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Reclusion

By Andrew McGowan

Night light, night bright,
shine for me
with all your might.
Night light, night bright,
watch over me
'til morning sight.
You'll be safer here,
Mr. scribbles.
What's going on in here?
Something's in my room.
Oh, Elinore...
We should wake up daddy.
No, you know he has
to work early tomorrow.
Sweetie, we can't
do this tonight, okay?
There's something here.
There's nothing here.
Don't you remember
what the doctor said?
There's no such thing as ghosts.
The doctor's full of shit,
wake up daddy!
Okay.
Show me. Where?
All right, let me
see the flashlight.
Elinore, I don't see anything.
Hey, what happened
to Mr. scribbles?
Elinore, did you take my brush?
Oh!
Elinore, help me!
Elinore! Elinore!
Daddy, daddy, wake up!
Well, fancy meeting
you here, man.
I was beginning to think
that you were flaking...
Tim?
Tim?
Hey, Tim, I didn't
mean to scare ya.
Okay.

I'll come back later.
You have reached
the office of Dr. Piccault.
No one is available to take
your call at the moment.
If this is an emergency,
please hang up and dial 9-1-1.
Otherwise, leave a message and we'll
be in touch as soon as we can.
Thank you and have a good day.
No, no, oh...

Hey!

Twice in one week,
I might have to call CNN.
Yeah, so I was wondering
where that was.

I'm just gonna go knock it
out now, if that's okay?
So, I guess you can just give
it to me since I'm here.

You know, I got
a couple minutes.

Why don't you just
tell me what's on it?

Well, it's the beginning
of the week, um,
so let me guess.

I'm gonna go with TP,
ultra soft of course...

And...

Mouthwash.

Okay.

Uh...

It was nice talking to you too,
and we should definitely do
this again when I get back.

Thank you.

Yes?

You can't hide anymore.

Excuse me, who is this?

We regret to inform you,
you have 45 days to vacate.

How do you know that?

What's going to happen when

you have to go outside again?

Nothing.

Nothing never happens.

Something bad always does.

Not this time.

I can do it. That's
not what she thinks.

Who?

Turn around.

Carri?

Ask her what's going to happen.

No.

Leave me alone.

You are, but not for long.

Tim?

It's Mary, can you hear me?

Tim?

Mary?

Yes, couldn't you hear me?

Uh, no, no, I didn't.

Strange, I could hear you.

Sorry, I thought it was a prank.

Is everything okay?

Dr. Piccault missed
the appointment today.

I know, I'm sorry

I couldn't call you sooner.

There's no easy way
to say this...

Dr. Piccault
had an accident.

Accident, what kind of accident?

Tim, I need you to stay calm.

It's okay if you want
to take some medication.

Is he going to be okay?

Well, we're not sure
at this point.

You've been transferred to a
new doctor for the time being.

New doctor, no, no, no, I can't.

Tim, we just want you
to be calm.

Can you do that,

or should I send some help?

Tim...

Tim?

No, you don't need
to send anyone.

What's important is that we have
a new doctor for you, okay?

What's his name?

Dr. Sephton.

But I don't know him.

Dr. Piccault has worked
with him before, he's excellent.
His office is going to call you,
but I wanted you
to hear it from me first.

Sure, okay.

Oh, wake up, man,
please don't be dead.

Tim!

Whoa, how did you get in here?

I came back with the thing,
and the thing is like this, and
you're laying here not breathing!

Man, I was gonna call 9-1-1!

Excuse me, I have to...

Would you mind
locking up when you leave?

Oh, sorry, I didn't
mean to snoop.

Um, I should probably get going.

I forgot to, uh,
give you your money.

Oh... deliveries on me,
get me next week.

Do you need any...

Any help?

I mean, with the letter.

No, thank you, though.

How long have you lived here?

Almost 20 years.

And when was the last time you,
like, went past that door?

Thirteen months.

