

Yellow Eyes in the Darkness

Lucius Zaros

Chapter 1

Shattered Dream

I slowly opened my eyes and stared towards the ceiling. It was such a boring white colour, shining brightly thanks to the new layer of paint. The bed was nice and warm, all around cozy. I had no intention of getting up quite yet. How long had I slept? I reached to my right with my arm but could only find the pillow and blanket. She was not there. Memories came crashing down on me, washing away the little precious moment of serenity. Replaced with what felt like countless claws tearing at my chest from the inside.

I squeezed the pillow violently, trying my best to relieve the pain. This was supposed to be the happiest time of my life. Married to the woman I love. Right after the wedding, we had even moved into a new home and were starting our life together. It was supposed to be perfect. Tears started forming in my eyes and I pulled the pillow to my face. I wanted to scream but didn't have the power to do so. Closing my eyes was a mistake. On the blank background, images began to form. I could see her again, the memory burnt into my mind. Hanging from the rope, her head tilted to one side in an unnatural angle. I was there again, walking in from the front door into unusual silence. Calling out for her and walking to the kitchen, finding her. The sound of my keys hitting the floor, echoing in my mind. My whole world collapsing around me into nothingness.

I threw the pillow into a wall and bolted up, reaching for a bottle on the nightstand. I shook it but heard nothing. All I wanted was to take the pills and escape back to my dreams, the only place where I could still be with her. My sweet escape from the cold reality.

I then sat on the bedside for a long while, head hanging low, trying to pull myself together. This had gone on long enough, I had to get up and do something, anything.

My legs felt weak as I stood up. When was the last time I had eaten something? Leaning into the wall for support and avoiding the empty water bottles littering the floor, I slowly made my way to the door. I opened it and walked into the dark hallway. It seemed to be night-time as otherwise at least some light would have seeped in from living room. There was a switch somewhere by the wall on my right side, but this being a new house I couldn't quite recall where. It was harder to find than I thought, but I finally felt it under my palm and flicked the switch. This was better, at least I could see something.

I noticed a bad smell in the air as I made my way to the bathroom. Clearly I had forgotten something in the kitchen, but that could wait. I was not ready to go back in there yet. Looking into the bathroom mirror was a shock in itself. I looked terrible, as if I had aged years in just a few days. I ran my hand over the stubble on my chin and decided to start by shaving it off. I like shaving my face, as it feels a bit like meditation. A moment without thinking, just concentrating on the job at hand.

Washing last of the shaving cream off my face, I already looked much better. Perhaps there was hope for me yet. I looked at the items by the sink. Most of them were hers. I didn't know what half of the bottles had in them or what they were actually used for but she loved buying them. A little smile crossed my face, remembering all the times she had dragged me through shopping malls. Her very own personal beast of burden. I picked up one of the bottles and swirled the liquid within. I had so little left of her now. Only memories, a few items and... Smile vanished from my face as the horrible realisation hit me.

I stumbled out of the bathroom, not bothering to put my shirt back on. How could I have forgotten? They had asked so many questions and I had pretended I was okay. They said they'd check on me in a week. How long ago was that? I told them there was nothing to worry about, that I could take care of things. Take care of her. I now realised the smell had not come from the kitchen. I stopped at the door, my hand grasping the handle and my heart

pounding in my chest. I said a quiet prayer and opened the door.

The stench hit my face as I stepped into the colourfully painted room. It was quiet and the rainbows and unicorns on the walls seemed to mock me. Walking to the cradle, my worst fears were confirmed. There she was, my only daughter. She had the eyes of her mother and they were now just as lifeless. Her dead dull eyes that were once full of joy and wonder were now staring at me, blaming me. Puke, now dried, was dripping on her cheek. How long she must have cried, begging for food, water, help. Until she drowned in her own puke. Why her? Why us? What had we done to deserve this?

A spider crawled out of her mouth and that was the final straw. Screaming, I fell backwards on the floor, backing away from my baby. I was about to get to the door and out of this cursed room, but then I looked up. She was on the ceiling, walking along it on all fours. Her head was hanging downwards, no longer supported by the broken neck. I was frozen by fear as I watched my dead wife crawl towards me. When she was above me, she stopped and I gazed into her accusing eyes. I opened my mouth to beg for her forgiveness. At that moment, she suddenly erupted into a swarm of countless spiders. They fell upon me, covering me.

I could feel them crawling on me, digging their teeth into my skin. They crawled under my clothes, even finding their way into my ears and nose. I tried to swipe them off me but there were too many. A black mass of eight-legged critters. I couldn't help but scream and as I did, they crawled into my mouth.

Chapter 2

Darkness

I woke up in darkness. Remembering the spiders, I tried to get up but found that something was keeping me still. I could feel wraps around my legs and arms, even some on my chest and forehead. I couldn't move. I realised someone was talking to me, a man with a kind and calm voice. He was asking if I knew where I was, if I remembered what had happened. I answered his questions as well as I could and they were followed by others. My face felt numb but I could feel sparks of pain beneath it. Why was the room dark and who was this man?

