"For Sale"

by ben j. tucker

INT. A QUAINT COFFEE SHOP -- DAY

Sunlight pours in through the storefront window.

LUKE and CARLA, 22-19, sip lattes at a table.

Carla's attention is rapt by a laptop. She's viewing a Craigslist posting. It says:

"For Sale"

It includes a pic of a high-end flatscreen. Plus contact info.

CARLA

How 'bout this one, babe? It's local enough.

She spins the laptop around to show Luke the TV.

CARLA (CONT'D)

Shall we?

LUKE

We shall.

Carla fishes her cellphone out of her purse.

Dials.

CARLA

Oooh, it's ringing-- Hello? Whuh? Hello? Hi. Yes. I'm calling about the television for sale.

EXT. MR. LEVI'S HOUSE -- DAY

It's a big but lonely-looking place. Out in the middle of nowhere... the outer-burbs.

Tires crunch gravel, as a pickup truck rolls to a stop at the end of a long, winding driveway.

Luke and Carla hop out.

Slap the truck doors closed.

CARLA

I'm gonna bring the Zapper this time, just in case.

LUKE

Leave the Zapper.

CARLA

What if this guy's crazy? Maybe this is all just one big elaborate set up or something.

LUKE

Nope. Negative.

CARLA

But I said just in case.

Off Luke's unyielding expression, Carla humphs, then pretends to toss a STUN GUN back into the truck. But slips it into her purse instead, slick style.

Luke and Carla cross to the front door of the house and knock...

KNOCK. KNOCK.

But no one answers.

CARLA (CONT'D)

C'mon, already.

She fingers the doorbell.

DING DONG, DING DONG.

But again, no answer.

CARLA (CONT'D)

You godda be kidding me. Where is this guy?

LUKE

How would I know. You called him.

She fishes out her cellphone and redials.

Luke moves over to a window nearby, peers inside and sees...

MR. LEVI, 70s.

Rocking back and forth in a pillowed rocking chair.

His eyes are closed.

Classical music blares.

Is he smoking a joint?

Sure is.

BACK TO

Luke raps on the window.

It solicits zero reaction from the old man.

Luke calls to Carla...

LUKE (CONT'D)

Hey. He's here.

(then)

Dude's old... possibly a pothead.

He knocks again on the window, but a lot louder this time.

EXT. FRONT DOOR OF LONELY HOUSE -- DAY (MOMENTS AFTER)

Door swings open.

Mr. Levi greets us, his face now beaming with gregarious delight.

MR. LEVI

Well who do we have here?!

He's quick-footed and witty. Very gentlemanly.

Has no clue of the world-of-hurt awaiting him.

CARLA

Hi! We're here for the tv.

MR. LEVI

Wonderful. Please, step inside.

INT. THE BIG, LONELY HOUSE -- DAY (CONTINUING)

The old man waves his two visitors inside.

LUKE

Nice place.

MR. LEVI

You're too kind. It's much too big and drafty, in my humble opinion.

(moving along)

TV is downstairs, in the basement. After I lost my sweet Ellen, my eyes also began to betray me. So I had the television moved below on account the radio works just fine.

He leads Luke and Carla toward the basement door.

MR. LEVI (CONT'D)

Say, if you'd like, I was about to boil up some tea to enjoy--

Carla tackles him to the ground like an all-state linebacker.

LUKE

(pulls out a gun)

Geezus, Carla! Lighten up. He's old.

CARLA

Oops. Got carried away. Guess who drank too much coffee? This bitch.

Carla helps Mr. Levi back onto his feet.

She dusts him off and gingerly-like leads him over to a sofa.

Sits him down.

Zip-ties his wrists, ankles together.

Bags his head.

Then turns to Luke.

Blows him a kiss.

And with that, our dynamic duo split up to do what they came here for... rob the place.

SERIES OF SHOTS

--Luke rifles through rooms, jacking whatever he likes.

--Carla takes the bathrooms, zeroing in on places people store medications. Score! She pops a pill.

END SERIES

Luke meets back up with Carla in the living room, where Mr. Levi fidgets, head bagged, on the sofa.

