running as it slammed shut behind them.

Finally, Suzie must have understood their need to escape and stopped resisting Kelly. When she turned around Kelly screamed. Suzie wasn’t keeping up with her; it was Suzie’s detached arm in her hand, and she could hear the muffled screams of her friend behind the last portal closing. The thing chasing them had finished the job, Suzie was silent.

In disgust, Kelly threw her friend’s arm down and kept running until she slammed into the next portal that was slowly closing. She used her old high school track and field hurdle muscles to jump through the disappearing portal, but she wasn’t fast enough. The opening swallowed her foot, dashing her to the ground. Kelly rolled over on her back and pulled her leg from the opening. Blood spurted where her sandal used to be. She looked up and saw the nightmare

coming from the opened portal ahead, and fainted.

Sitting straight up in bed, Kelly wiped the sweat from her brow, trying to stop panting. It had only been a nightmare, but it was so real. This recurring dream was from a B movie in which the woman always falls and is captured by a monster who picks her up like a piece of garbage. Ever since the zombie attack, she’d had these dreams. Was it a dream foretelling the future or her fear of the zombies crisscrossing the country?

Just yesterday, the horde reached Downer’s Hill, a nearby town. She stocked up on food and water and boarded her windows in anticipation of their imminent attack. Kelly looked over and saw her boyfriend, Kyle, snoring softly. The guy could sleep through anything. The bedside clock said four-thirty; she lay in bed for a bit before deciding sleep wasn’t in the cards. She would make herself some coffee and find out where the zombies were on the news. When she eased herself out of bed, Buffy, her dog, growled as her foot touched the floor.

“Sh-h-h-h,” Kelly whispered. The terrier meekly followed her out of the room. The tragedy of not closing the door behind her would come back to haunt her later. Kelly made it to the kitchen and started the coffee. She shuffled over, ready to put a cup of food in Buffy’s dish but wanted to get

her to do her business outside first. Kelly peeked through the windows before going out the door. The neighborhood was still dark; it hadn't awakened yet. It didn't look as if the Zombies had reached her area. She cautiously opened the door. Buffy wouldn't go outside.

"Come on, you aren't going in the house, dog." She pushed the dog toward the open door, and Buffy growled, resisting her owner with all her might. Kelly was wide-eyed and suspicious. "What's wrong with you, Buffy? Alright, I will go with you." She snapped the dog's leash on, pulling Buffy outside. They walked between her neighbor's house and fence, headed for the backyard. Once she was in her spot, Buffy dutifully emptied her bladder. They ran back to the front of the house in time to see several zombies enter the front door she'd left open.

Kelly stepped back to the side of the house and waited. When Kyle's screams reached her, she and Buffy ran down the sidewalk looking for help.

"Kelly!" Suzie called, and she stopped, seeing her best friend's head poking through the front door. "They're here, come inside, quick!" Kelly didn't question her friend and trotted across the street, pulling the door behind her.

"They got Kyle!" she sobbed, sliding down to the floor.

"Oh my God, are you alright?" Suzie looked over at her friend suspiciously. "You weren't bitten, were you?"

"No, I took Buffy out to do her business, couldn't use the back door because we screwed that one shut. I left the front door open, they walked in, and I left the bedroom door open. They went right upstairs to Kyle. I could hear his screams. I've killed my

boyfriend." Kelly put her hands to her face and sobbed.

"Nonsense, the zombies killed your boyfriend."

"But I left the front door open."

"You didn't mean to!" Suzie wrapped her arms around her friend and shushed her tears. Buffy barked at the window.

"Shut that dog up!" Suzie cursed. Kelly grabbed the pup away from the window, and they drew the drapes to hide. The zombies bumped up against the door, continually striking the surface. They knew someone was inside now.

"Do you think they can get in?"

"I don't know, Suzie, I've never been in a zombie attack in my life. Let's just keep quiet and see if they leave." An hour later, they were still in the same loop of hungry creatures pushing at the door and looking for brains.

"This is weird, but I'm hungry. Do you have anything to eat?"