A mental hospital. They had found me in my home, lying on the floor of the nursery. I could imagine it had been a ghastly scene. A dead baby in the cradle and the father lying on the floor next to it, with his eyes clawed out. Yes, apparently that had happened which explained the darkness at least. He insisted I had clawed them out myself, even after I told him of my dead wife and the spiders. I could hear him scribble something on what I assumed was a notepad.

I suppose it didn't matter that I told him about the spiders. They thought me mad anyway. It was a strangely comforting thought that I had only gone insane. The alternative was even worse. After all I had gone through in just a few days, it would have been a miracle if I had retained my sanity. I didn't know if it was the drugs pumped into me, the exhaustion or both, but I was feeling relatively okay. It felt strange to converse with the man about such dark events so calmly, almost casually. He told me to get some rest and that my own therapist would come see me the next day. Having said that, he

left the room.

It was strange trying to fall asleep, not being able to close my eyes. Everything was just dark, all the time. I couldn't even tell when the dream began. As I stared into the empty darkness, I suddenly saw something in the far distance. A pair of eyes, looking straight at me. I somehow felt as if they were reading my thoughts, as if my mind was an open book. Who were they and how could I see them? There was something else right behind them as well, another pair of eyes but unlike the first, these were inhuman. It took me a while to focus on them but I finally managed it. They were strange eyes. Beautiful and horrifying at the same time, glowing yellow in the void that was now my world. Unlike the first pair of eyes, these were not looking at me but at the reader. They were filled with curiosity and... anticipation?

As the yellow eyes turned to look at me, the curiosity was replaced with hatred and disgust. I quickly averted my gaze. I heard the door of my room open and someone walking in. Wait, was this not a dream? I turned back towards the eyes and they were still there, staring from beyond the void. Gazing into the yellow eyes, I heard the doctor speak and then it all suddenly fell into place. It all made sense again as I remembered everything. It was the doctor who spoke with my voice.

Chapter 3

Punishment

Oh how I had lusted after that woman. Doctor and client relationships were supposedly unethical, but it's not like this was my first time walking at the grey zone of professional ethics. She was exactly my type and already in my grasp, I knew I was like a god to her. All I had to do was to make a move, but then he had to ruin everything. Another client, an annoying young man suffering from anxiety.

They hit it off with the first meeting and started dating. After that he was all she ever talked about. Him this and him that. Despite my best efforts, she was slipping away. She got pregnant, they got married. Finding new purpose in loving relationship and motherhood, she started getting better, her depression easing its grasp on her. She even dared to suggest that we'd start meeting less often. He stole her from me, I did the right thing. It was justice.

It was so easy. A description of medicine to help her ease into post-therapy life. All it took was a single pill amongst the many. No one would ever know. No one ever had before, no one ever did after. She would pay for her insolence and come crawling back. One bad depressive episode and she'd be mine again, just like the others.

The news came a few weeks later. The bitch had hanged herself. Worse still, the husband was brought to me for evaluation as I was for some reason considered their 'family doctor'. However, it was such a pleasure seeing him walk in, a broken man. I wanted to see him suffer, because it was his fault I had lost my toy. He had forced my hand. I sent him home, assured the authorities that he'd be fine and that we should check on him in a week. I hadn't dared to even

hope for the results that followed.

I got a call early in the morning, asking me to come to the nearby mental hospital. When I heard what it was about, I could hardly contain my excitement. Their baby was dead and the man had gone insane. He didn't deserve her, and he didn't deserve her offspring. It was already almost noon when I arrived at the hospital. I was greeted by a gentlemanly old doctor and he escorted me to my patient. I was let into the room by myself which suited me well. As I walked in, I could tell that he noticed me. I asked him a question.

The doctor asked me a question. I knew what it was before he, or I, even asked it. Before I could answer, the yellow eyes, His eyes, were right before me, filling my vision, burning with anger. I tried not to scream but couldn't help it. This too I already knew. I had gone through this countless of times. I knew the other me was calling for help, saying I needed to be calmed down. They came in, stinging me with needles.

The sounds around me are getting further away and thinking is getting harder, but I know you can hear this, read this. Listen to me. I don't deserve this, their suffering isn't my fault. They belonged to me, it was my right to do what I did! Please, you have to save me. Free me, don't let Him make me live through this again. I just want to die, I don't want to be brought back. Destroy it, you must destroy it! No one else can read it. I beg you, do it before He --

Chapter 4

In New Hands

I slowly opened my eyes and stared towards the ceiling. It was such a boring white colour, shining brightly thanks to the new layer of paint. The bed was nice and warm, all around cozy. I had no intention of getting up quite yet. . .

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