Do you miss the outside

world, just a little?
I can see it from here.
Do you ever get lonely?
No.
I would.
I mean, I don't think we're
supposed to be alone.
Do you?
All right, well,
I'll see you next week.
We're sorry, please
consult your directory and dial again.
Tim?
Hey, hey, hey it's Nick.
Tim.
Tim, it's Nick.
Earthquake?
Yeah, what did
you think that was?
That can't be right.
Why... why not?
Did you see anybody else?
Do you mean besides me and you?
No I, I thought I heard
something, like growling, but...
Oh, yeah, Brett's dog got loose.
Brett's your neighbor and he
can't keep his dog on a leash.
Dog?
Yeah.
I'm not crazy.
Oh, no. Who's saying
anything about crazy?
A little buzzed up, maybe.
Did you, uh, open this tonight?
I had one glass.
Well, I don't think the
bottle would re-seal itself
after the, uh,
the wine leaked out.
Look, man, I'm not
passing judgment.
If I was you
and I got that letter,

I'd be pretty freaked out too.
Oh, there you go.
Well, I guess
I'm gonna head out, um...
You're okay, right?
Yeah.
I could use some help.
I mean, with the letter.
If you haven't found anything
better to do with your free time.
How do you feel about
having some company over?
You know, Joan, I'm glad you
talked me into helping with him.
You ready to head to his place?
Shouldn't you be helping me?
Okay, I'm here, let's just
talk about this for a second.
I think I took it out too soon.
You didn't.
What if he has allergies?
He doesn't.
What if he doesn't like it?
He will.
What if he doesn't like me?
He probably doesn't even like
me, so it'll make two of us.
All right, nervous Nelly, what did
you do with my girlfriend this time?
I am not nervous Nelly.
Okay, you're not.
He's been living
an anchoritic lifestyle,
and I don't want to be the
reason he regrets his decision.
Is that even a word?
Reclusive.
Okay.
The food's perfect,
you're perfect,
and he's gonna wish
he did this six months ago.
You think so?
Absolutely.

All right, what do you
want me to do?
Tupperware?
Yeah.
How you doing over there?
Good, just sauteing the garlic.
You're not gonna
eat that, are you?
Mmm, nice!
Is that the stuff with the
sesame, the, uh, the Bernero?
Cavolo Nero, also called Kale.
Oh, this looks really good.
Thanks.
You don't like it, do you?
My wife used to make Kale.
Oh, uh, I hope I didn't...
No, they're just,
um, something th...
I'm her... uh, I'm sure
hers was much better.
Couple episodes of top chef
doesn't make me erudite.
Okay, that's not a word.
I'm just saying.
Really, now?
It's a word.
Yeah, I don't think so.
What do you think?
Means, um, having
great knowledge.
Thank you.
Okay, Merriam Webster,
I'd like you to meet
encyclopedia Britannica.
I knew that one.
Yeah, right.
What?
Nothing.
So, that animus earlier
about the food situation.
Seems like wasted energy.
Did you just use
"animus" in a sentence?

I did, and correctly,
and I kinda think you want to
make out with me right now.
You think three syllables
is all it takes?
I think it's
a pretty good start.
I'm not that easy.
You're gonna have to come
up with something bigger.
Oh, you don't think I can?
I'd like to see you try.
A star?
Batman.
Oh!
Yeah, you're not gonna
get this one either.
That was a terrible Batman.
That was the Batman.
Mmm...
Peace sign?
Whoa, look at you,
one for two, huh?
It's so sad.
Are you still
thinking about that?
He was married, had a family.
Now he's all alone.
Not if we can help it.
Can we?
Yeah.
Look what we just did.
Go to sleep, all right?
Okay.
Nick?
Nick?
Oh, my god! Nick, Nick!
What's going on?
Something's grabbed my arm!
What do you mean?
Something's grabbed my arm!
What?
Whoa!
Is there... is there

somebody in there?

I don't know.

Get back, get back, get back.

You gotta be kidding me.

What?

It's the luggage.

You just had a bad dream,
and you were sleepwalking.

We both know that's
nothing new for you.

This was real.

No, it wasn't.

It seemed like

it was real, but it wasn't.

You thought someone
was in there.

That's because you did!

Look, we just had an earthquake,
all that stuff got tossed
around and it fell.

That's it.

Can I have some wine, please?

How about a hug,

can I have a hug?

Can I get a kiss?

No.

Tim doesn't know we were working with Dr.
Piccault, now with you.

Well, I don't think it's a
good idea to change that,
especially since you made, what
sounds like, pretty good progress.

I know you've consulted with
Dr. Piccault in the past.

So, do you think Tim's case
is more my area of expertise?

I think your expertise is a
perspective that can only help.

And what does

Dr. Piccault think?

He felt that Tim
was a unique case.

