

DEAD OF THE NIGHT

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. RADIO STATION - STUDIO -- NIGHT

Glass windows surround the cubicle. Buttons flash on a panel on the desk.

JANICE PARROW (24), places a pair of earphones over her ears.

She swings around on a swivel chair, glances at an electronic board on the wall. It reads: TWO, ONE. A red light comes on.

Janice draws the chair closer to the microphone, presses a button.

JANICE

We have time for one more caller.

An orange light flashes on the display panel. Janice hits the button.

JANICE (CONT'D)

What's got you up at this time of the morning?

Heavy breathing filters through the phone.

JANICE (CONT'D)

Hello! You need to speak up.

NORMAN (V.O.) (FILTERED)

It's here again.

The caller gasps. A loud pitched wailing is heard through the call.

NORMAN (V.O.) (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

Did you hear it? Its been here all night watching me.

Janice frowns. She glances at her watch, taps on the desk.

INT. NORMAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Overturned furniture. Pictures hang at an angle. A single lamp burns.

The radio echoes from one of the bedrooms.

NORMAN (40s), crouches in the corner with the phone to his ear. One of the lenses in his spectacles is cracked.

JANICE (V.O.) (FILTERED)
 What's your name, Sir?

Norman's eyes dart around the room.

He holds the phone close to his mouth, whispers into it.

NORMAN
 Norman.

JANICE (V.O.) (FILTERED)
 Are you okay, Norman?

Pots clang in the kitchen. A glass shatters O.S.

Norman whimpers, clutches the phone tighter, sinks back against the wall.

INT. RADIO STATION - STUDIO -- NIGHT

NORMAN (V.O.) (FILTERED)
 It won't leave me alone. I haven't
 slept in days.

JANICE
 Are you alone, Norman.

NORMAN
 My wife's gone already.

MARK DAVIS (29), taps on the glass.

Janice gathers a few belongings, shoves them into her bag.

She looks up, waves and smiles.

Mark opens the door, joins Janice in the studio.

NORMAN (V.O.) (FILTERED) (CONT'D)
 Are you still there?

Janice rolls her eyes.

JANICE
 Yeah, I'm here, Norman. You need to
 give me more to go by.

NORMAN (V.O.) (FILTERED)
 It's taken over my life.

JANICE
 Could it be your imagination
 playing tricks on you?

(MORE)

JANICE (CONT'D)
I know I get really scared when I'm
alone in the dark.

Mark shakes his head, hides a smile behind his hand. Janice
mock punches him.

NORMAN (V.O.) (FILTERED)
No, it killed her. I used to think
it was...

Janice drums her fingers on the desk.

JANICE
You used to think it was what?

No response.

JANICE (CONT'D)
Norman?

NORMAN (V.O.) (FILTERED)
I used to think it was me. But it's
not.

Norman sobs through the phone.

NORMAN (V.O.) (FILTERED) (CONT'D)
I miss her. I used to think maybe
I'd be better off without her, but
I really miss her...

A disconnected tone.

Janice shakes her head. She glances at her watch, speaks into
the microphone again.

JANICE
We've lost Norman, and we're out of
time. This was Janice Parrow of the
Sleepwalkers talk show. Mark Davis
will take you through to the
Breakfast show.

She presses a button on the panel, removes the earphones.

JANICE (CONT'D)
I have got to get off this show.
The calls get weirder and weirder
by the day.

Janice slings her bag over her shoulder.

She waves at Mark as she pushes open the door.

EXT. RADIO STATION -- NIGHT

The horizon shows the first signs of sunrise.

Janice strides to her car, which stands alone in the parking lot under a street lamp.

Vapor escapes from her mouth as she breathes out. She rubs her hands together.

Janice digs in her bag as she reaches her car. She pulls out her keys.

Footsteps sound behind O.S.

Janice swings around, scans the area.

Nothing.

She clicks the remote central locking. The car beeps, and the locks pop open.

Janice yanks open the door, climbs in the car, immediately locks the door.

The windshield of the car is frosted up.

Janice starts the engine, presses the lever on the side of the steering.

Water sprays onto the outside of the windshield. The wipers struggle across the ice. It slowly starts to melt, and the wipers speed up.

Through the windshield, a shadow moves across the front of the car.

Janice leans forward, peers through. Seeing nothing, she sits back, sighs.

INT. JANICE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN -- DAY

The room's furnishings are very trendy. A small table and chair in the center.

Janice places two plates of food on the table.

STEVE (30s), her husband, strolls in, sits. He sniffs, gives her a smile.

STEVE
Smells good.

Janice stares at her plate, deep in thought.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Earth to Janice! You okay?

Steve takes a mouthful of food.

JANICE
I want to resign my job, Steve. I
cant keep up these hours any more.

Steve coughs, but manages to swallow.

