

Our Doors Are Always Open

Written By

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Based on the short story by Ian Muller

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EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Rain pounds the pavement. A combat boot SPLASHES through a puddle as its owner steps onto the sidewalk.

LOUIE (25), a gutter-punk with greasy hair and a pockmarked face, stands in front of a massive stone-built church. A single marquee hangs above its doors:

In need of a Flock? Search No Further! Day or Night, Rain or Shine, Our Doors Are Always Open. Come Pray With Us.

INT. CHURCH LOBBY - NIGHT

Maroon and purple tapestries line the stone walls and floor. A pedestal bowl filled with holy water sits on one side.

Louie strips off his backpack and shirt, wringing water onto the floor. Open palms scoop out handfuls of holy water as he washes his face and underarms.

From his bag, he grabs a dry shirt, pulling it over his head. In front of him, another set of double doors. He opens them into-

INT. CHAPEL

Pews line both sides of the walkway. Centered at the opposite end of the room is a simple wooden cross. A confessional booth sits behind it.

Louie drags his bag behind him as he makes his way to the front. Staring at him from both sides are the eyes of saints etched into stained glass windows.

He PLOPS down on the front pew, kicking back his feet. Louie pulls off his curb-stompers and peels off filthy socks, tossing them behind him.

From his backpack, Lou pulls out a half-full 40oz and a battered DiscMan. He slams the malt-liquor as he places headphones over his ears. Punk rock BLARES.

Leaning back and closing his eyes, he fails to notice a light begin to GLOW from within the confessional. It burns white-hot, before subsiding. Thick STEAM drifts from beneath the door.

Lou's nose wrinkles. He pulls his shirt over it.

LOUIE

Jesus Christ! What the fuck is that smell?

The DiscMan SKIPS before cutting out. Louie shakes it, but to no avail. He throws it back in his bag and slides on his boots.

LOUIE

Fuck this, I'd rather sleep in the rain.

The confessional door CREAKS open.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Hello, Louie.

Louie is on his feet in an instant, producing a switchblade from his pocket. The blade FLICKS out.

LOUIE

Yo! Who the fuck is in here?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Can't you tell?

LOUIE

Yeah, some bitch who's gonna get her tits cut off if she don't get out here.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

As you wish...

CHARLOTTE (19), a girl with a cheap red dye-job and holes in her thrift shop cardigan, steps out from the confessional booth. Louie gapes at her.

CHARLOTTE

Hey, Lou.

LOUIE

How...? It can't be. Charlotte?
This isn't fucking possible.

CHARLOTTE

Why? Because you left me?

Charlotte moves in front of the cross and stands in mock-crucifixion.

CHARLOTTE

Sometimes shit catches up to you,
Louie.

Charlotte begins to cough. A dark lump shoots from her mouth and lands at Louie's feet with a SPLAT. Thin bodies

of larvae writhe in the black sepsis.

LOUIE

Holy fu-

The stain glass windows EXPLODE inward, showering the room in glass. Shards cut through his shirt and arms.

The shrapnel swirls around Charlotte, lifting her from the ground. Each swipe takes bigger and bigger pieces from her as she is literally being torn to shreds. Her eyes never leave Louie.

CHARLOTTE

Welcome to your reckoning.

Louie looks to the nearest broken out window. A mass of darkly knotted tentacles SQUIRM from outside, reaching toward him.

He sprints down the aisle. Behind him, Charlotte has been reduced to gore and sinew. She is SCREAMING.

Louie reaches the chapel's doors. They won't budge.

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)

(shrieking)

Louie!

Behind him is a vortex of spinning glass consuming everything it touches. The cross is shredded to splinters in an instant.

The pews begin sliding toward it, like some inescapable black hole. Louie's feet upend and he is suspended in mid-air, still grasping onto the door's handle.

The double doors open inward. Louie is holding on by the pads of his fingertips. He GRUNTS as he pulls himself into-

INT. CHURCH LOBBY

Louie collapses onto the floor with a wet CRUNCH, the doors slamming behind him. He takes a step toward the door, but the floor pulls at his boots.

Pink goo is spreading on the floor beneath him, hardening as it moves. He spins around and finds the entire wall encased in the substance.

Louie tries to run for the door, but the goo makes it impossible. One of his boots pulls off, exposing his foot.

He makes it to the front door, just as the handle is enveloped. The lobby now looks like the inside of some enormous mouth. He struggles to turn the knob.

CHARLOTTE (O.S)
Try your blade, Louie.

Louie pulls out the switchblade and begins cutting into the membrane. Blood and pus pour from the wall, pooling at his feet. It's too much to take. Louie staggers back, vomits.

The jagged cut begins to pulsate. A taloned hand births itself from the gash, stretching out impossibly long toward Louie. As it nears, Louie sees a maggot-infested hole centered in the hand's palm.

Louie slashes at the hand with his blade, but it whips out of reach, like a serpent. Beneath him, the goo begins to creep up him, encasing him.

Louie struggles, but it's in vain. He's trapped. The talon's palm rests on Louie's head. His eyes roll back to white.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - UNKNOWN

Louie wakes with a GASP. He's laying on a stained mattress in a shitty basement apartment. Beside him is a bloated corpse. It's Charlotte.

He turns her head, looking into dead eyes. Vomit trails from her cheek to the bed. Louie begins to cry.

LOUIE
I'm sorry.

Louie leaps from the bed.

LOUIE
(screaming)
I'm sorry! Is that what you want to hear! I'm sorry I left you, I tried CPR! I didn't make you take those pills!

Louie runs to the door. The knob crumbles in his hand. He pounds on it.

LOUIE
Somebody help me! Please!

Louie moves to the windows. Beyond the glass is a haze of

grey. Louie grabs the bedside lamp and wails on the glass. It doesn't break.

Louie jumps back on the bed, shaking the corpse.

LOUIE

What now, Charlotte?!? What's the next game? I'm ready for you, you stupid bitch.

Charlotte's mouth falls open, black bile pouring out.

CHARLOTTE

(disembodied)

No more games. You're here for the long haul, Lou. Your body will wither and rot like mine, but you'll feel all of it. Be ready, it gets worse.

Charlotte's corpse begins to rapidly putrefy in Louie's hands. Skin separates from bone. Intestines liquefy and leak out from beneath her.

Louie collapses.

LOUIE

I'm sorry I left you. I was scared...

Louie sobs.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

A pickup truck jumps the curb as it comes to a stop. The driver door swings open.

SAL (40), a bull of a man with a beer-gut that hangs over his belt, steps out onto the sidewalk, drunk.

He staggers unsteadily, using the hood of the truck for balance. His knuckles are bloody and scabbed over.

SAL

(to himself)

Easy, Sal. You've just got to find some place to dry out. Get your head right, plan your next move.

Sal looks up. In front of him is a massive stone-built church. A single marquee hangs above its doors:

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Shine, Our Doors Are Always Open. Come Pray With Us.

SAL

Yeah, that'll do. Have a quick
word with the big man upstairs.
He'll understand. Wives are
supposed to honor their husbands,
right?

Sal steps through the double doors of the building. A beat
before TRISHA (38), A waif-thin woman with two black eyes
and blood-crusted lips, moves to the entrance from inside.
She closes the doors.

FADE TO BLACK.