Carla munches on a sandwich.

Luke readies items to take out to the truck.

CARLA (CONT'D)

Don't forget about the tv in the basement.

LUKE

Shoot. Kay, I'll grab it.

Luke heads off, down a hallway to the basement door.

It's locked.

He kicks it open.

Proceeds.

BACK TO

MR. LEVI

I'm having trouble breathing.

CARLA

Don't be a baby, baby. We'll be out of your hair before ya' know it.

Her eyes touch down on the joint Mr. Levi was smoking earlier. It's discarded in an ashtray.

CARLA (CONT'D)

Sweet.

She snatches it up. Sparks it. Starts puffing.

CARLA (CONT'D)

Yummy.

BASEMENT

Luke steps down into the thick blackness of a windowless basement.

He touches the wall blindly, searching for the light switch.

There it is.

He flips it.

CLICK.

A solitary bulb flickers to life, revealing...

An empty basement.

Aka no tv.

But there is another door across the way.

Luke heads for it.

But half way there.

POP!

Light-bulb bursts.

BACK UPSTAIRS

Carla tokes.

Mr. Levi fidgets.

MR. LEVI

Please remove the mask. I've trouble breathing. I beg you. I'm blind so it's impossible for me to identify you--

CARLA

Calm down already. Jeez.

Carla yanks the bag off Mr. Levi's head. But she thinks twice, then pretends to punch him in the face to verify he's actually blind.

Accidentally connects.

BIF!

MR. LEVI

Argh! You hit me?!

CARLA

I didn't mean to--

LUKE (O.S.)

Dang it, Clare. Wouldja stop bullying the geriatric.

Carla whirls around to find Luke's returned from the basement.

CARLA

It was an accident. He moved.

MR. LEVI

Did not.

CARLA

Yes you did. Like I'd really intentionally try to punch this old fart in the face on purpose. It was a total accident. Wait, where's the ty?

LUKE

I'm working on it. I need a flashlight.

CLARE

Use your phone.

(d'oh)

LUKE

TOVI

Whatever.

He turns, leaves.

We follow him downstairs into the...

BASEMENT

Flashlight on, Luke crosses to the door.

It's double locked.

LUKE

Sonuva.

He flexes into a stance.

Stomp-kicks the door open.

Then proceeds inside.

BACK UPSTAIRS

Carla brings Mr. Levi an ice pack.

CARLA

I am soooo sorry 'bout that. I'm such a klutz after I smoke.

BANG! BANG!

Gun shots?

Yep.

BASEMENT/STAIRCASE

Wafting over from the corner room across the way, we hear:

Two bone-crushing THUDS. A body slamming the wall, then the floor.

Followed by silence.

CARLA

Steps down into the basement.

CARLA

Luke?! Babe? You okay?

Her cellphone flashlight slashes through the darkness, landing on the door.

It's slightly ajar.

CARLA (CONT'D)

You hear me over there! Luke? Hey, we gotta get out of here.

No response.

CARLA (CONT'D)

Luke?! C'mon, babe, you're starting to scare me a little...

She crosses, evermore ill-at-ease, over to the door...

CARLA (CONT'D)

Sweetie?

...the Zapper's white-knuckled in her hand, just in case.

She nudges the door.

Door creaks open to reveal...

LUKE

His body ripped open and feasted upon. Beyond dead.

CARLA

Knee-jerks into hysterics.

CARLA (CONT'D)

Noooo!

Her eyes sweep the scene before landing on something terrifying off screen (we don't see it.)

She belches a blood-curdling scream.

Then knee-jerks into a footrace for her life.

But just when she gets back to the top of the stairs, Mr. Levi steps out into the doorway, intercepting her escape.

CARLA (CONT'D)

Please god, help me!

Mr. Levi slaps the door shut in her face just as...

THE CREATURE latches on to Carla from behind.

RIPS her back into the black abyss of the basement.

INT. MR. LEVI'S HOME -- LATER ON THAT DAY

Mr. Levi sits down at a computer.

Classical music plays in the bg.

He pecks out a Craigslist post.

"TV For Sale"

Clicks publish.

The end.