You do know that
a vast majority of the cases

have nothing to do
with the paranormal?
I mean, have there been events
that point to the paranormal?
No.
Well, it's basic.
You have Sage to burn, or OSHA?
Elinore?
Elinore!
Look, I know an
abrupt change in therapist
can seem overwhelming.
So let's just start slow,
and we'll build from there.
There's this feeling, rolling
around in the back of my head.
I can't quite place it.
And it never seems
to go away either.
Kind of like dread, maybe.
Existential dread is common
in cases like yours.
I'm not so sure about
the existential part.
So, you believe in destiny?
I believe decisions
are mine to make.
Like going outside?
You decide it.
Yes.
What if you had been locked out?
It didn't occur to me.
Consciously.
Anyway, still not
sleeping well at night?
Bad dreams?
Yes.
Being evicted
is traumatic for anyone.
For you, it's bound to wreak
havoc with your subconscious.
Manifesting your dreams.
And sometimes, I'm awake.
I'm not at all puzzled that

you're having anxiety attacks.

I...

I feel like things are really
happening that I know can't be.

Anxiety, and phobia, fear, stress, panic
are all rooted in the unconscious mind.

And they can project
themselves in many ways,
whether you are awake or asleep.

So it's normal?

Normal for you may not be
normal for someone else.

But this is
a good starting point.

Hey.

Well, I figured the sooner we
started, the sooner we can finish.

I'm not ready.

You're gonna have to
come outside eventually.

So I think we should just
peel the band-aid off, okay?

Can you do me a favor?

I want you to look
at me right here,
that's the bull's-eye
right there, okay?

Give me your hands.

Come on, I'm not gonna bite
you, give me your hands.

You can do it.

That's it.

Okay, all right, okay.

I just want you to put one
foot in front of the other,
just take one step.

Just like when you were a
kid, just give me one step.

All right, now give
me another one.

That's it.

Okay, come on.

Watch the step here,
give me one more.

Okay?
Come on, that's it.
One more.
You can do it, one more.
Look at the bull's-eye,
one more.
You're outside.
You did it.
One...
Hello?
Joan can't help you.
Help you.
What about her?
You leave her alone.
She doesn't know what I know.
What?
Hindsight hasn't
taught you anything.
Hey.
What are you doing back there?
I don't know that one.
Ow, not so hard.
Ow! Stop...
Oh, come on.
Oh, come on, come on.
You got me.
Well, how did you two
end up together?
Well, she has pretty good taste,
and I've got pretty good luck.
Mmm.
Yeah, she reminds me
of my wife, uh, Carri.
Oh, how'd you meet her?
Uh, a Styx concert, uh,
she passed me a joint.
No way, stoned
at a Styx concert?
Any other way to see
Styx in 1979?
Well, I guess not.
What happened to her?
Oh! I'm... I'm sorry,
man, I didn't...

Oh no, no it's okay, I've had more
than enough therapy, it's just...
After, uh, my wife
was taken, um,
my daughter, Elinore...
Hit her hard.
I didn't know
you had a daughter.
Yeah, after my wife,
well, Elinore...
Um...
Well, she ran away.
I don't blame her.
I wasn't exactly fit.
Hey, hey, hey, hey.
You're getting there.
Didn't mean to be a buzz kill.
No.
Uh...
Uh...
I'm probably going to turn in.
Oh, yeah, right, um...
Do you mind if I crash?
Sleep?
Here?
Yeah.
Joan and I, we kind of got into it
earlier and I just need some space.
Okay.
Thanks, man.
Goodnight.
What are you doing?
There's something in my room.
What? Now?
Tim!
Tim!
Tim? Tim.
Tim, Tim.
What the fuck are
you doing in here?
Tim.
Can you hear me?
Tim, wake up, are you...
What the...

Tim, wake up, Tim, Tim...
Jesus.
Are you all right?
And?
Nothing.
Nothing was there.
Makes me feel stupid
just talking about it.
Has he ever mentioned
seeing anything?
What do you mean?
What kind of things?
He's having severe
anxiety attacks, right?
Which is why I like to
give him a sleep test.
Something very simple.
You know, just to be able
to rule things in or out.
I would call someone and
have them come to him.
You think you could get
him to go for that?
This is the easiest
test you'll ever take.
All you have to do, is sleep.
What's this for?
Oh, really basic.
It remotely monitors
heart-rate activity.
That... that's all
you need to tell?
Oh, no.
This is just a simple way to see
if we need to do a full exam.
Okay.
Snoring a problem for you?
Depends on who's doing it.
You know, I don't mean to be
difficult, but I'm not tired.
Me neither.
How about we chat a bit?
I have a song.
Okay.