STEVE
Great. And how are we supposed to
get by on one salary?

JANICE
I'll try and get something on day
shift somewhere else.

STEVE
What are the chances?

Janice shrugs.

JANICE
Isn't my safety and sanity more
important than money?

Steve leans back in his chair, crosses his arms over his
chest.

STEVE
Look around you, Janice. Luxury
home, modern appliances. These
things cost a lot of money.

JANICE
Yeah, but...

STEVE
This is the life you wanted.

Janice picks up her fork, shifts her food around on her
plate.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Or then again maybe I should get a
second job.

JANICE
Don't start, Steve.

Steve picks up his plate and cutlery, heads for the living room.

STEVE

If I work around the clock, you can avoid me totally.

INT. RADIO STATION - STUDIO -- NIGHT

Janice's head rest in her hands.

LADY CALLER (V.O.) (FILTERED)

My dog has been sitting in the corner all night, barking. I've had no sleep.

Insistent barking filters through the line.

LADY CALLER (V.O.) (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

And there's nothing there.

The caller lowers her voice to a whisper.

LADY CALLER (V.O.) (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

My husband think's I'm crazy, but I tell you this house is haunted.

Janice rubs her temples and sighs.

LADY CALLER (V.O.) (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

My husband's a real thinks he knows everything but Brutus is way smarter.

JANICE

Have you tried giving him something to eat, or opening the door. Maybe he's just trying to tell you he wants to go out.

A mans voice filters through the phone in the background.

MANS VOICE (V.O.) (FILTERED)

Shut that mutt up!

The dog yelps. The woman shrieks.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.) (FILTERED)

Oh my god! Something's got him...!

The line goes dead. Janice frowns. She clears her throat, speaks into the microphone.

JANICE
That's all from me on Your Late
Night Companion. Coming up, Mark
Davis after news and sports.

Janice hits a button, leans back in the chair. A hand grabs her shoulder.

Janice screams, leaps out of the chair.

Mark stands behind her. He doubles over with laughter.

JANICE (CONT'D)
Damn it, that was not funny! This
place is creepy enough, without you
lurking about.

Mark grins sheepishly.

MARK
Sorry, couldn't resist.

Mark takes his place in the chair.

MARK (CONT'D)
Ghost-detecting dogs. What's next?

Janice rolls her eyes.

JANICE
Gotta admit. That was a bit freaky.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE -- NIGHT

Janice browses through the aisles. She throws a few items into her basket, makes her way to the magazine rack.

She picks one up, drops it into the basket.

Movement in an overhead round mirror catches Janices eye. She whirls around.

Seeing nothing there, Janice edges to the unattended counter. She glances around.

JANICE
Hello!

Her voice echoes through the store. Janice pulls out her wallet. She writes a message, takes out a couple of notes.

The store attendant slides in behind the counter. Janice startles.

JANICE (CONT'D)
Geez, I thought there was no-one
here.

Janice places the money on the counter.

ATTENDANT
Was in the back.

A security monitor behind the attendant flashes pictures of the stores aisles on the screen, showing the store is otherwise empty.

A dark human form appears on the screen in one of the aisles. Janice points at the screen, lowers her voice.

JANICE
There's someone here.

The attendant turns to look at the monitor. It flashes to a different aisle, then back to the first one, now empty.

ATTENDANT
Nah.

Janice grabs her bag, dashes for the door.

INT. JANICE'S CAR - RESIDENTIAL STREET -- NIGHT

Janice is behind the steering wheel. Her cell phone rings from her bag.

She digs in her bag with one hand.

As Janice slides the cell phone out, it falls to the floor. She dives to retrieve it.

The car swerves.

Janice grabs hold of the phone, straightens up.

Through the windshield, a dark figure stands in the middle of the road.

Janice yanks at the steering to avoid it.

EXT. JANICE'S CAR - RESIDENTIAL STREET -- NIGHT

The car careens across the road. The back tire bursts.

Out of control, the car hits the sidewalk, bounces onto it, slams into a tree.

MOMENTS LATER

Janice lies slumped over the steering. Blood trickles from her forehead.

The side door of the car opens. PATRICK (60s) peers in.

PATRICK
Lady, are you okay?

Janice groans, lifts her head. She winces as she tries to move.

She grips her arm

Patrick holds up his cell phone for light to her to see.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
I already called nine-one-one.

Janice gives a feeble nod.

EXT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - PORCH -- NIGHT

Janice, a blanket around her, sits in a chair overlooking the street.

Patrick leans against a railing.

JANICE
Did you see that guy?

PATRICK
I didn't see anyone.

JANICE
He was standing in the middle of the road.

Patrick scratches his head, frowns.

PATRICK
I've been sitting on my porch the whole time, and I didn't see anyone.

