

The Great Spirit

By

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SHEILA

See?

MEG

I don't like green.

DAN

I'll have that in mind next time  
you ask for money.

MEG

Wow. That would have totally shut  
me up if you actually had a job.

DAN

Who says I don't?

Sudden silence. Meg and Sheila turn to Dan, who stares back  
with an ace-up-the-sleeve smile.

SHEILA

You got the Prism Capital job?

He slides a business card along the table.

Sheila and Meg study it in awe.

It reads: "Dan Hassle - Investment Advisor".

SHEILA

How...?

DAN

I impressed them with a couple of  
good calls. They call me "The  
Oracle".

Meg and Sheila spring up from their seats and hurry to hug  
Dan in celebration.

MEG

Screw the salad, mom. Bring the  
champagne.

Sheila goes to get it.

SHEILA

Damn right we'll have some cha --

She's cut short by a SUDDEN PAIN in her throat. She falls to  
her knees, red faced, eyes bulging, choking as if an  
invisible force was strangling her.

DAN

Sheila?!

Whatever it is, Meg gets it too.

MEG  
(choking)  
Dad...

Dan whirls around, addressing a presence nowhere to be seen.

DAN  
Release them, Zarek!

Meg and Sheila writhe on the floor, GASPING for air.

DAN  
Leave them alone! I'll do whatever  
you want!

Zarek releases its grip on the women. They cough and gasp, finally able to suck in some air.

LATER

The food on the table is gone. An Ouija-like board takes its place.

Dan, Sheila, and Meg place one finger on the planchette.

Dan, pissed, looks around as he addresses the presence.

DAN  
You wanted an altar, we built you  
an altar. You wanted prayers, we  
gave you prayers. What the hell do  
you want now?

The planchette jerks around the board. Moves at lightning speed as it indicates a sequence of letters.

It starts with "H", then "U" --

The pace accelerates. Their eyes try to follow. It's too fast.

With his free hand, Dan grabs a notepad and hurries to write down Zarek's message.

The planchette finally stops moving.

Grim faces turn to the notepad, studying Zarek's demand:

"HUMAN SACRIFICE".

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

An alarm clock reads "4:00 AM".

Dan and Sheila lie in bed, eyes open like saucers.

SHEILA  
Remember that demonologist we  
mailed last month? He mailed back.  
Said he might be able to help. He's  
not cheap, though.

DAN  
On a scale from one to ten, one  
being that guy who charged fifty  
bucks to bring burning incense, and  
ten being that other guy who  
charged two grand for exorcising  
the house... How expensive is he?

SHEILA  
Eleven.

DAN  
Sonofabitch.

SHEILA  
We have the money.

DAN  
And we have a mortgage to pay.

SHEILA  
Do you see another option?

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Dan and Sheila share the table with MR.SEDWICK (60's), a  
scrawny man with a perpetually tired look.

The couple watches as he finishes his glass of juice.

SEDWICK  
I assume you already tried moving.

DAN  
Three times. But he always follows.  
Bastard's got a crush on us.

SEDWICK  
A mover, huh? That narrows down the  
suspect list. I can help you.

DAN  
(ice cold)  
We're sure you will.

That's when Sedwick starts feeling dizzy. Very dizzy. He  
stares at his empty glass.

SEDWICK  
What...?

Dan and Sheila watch, unfazed.

Sedwick hits the floor, the sedative forcing his eyes closed.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Sedwick's eyes flutter open. Finds himself in front of the altar, tied to a chair.

Nobody in here but him and Dan... holding a nasty BUTCHER KNIFE.

DAN

I wanted to do this while you were out, but he said I couldn't. Sorry.

He forces himself to raise the knife, ready for the kill.

SEDWICK

(completely calm)

Human sacrifice, huh? That narrows it down even more. Let me guess. Zarek?

Dan freezes, surprised.

SEDWICK

That bastard and me... we go a long way back. I've beat him before. Many times. Bet it all started with strange noises during the night. That's all he could do at first. Bang a few doors, scratch a few windows. But then he started to get stronger, didn't he?

Dan lowers the knife, enthralled.

SEDWICK

You know what makes him stronger? You. He feeds off your servitude. Destroy the altar. Stop the prayers. And he'll move on.

DAN

And we'll never hear from him again?

SEDWICK

Never again.

Dan takes this in, then:

DAN

I believe you.

SWASH! - he STABS Sedwick anyways.

Sacrifice blood trickles down onto the floor, quickly forming a puddle.

Dan yanks the knife out, speaks to Zarek.

DAN

Your turn.

Driven by an invisible force, the blood puddle splits into smaller puddles which then shape into letters and up and down arrows. These are Stock Exchange symbols.

Eyes beaming like he just found gold, Dan takes out his notepad and hurries to write them down. His handwriting morphs into...

INT. DAN'S STUDY - NIGHT

...the exact same symbols flashing across a computer monitor which displays a news trading site.

Dan's greedy eyes savor the Stock Exchange movement.

DAN

Thank you, Zarek, Great Spirit.

FADE OUT.