It's from when I was a kid.
Anna!
You see?
I don't think he's breathing.
See, this is what
I was telling you about.
Luke, I am your father.
Did you see that movie?
Yeah. Yeah, do you
like science fiction?
I do, yeah.
I'm a big geek that way, let
me just see this for a second.
Is that too tight?
That's okay, it feels okay?
So that's it, it's sleep apnea?
Well, the c-pap should be
effective, but I'll be honest...
This is definitely outside
of the realm of normal.
Even for a sleep apnea.
We need to run
a full examination on him.
You're good at picking
up on things.
What do you think it is?
We know, through
scientific research
that the cerebellum is the part
of the brain that reduces dreams.
It's the very seat
of our unconscious mind.
Phobias, repressed feelings,
darkened thoughts.
The unconscious mind is a
powerful repository for them all.
So is it that much
of a leap to theorize
that paranormal phenomena would
manifest itself there first,
when we sleep?
Now you have quietly
led us all down this path.
Why don't you tell me

what's really going on?

Mmm.

Tim?

How did you get here
by yourself?

It's not that far.

What are you doing?

I wanted to say something.

Are you awake?

Does that change anything?

I don't know.

Have you ever done anything that at
the time seemed like a good thing
at hindsight proved you wrong?

Yes.

Hindsight.

Sorry, I liked you.

I guess I can take
him back in the morning.

Do you want to
talk about before?

Look, you said that
things were evolving.

Well, maybe they are.

But I'm not letting you
do this by yourself.

Whatever happens,
we're in this together.

You have anything
to say about that?

What if the sleep clinic
doesn't work out?

Why wouldn't it work out?

It's a simple question, Nick.

Why don't we deal with
that if we have to?

Look, it's been a long day.

Why don't you get some sleep?

Aren't you coming?

No, I better keep an eye on him.

I'll be okay, you go ahead.

He should be dead.

Normal, then an erratic beat,
then here. This is

a massive fibrillation.
And then...
He's... his heart just stops.
You mean a heart attack?
No, that's not what a
heart attack looks like.
Can sleep apnea cause it?
Apnea causes a lack of oxygen, which
can cause your heart to stop.
So, how come, if he has
apnea, he's not already dead?
It's rare. Most of the
time, people wake up
when they can't breathe.
Then go back to sleep.
Just like you wake up when you
have to go to the bathroom.
People can drift in and
out of apnea all night
and never really
get a night's sleep.
Well, how long can someone
live after their heart stops?
In this scenario,
three or four minutes.
But it was stopped for longer.
If he wasn't dead, I don't
know how he could be alive.
Especially with no brain
damage, no side effects.
How does that happen?
That's what we're gonna
find out tomorrow night.
Shall we?
- So, you're both free, and Jonathan too?
- Mmm-hmm.
Yep. So,
how does this work?
We sold him on coming here, but Tim's
been asking me a lot of questions.
We wire him to more advanced
diagnostic programs
that monitor brain functioning.
EEG, EMG,

and then the data's transferred
back to my office computer.
So he just sleeps here?
He just sleeps here.
We can hear him through a
two-way intercom monitor,
so if he needs anything,
he just lets us know.
Look, I've done this more
times than I can count.
There's nothing
to be worried about.
Well, thanks, doc.
Thank you.
Thank you.
Thanks, see you soon.
Did you tell him?
Yeah, I did.
How long is he
gonna hide in there?
Maybe he'd like
to come down here
and explain what's going on.
You know, Joan,
this agro-attitude
is not gonna help.
Do you know anything
about what happened to Anna?
Nick said she had an accident.
Besides that?
No, how could I?
So much for your test.
Pretty bad timing
for you, right?
Bad timing for Anna too.
She comes in, tries to help
and something happens to her.
What about your wife?
You don't remember anything?
I was asleep when it happened.
That's it?
That's your story,
sleeping while your wife dies?
Of a stroke, right?