Janice frown, confused.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Your car came racing around that corner, skidded across the road, tire burst.

Patrick slams one fist into the palm of the other hand.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Bam! You hit that tree. Cruella de
Ville, I tell you.

A police car and ambulance pull up in front of the house.

INT. JANICE'S HOME - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Abstract sculptures and artworks. Brightly colored furniture and glass side tables fill the room.

A parrot sits on top of its cage in the corner of the room, chattering away merrily.

Janice, her arm in plaster and a sling, sits on a couch. Steve carries two cups of coffee, places one on a side-table next to Janice.

Steve sips from his coffee, watches Janice.

JANICE
So I suppose you also think it's
all in my mind.

STEVE
No. But I do think you've been
tired.

Janice rolls her eyes.

INT. JANICES HOME - BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Janice sleeps propped up against pillows.

Total silence except for a clock ticking. The clock chimes eight times.

An eerie wailing O.S.

Janice sits up straight. She swings her legs off the bed, plunges her feet into a pair of slippers beside the bed.

JANICE
Steve!

INT. JANICE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

Janice flips the light switch. The overhead fluorescent light flickers, then brightens up.

On the refrigerator door is a note which reads: "BE BACK SOON -STEVE".

Janice opens the door. She pulls out a tub of yoghurt.

INT. JANICES HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Janice notices the empty parrot cage. Blood splatters on the cage.

The parrot, ripped to shreds, lies on the floor under the cage.

Janice picks it up.

A tear rolls down her cheek.

She places the parrot back in the bottom of the cage, throws a blanket over it.

Janice picks up the phone, dials.

STEVE (V.O.) (FILTERED)
You've reached Steve's voicemail.
Leave a message, Ill phone back.

JANICE
Where are you? Your stupid cat has
killed...

A dark shadow forms on the wall that Janice is facing. A loud roar O.S.

Janice drops the phone, turns slowly.

A dark figure glides across the room towards Janice.

Janice pulls at the door leading outside. The deadbolt is locked, key missing. She struggles with one arm, unable to get it open.

The distance between Janice and the figure lessens. Janice picks up the nearest sculpture, flings it at the figure.

The sculpture passes through it, lands on the floor, shatters into pieces.

Janice screams.

A few feet from her, the figure dissolves.

Janice, her back to the door, slides down to her haunches. She whimpers.

INT. JANICE'S HOME - KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Janice fumbles with the key rack, checks the keys. Finding nothing, she slumps her shoulders.

She pulls open a drawer, shuffles through more keys.

A door opens O.S.

Janice pulls a knife from a wooden block on the counter, holds it ready to attack.

STEVE (O.S.)

Jan, where are you?

INT. JANICES HOME - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Janice hobbles into the room. She tumbles into Steves arms, sobs.

JANICE

There was this...thing here.

STEVE

Thing?

Janice sniffles.

JANICE

It just vanished.

Steve holds Janice back at an arms length, both hands on her shoulders. He looks her in the eye.

STEVE

Slow down. I cant make head or tail of what you're saying.

Janice walks over to the cage, pulls off the cover.

JANICE

Rocco's been killed. At first I thought it was the cat, and then...

The parrot squawks. Rocco, alive, marches along his perch. No traces of the blood.

Janet stares at the cage in disbelief. She covers her mouth with her hand.

STEVE

What are you talking about?

JANICE

Dont say it.

She turns to face Steve again. The dark form appears behind Steve.

Janice grabs at him.

The monster thrusts its hand into Steve's back, twists it.

Stevens eyes widen. He gags, drops to his knees.

The form lifts Steve into the air. Blood dribbles from the corner of his mouth.

It pulls back its arm, Steve drops to the floor. He rolls onto his back, stares up in fear.

The figure slashes at Steves chest, leaving a deep gorge. Steve screams out.

Janice runs toward Steve. It lifts her by her neck, throws her back against a couch.

It swipes at Steve's neck, his head lulls to one side. Blood spurts from the gash, and pools around his head.

Janice screeches in alarm.

The form turns its attention to her.

Janice backs away, falls over a side table.

She lands on her butt, scrambles backwards, as it looms over her.

Janice backs into the wall. She closes her eyes.

JANICE (CONT'D)

You're not real.

She opens her eyes, glances around. No sign of it.

Janice crawls to Steve's body. She searches through his pockets.

Finding keys, she heads for the outside door.

She pushes the key into the deadbolt, unlocks it.

The dark form moves up behind Janice. It flings her across the room. She bangs against the wall.

Janice slumps to the floor.

INT. JANICE'S HOME - HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Janice comes to.

The dark form drags her by her feet across the floor.

Janice grabs hold of a doorway. Her feet yank loose from its grip.

It growls, swings around at her.

Janice pulls herself onto her feet. She shoves herself away from the wall, races back to the living room.