"No, Kelly, sorry I've been a little busy staying off a zombie attack."

"My house is full of food, and we put boards on all the windows. You didn't think this was going to happen?" Kelly snapped at her friend.

"No, I didn't think that far ahead. And how did all that preparation work out for you?" Suzie stood glaring at her friend.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to make you mad. It's just that Kyle and I were preparing for a siege at my house. I stocked up on food and water while Kyle boarded up the windows, and now here we sit, there is no food, no weapons, and they are bumping at the door.

"There is something we can do."

"What, Suzie?"

"Let Buffy out. She will distract them. We can get back to your house. If the zombies are gone, we can hold up

there.

"I can't let her go; she's, my baby."

"It's Buffy or all of us; think about it." Kelly didn't have to think. Buffy was her baby; she'd had her since she was a puppy. She would not sacrifice her dog as bait because Suzie never prepared herself for the war.

On the third day without food, Kelly had to admit there was something about what Suzie said. They needed a diversion. She hoped she could return to her house where things were safe.

"Okay, I will try to get back to my place. The zombies are still at the front door. I say let's go out the back and let Buffy lead the way."

"Good thinking." Suzie was behind Kelly when she let the dog out and told Buffy to go home. The terrier didn't hesitate; she leaped out the back door and ran toward home.

The zombies moaned and groaned, turning to the dog, distracted, followed Buffy at a slow, staggering rate.

"Oh, great. Buffy's leading them to your house. That was a mastermind move." Suzie sulked.

"Look how slow they move; we can get in front of them." Kelly shouted. Buffy ran before the crowd turning to bark at the zombies, stirring them to follow. Suzie and Kelly leaped over the neighbor's fences to get to the house before the dog. The front door was still open. Kelly reached inside with Suzy right behind her.

"Quick, search the house, and make sure we are the only ones here," Kelly told her friend. Buffy barked outside, and Kelly ran to the door.

"No!" Suzie shouted, "You're going to let them in." Kelly opened the door, and Buffy ran inside. She slammed the door behind them moments before the horde reached the porch and doubled locked it. Buffy barked again.

"Quiet," Kelly told her, but the dog wouldn't stop barking.

"I should throw you outside, dog. Shut up!" Suzy screamed. Kelly looked at her friend in shock.

"She just saved us from the zombies. I have food and water here."

"Oh, sorry," Suzy said sheepishly. They moved from room to room. The house appeared empty.

"I'll look upstairs," Kelly told her friend. She heard the door squeak as she opened it further to get a view of the bedroom. Blood encrusted the comforter on the bed; it was Kyle's blood, no doubt. Kelly gasped when Suzy came through the door.

"Poor Kyle." was all she could say, and they cried.

Kelly sat on the floor at the foot of the bed wiping the tears from her eyes while sucking the snot back up her nose.

Suzie screamed. "It's moving! Look on the bed," Kelly followed her friend's hand and watched in horror as the small pieces of brain matter scooped their way toward the bottom of the bed, sensing her presence. She flipped the comforter over, collecting the bloody blanket in her arms.

"What are you doing?" Suzie screamed.

"I'm putting this on high heat in the dryer, kill the zombie virus. Get out of my way." Suzie followed her friend downstairs, watched Kelly throw the bloody comforter in the dryer, and put it at the highest, longest heat setting. While they waited for the dryer to do its thing, Suzie mentioned again how hungry she was. Kelly fed Buffy first and made sandwiches for them. Sitting at the kitchen table, they ignored the zombies pushing at the front door.

"How long do you think they will keep trying?" Suzie asked, biting into her

salami sandwich.

"I don't know, they need to be distracted, I think. Let's watch television to see if they have any information on escaping the horde."

They carried their sandwiches into the living room and turned on the television.

The news channel carried live footage of tanks going through the towns and running over the slow-witted zombies.

"The town of Maplewood has been overrun with zombies for the last three days." The camera panned out to several tanks running the hordes of invaders over and blasting them with flame throwers. "It appears that crushing them and setting them on fire serves to deter the virus in the infected bodies. Residents are cautioned to stay inside and mark their door if someone needs rescuing. The National Guard will watch for the S.O.S signal on the door."

