**The Sound**

Each day is like the next. Each day is like the last. I wake up around 5:00 a.m., shower, shave, get dressed, eat, go to work, come home, read, sleep, and repeat. It was that exact way for years. I wouldn’t say I was fine with the routine but, I never felt the need to change it, everything was correct, everything was in order. Then came the sound. I was in the midst of reading only a few days ago when I had first heard it. It was a hushed kind of tapping, a rhythmic sound like someone were drumming against the outside of my wall. Hitting twice and then pausing. Similar to a heartbeat.

“Tonk, tonk,” pausing about three seconds then-

“Tonk, tonk.”

I turned my attention towards the direction of the noise as it continued on. Slowly, I stood from my chair, thoughts juggling in my mind, “I live alone, it’s late, there are no animals around, is it the wind, is someone trying to break in?” Possibilities raced through my head and more would follow if not for-

“Tonk, tonk.”

My train of thought interrupted, I mindlessly put my ear to the wall, feeling its coldness brush against my cheek. And as I focused, I silently waited for the sound until,

“Tonk, tonk.”

I slammed my fist into the wall and I heard a rushed scurrying, a crazed shaking, and the tapping came back in faster intervals.

“Tonk, tonk, tonk, tonk.”

I jumped backwards and realized the sound was coming from outside. I decided to investigate, thinking it to be teenagers pulling a prank on me or, some drunk idiot wandering around. That sounded about right, there was a pub not too far from here, that’s all it was, that’s all it was. There was an immediate crunch sound of my feet sinking into the fresh snow. My face was blasted with a frigid wind as I shuffled my way down the front steps. It was late in the night and the only real light came from my porch lamp, all others were either too far away and obscured, of turned off. Even the stars couldn’t be seen.

I felt around in my pockets for my phone, holding up its screen for light. I began to trace my way around the house, making my way to the side that I heard the sound, crunching in the snow as I walked. But, as I did so, I noticed imprints in the slush. Footprints were to be anticipated yet, these seemed sporadic, random, and gnarled. There were large “feet” that appeared to be dragged and what I could only assume to be strange hand prints, alternating from knuckles to open palm.

As I turned the corner I expected to see the tracks leading to some slumped over man half-awake and vomiting however, what I did see was… *not*. It was large and slender, around maybe nine feet tall, hunched over and a sickly, discoloured brown. It was pale, slithery thing, hairless and warped, its joints bent the wrong way, and its bones jutting and stretching flesh, making each vein able to be seen. The thing rocked back and forth staring at the wall with a kind of excitement, its distorted long limbs hanging at its side, elongated index fingers hovering above the ground. It cracked its neck to look at me with an audible snap, revealing a mouth without lips, peeling its face into a mocking smile and pupiless eyes that shined in the dim glow of my device. Its muddy breathing visible in the cold.

The creature stared, and extended its finger tapping it against the wall.

“Tonk, tonk.”

It dropped on all-fours with jolting motions, like a stopmotion nightmare, and lunged at

me as a spider would. I let go of my phone and ran. Sprinted back inside, slammed the door shut, and locked it. I collapsed on the floor, out of breath and whimpering like a child. Then I stopped and listened, there was another, heavy breath. It was soon followed by, “Tonk, tonk,” matching the pace of my own heart.

It was at at *my door*. Tapping away again. I had to call someone, the police, my neighbor, my family, I-

I dropped my phone.

I was trapped.

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