INT. JANICE'S HOME - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Janice's foot catches on Steve's body.

JANICE

Shit!

She flings herself to the door, opens it, and runs out.

EXT. JANICE'S HOUSE - PORCH -- NIGHT

Janice's sling hooks on the door handle. She fumbles to get loose.

The demon appears in the doorway. It reaches for her hand.

Janice yanks her arm back, slams the door closed.

EXT. JANICE'S HOME - DRIVEWAY -- NIGHT

Steve's car is parked in front of the house.

Janice climbs into the driver's side.

The car backs out of the driveway.

INT. STEVES CAR - STREET -- NIGHT

Janice races along. She keeps her eyes on the road.

In front of the car, the demon steps off the curb. Janice accelerates.

She drives straight into the demon, and the car goes through, with no impact.

Janice looks back. The dark form remains standing in the road.

EXT. RADIO STATION - NIGHT

Steve's car swerves into the parking lot, screeches to a stop.

Janice leaps out, runs to the front door.

Finding it locked, she bangs on the door.

Breathing heavily, she glances back at the parking lot, shudders.

Janice investigates the outside of the building. She finds a window slightly ajar.

Holding the window open with her good hand, Janice manages to squeeze into the building.

The window slams onto her leg.

INT. RADIO STATION -- CONTINUOUS

Dim overhead lights provide lighting.

Janice slithers onto the ground. She rubs her leg. She struggles to her feet, cringes.

Janice limps along the passageway.

Footsteps echo behind her.

She glances behind her, picks up her pace.

INT. RADIO STATION - STUDIO -- NIGHT

Mark is on duty at the panel.

MARK

Mark Davis standing in for Pete
Williams tonight...

Janice bursts into the room.

Janice pushes Mark aside, speaks into the microphone.

JANICE

This is Janice Parrow live. A few nights ago Norman phoned in on the Sleepwalkers show.

Janice takes a deep breath.

JANICE (CONT'D)

Norman, if you're listening, please call the station.

Janice steps back, slumps against the desk.

Mark takes over the microphone.

MARK

Let's play some music to soothe the soul.

Offline, he turns to Janice.

MARK (CONT'D)

What the hell was that?

A light flashes on the panel.

Janice jumps, presses the button.

JANICE

Norman?

INT. NORMAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

The room is restored to order.

Norman sits on the armrest of a couch.

His WIFE sits in a wheelchair knitting.

NORMAN

Yeah?

JANICE (V.O.) (FILTERED)

Your call the other night...

Norman takes hold of his wife's hand, smiles at her.

NORMAN

You were right. It was all in my mind, like a bad dream.

INT. RADIO STATION - STUDIO -- NIGHT

Tears stream down Janices face. She wipes them away.

JANICE
No, you were right. It's been
wreaking havoc in my life.

NORMAN (V.O.) (FILTERED)
I really thought...

Janice buries her head into her hands.

JANICE
Its real, Norman. It's very real.
Some kind of demon. How did you
make it go away?

NORMAN (V.O.) (FILTERED)
I just woke up the morning after
your show, and all was fine. Like
it never even happened.

Janice rubs her temples. She glances through the glass.

The demon stands in the passage, watching her.

JANICE
Something must've changed.

NORMAN (V.O.) (FILTERED)
Well, I used to think it would be
easier without my wife. But I've
had a taste of life without her.

JANICE
That's it!

Janice stares at the demon.

JANICE (CONT'D)
I don't want to lose Steve.

The demon turns and disappears down the passageway.

It fades as it leaves.

JANICE (CONT'D)
Thanks, Norman.

Janice replaces the receiver. Mark stares at Janice in disbelief.

MARK

Whoa! These shifts are seriously getting to you. Demons?

Janice grabs onto Mark's shoulder.

JANICE

Its real, Mark.

Mark sniggers.

MARK

Uh-huh.

Janice picks up the phone, dials.

JANICE

Steve?

INT. JANICE'S HOME - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT.

Steve sits on the couch with the phone to his ear. No signs of the previous struggles apparent.

STEVE

Where the hell are you? I've been out of my mind. You've been acting so weird lately.

INT. RADIO STATION - STUDIO -- NIGHT

JANICE

I know, baby. I'm sorry. Everything's gonna be okay now.

STEVE (V.O.) (FILTERED)

Well, I was thinking. Maybe you're right. This job is putting a lot of strain on you.

Janice smiles.

JANICE

Well talk about it when I get home.

Janice, about to replace the receiver, hesitates, lifts the phone to her ear again.

JANICE (CONT'D)

Steve? I love you.

EXT. MARK'S CAR - RADIO STATION -- NIGHT

Mark starts his car, fiddles with the car radio, tunes into a station. He looks up.

A dark human form stands next to the drivers window.

FADE OUT.