Did she scream for help?
I don't know what
you want me to say.
How about the truth,
for starters?
You must have heard
her scream something,
why can't you remember?
Hey, hey, hey, hey.
We're all
on the same team, right?
I'm sorry.
Hey, whoa, where are you going?
Wait, wait, where you...
Where are you going?
She's just a little strung out.
This is Dr. Andre
Piccault to patient Tim Liston,
October 13th.
I've gotten very close
to Tim in recent months
and I've had a breakthrough.
When Tim sleeps, he
experiences an apnea state.
Uh, something supernatural
manifests.
It's like
he becomes like a bridge,
uh, that allows him
to cross over.
Tim.
Tim, what are you doing?
There's something in here.
You can hear it,
listen, right now.
Bad things always happen,
I'm sorry I lied to you.
What happened
to Dr. Piccault?
He's in a coma.
Why do you have this?
You, and Dr. Piccault,
and Dr. Sephton.
Just one big lab rat,

aren't I, buddy?

No, no, you're taking
this the wrong way.

Does it even matter?

Do you see what's
happening right now?

Matters to me.

Yes.

In the beginning, it was work.

We could have left at any point,
and we didn't because of you
and how we felt about you.

That supposed to make me feel better?

Yeah, it should.

I put myself out there for you.

Now we're all in,
all three of us.

You're not afraid to
go outside, are you?

You're afraid of what happens
when someone comes in.

That's why you don't
have any family...

Or friends...

Or anyone.

You knew.

No, I coped.

Why?

Why didn't you say
something, or do something?

You could have stopped it.

Stop something I'm not aware of?

I've been through therapy,
drugged up,

institutionalized,
harassed by police.

What else is there
besides being alone?

Okay.

What do we know?

There's this thing, this dread.

And when you go to sleep,
this apnea happens and you
become a bridge for it.

I don't want to be
a bridge anymore.
So how do we blow up the bridge?
Jonathan would know.
So what do we do
in the meantime?
We just gotta
keep you breathing.
I'm taking first watch.
Nick...
- Nick, Nick!
- What?
What, what, what? Tim: She's
right in front of me, Nick!
Where? Who? She's right in front...
Do something!
Where, where, where?
Anna, she's right there!
I don't see her, where is she?
There, there, there!
There's nothing there,
there's nothing there, man,
there's nothing there!
Bad things always happen,
I'm sorry I lied to you.
Mmm.
I...
I don't know what to say.
How about you can help us?
Look, this...
You've got to understand
that there's no precedent
for this.
Maybe a few days.
Days?
We're not gonna
make it a few more days.
Yes, I need time to work
through this, process it...
How much time
do you think we have?
I have no idea.
I just don't want to end up
like what you just showed me.

I won't let that happen to Nick.
Not because of you or me.
You should have thought about
that before you started this.
Hey.
What did Jonathan say?
Did you get any sleep?
No, not really.
What did he say?
You do look tired, are you okay?
Oh, yeah, I'm fine.
Nick, I'm sorry.
No, I'm sorry.
I should have listened
to you sooner.
I'll stay with Tim tonight.
No, that's on me.
Nick, I can do it, it's okay.
I don't want you
over there with him.
All I have to do
is keep him awake.
No.
It doesn't matter
if I'm here or there.
You said we'd take shifts.
I'll start tonight and
when you get some sleep
you can come over.
All right.
I'll set my alarm for midnight.
What did Jonathan say?
He said tomorrow
he'd have a plan.
Oh.
Oh, shoot.
Hey, it's Joan.
Leave a message.
What?
Daddy, daddy, wake up!
Daddy!
Bad dream.
I have something for you.
Mmm.

Mr. scribbles.
You forgot him when you left.
You knew?
I never stopped
thinking about you.
I never stopped
caring about you.
Elinore.
Never really was an
eviction, was there?
You needed a little push.
And Dr. Piccault?
Getting him to take you on
was the real challenge.
I wanted to come back sooner,
I'm sorry it took me so long.
No.
I'm so sorry I wasn't
there for you.
I don't blame you.
I hope you know that.
I do.
I'm glad.
I wish I could have been stronger...
No, no, no, no, no, no.
You're stronger now.
So beautiful.
Proud of you.
Help me!
Help!
Where did this come from?
I found it at Tim's.
A lot of these seem like they're
Latin, like quorum, quota...
Now here's one, "quotidian".
Recurring daily.
Huh.
I'm not keeping you up, am I?
Mmm-mmm.
Okay.