"That's what we have to do," Kelly said excitedly and ran out the side door into the garage for a can of spray paint.

"I'll paint the door with S.O.S, and they will come for us." Suzie clapped her hands excitedly.

"That's a great idea." The dryer buzzed, and the girls looked at one another.

"Do you think it's dead?" Kelly asked.

"I think we should throw it outside and spray S.O.S on the door." Kelly went to the window, watching the zombies get distracted by people running down the sidewalk. The horde turned away from her door and followed the stragglers. She grabbed the hot blanket and tossed it out quickly, then sprayed the call for help on the front door. "There, I did it. Now all we have to do is wait for our rescue."

They continued to watch television, fearful of the violence that was taking place outside.

"Hey, there's something weird about this news program," Suzie said.

"What do you mean?"

"I haven't seen one newscaster."

"Maybe they are just running the footage for us."

"But there hasn't been one human on this program. Turn on the radio." Kelly turned on the radio station to her favorite channel.

"Repeat: do NOT spray paint your front door. Zombies have taken over the news station on Channel 67 and are broadcasting that those who are sheltered in place are to spray S.O.S on the door, and the National Guard will rescue them. The zombies are using this distress sign to locate and eliminate people who are hiding."

"Oh my God, I spray-painted our location."

"Maybe we can wipe it off or paint over it. Do you still have the paint you used on the front door?" Kelly ran out to the garage and grabbed the quart of paint she'd used to make a bold statement on the front of her house. She opened the can, grabbed a paintbrush, and headed for the front door. The zombies were still distracted by the people they'd caught in front of the house. Kelly opened the door and painted over the S.O.S. mark when she felt a bug crawl on her leg and slapped at it before she ran inside and slammed the door. Her leg stung.

"You did it," Suzie clapped. As soon as this left her mouth, the horde returned and began banging against the door.

The television news report sent out a warning. "Folks, do not be tricked into painting your S.O.S. sign off your front door. Zombies have infiltrated the local radio station. Zombies can't read. It is the smell of fresh paint that will draw them in."

"I can't believe we've been tricked,"

Suzie shouted. Kelly slapped again at the bug on her leg. She'd been bitten. "Wait, what is that?"

"A bug I picked up when I was outside." Suzie inspected Kelly's hand. "That isn't a bug; that is Kyle's brain matter, and I recognize it. It must have jumped out of the blanket while you were distracted. Kelly, you've been bitten. You are going to turn into a zombie soon."

"No." Kelly sank to the floor, feeling changes in her body taking place. The infection was already racing through her bloodstream. Buffy barked at her, and then her eyes glazed over as she growled.

"Kelly, you need to leave the house. Buffy and I are in danger of you and this virus." Suzie shouted and pointed at the door.

"Take care of my dog," Kelly begged as she walked out the door, picked up the bloody comforter, and wrapped it around herself. If she was going to be undead, she would do it with her long-term boyfriend, Kyle.

"Hey, I'm here," she shouted at the hordes, ripping someone apart on the street. She could feel Kyle boring into her as the pieces of Kyle's brain matter penetrated her body. When Kelly reached the horde, the virus had infected her completely. She had become one of them and got excited when she smelled fresh paint.

Kelly trotted back to her front door and knocked. Suzie saw her friend wrapped in the blood-drenched comforter. Since zombies don't knock, she opened the door.

"Kelly, you're alive." Kelly leaped at her; Suzie slammed the door, but not before Kelly bit her arm off. After she gleefully gnawed on her friend's arm. Kelly jumped off the porch to join the horde, breaking her foot off. She stared confused at her foot lying

on the ground and was unable to get up to walk. If she were still human, she would have realized her dream had become reality. Unable to run with the others, the horde returned to put Kelly out of her misery.

Buffy barked furiously, as she broke through the window in a fit of rage, chased off the horde. She sniffed at her master, there wasn't much there. Buffy trotted over to Suzie's half eaten arm lying on the ground, sniffing curiously. She picked it up and ran off into the woods.

