

IT WAS A NIGHT

PART SIX

'...And To All a Good Night'

Written by

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OVER BLACK.

AUSTIN (V.O.)
Mrs! Mrs! Watch out!

INT. AUNTY RUTH'S PIE SHOP. NIGHT.

Huddled together, our group of unexpected allies watch on in increasing horror as DOROTHY (74, a sweetened New York accent) approaches the swirling storm surrounding the GHOST GIRL. CARMEN (41, speaks with a noticeable baritone Alabaman accent) is using his height to shield LUCIFER (21, a Michigander) and AUSTIN (23, Australian), who is doing his best to both hide and continue taking notes in his journal. The young couple, NADIRA (24, Australian) and ANNA (25, Australian), are holding onto one another for dear life.

All around them the world is falling apart. All traces of the Christmas spirit from before have been shredded and added to the growing cyclone of diner debris. Chair stuffing, shards of broken china and forgotten menus whiz through the air at dangerous speeds. Every window has been encased in ice, including the front door.

NADIRA
What is she doing!?

LUCIFER
She's going to get herself killed!

Dorothy ignores the cries of those behind her and steps into the storm.

INT. GHOST GIRL'S STORM. CONTINUOUS.

Up close, the Ghost Girl is more light than girl. Her eyes, blue and cold, pulsate with her anger and her entire body is emitting a blindingly white glare that is wisping off her in smoky tendrils, becoming unnaturally solid in the cold air.

DOROTHY
(soft)
Hello, Annie.

The Ghost Girl turns her face to Dorothy's, finally acknowledging her.

INT. AUNTY RUTH'S PIE SHOP. CONTINUOUS.

Outside the storm, the group continues to shield one another from danger.

Suddenly, looking up from his book and realising Dorothy has stepped into the ghost's inner circle, Austin's face pales.

AUSTIN

Oh god.

Anna, hearing, looks over to Austin.

ANNA

What?

AUSTIN

She shouldn't be there. That's, that's too close. This ghost is currently sitting at a category seven, at least!

ANNA

What kind of ghostbusting bullshit is that?

AUSTIN

In layman's turns: Highly dangerous. Meaning, no matter what do not approach.

Leaning around Carmen, Lucifer enters the conversation.

LUCIFER

(rising hysteria)

Well why the hell are we still here then!?

AUSTIN

Because I was going to get rid of it, but...Mrs! Mrs! Watch out!

All heads turn to see...

INT. GHOST GIRL'S STORM. CONTINUOUS.

Dorothy has produced the pair of knitted mittens from her cardigan pocket, slowly presenting them to the Ghost Girl.

DOROTHY

Here. For you, just like I promised. See, there's no need to worry.

The Ghost Girl watches Dorothy cautiously.

CARMEN (O.S.)

What is it doing?

Shifting her gaze over Dorothy's head, the Ghost Girl takes in the crowd watching her. There's Lucifer, still with his knife in hand, the two girls cradled together, Austin studying her like a fascinating specimen, and Carmen with his hard gaze.

Dorothy, unaware, takes another step forward.

DOROTHY
Annie...

It's not working, not like it did before. Spooked by Dorothy's sudden movement the Ghost Girl blossoms with a fresh wave of cold white light, temporarily blinding everyone in the diner. Dorothy falls backwards, out of the inner eye of the storm.

INT. AUNTY RUTH'S PIE SHOP. CONTINUOUS.

Anna and Nadira rush forward to help up Dorothy and bring her back into the group.

CARMEN
(stern)
Why isn't it working?

DOROTHY
I don't know. I, well, I was a little behind schedule this time.

AUSTIN
Schedule?

DOROTHY
Every year, I usually arrive with her gift already made. Then I'm able to give it to her long before the storm even starts. But...I just didn't think it would get this bad, I don't understand!

Everyone turns to Austin.

AUSTIN
(scholarly)
Well, it is a well known fact that ghosts are naturally distrustful.

ANNA
Well known fact?

AUSTIN
For those in the right circles.
(looking to Dorothy))
Those who are trained in how to
properly deal with them.
This is because the souls that
remain behind do so because their
deaths were particularly traumatic.

CARMEN
(nodding towards Dorothy)
But she told us she built up a
trust with this ghost.

AUSTIN
The thing is, ghosts have a very
poor concept of time. They're often
in loops, reliving their last day
on earth which tends to confuse
them. They get lost in their
memories, see?

Everyone looks a little confused.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)
I am impressed though.
(to Dorothy)
By establishing this yearly
tradition, you've convinced her to
remain in a sort of stasis in-
between visits.

Anna steps forward.

ANNA
I'm sorry to interrupt, but can we
get back to...
(indicating the Ghost
Girl)
Please?

Austin nods his head in agreeance, turning to face the Ghost Girl.

NADIRA
So, what should we do?

LUCIFER
Get rid of her, of course!

Suddenly, prompted by Lucifer's outburst, the Ghost Girl surges forward, causing the knife in Lucifer's hand to freeze so rapidly he squeaks and drops it.

Before she can attack the rest of the group, Austin jumps in front, throwing up his hands and enveloping them in a purple dome of light.

INT. ENCHANTED CIRCLE. CONTINUOUS.

LUCIFER
We're going to die!

Lucifer's wailing earns him a stern look of disapproval from everyone.

AUSTIN
(exasperated and through
gritted teeth)
No, we're not going to die.
Although, this barrier won't hold
forever.

Austin turns to Dorothy who is being supported by Nadira and Anna.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)
With your permission, I can remove
this ghost.

LUCIFER
What are you asking her permission
for?

ANNA
Shut-up, man.

Lucifer shuts his mouth, frowning, as Anna returns her attention to Dorothy, who is still out of sorts.

DOROTHY
I just don't understand.

NADIRA
It's okay, Mrs. It's not your
fault.

DOROTHY
But, I just don't understand what
could have set her off like this? I
really was only a little late.

Standing a little to the side, Carmen shuffles around awkwardly, looking out the window that would have shown his van if it were not covered in ice.

BAM!

Everyone turns to find the Ghost Girl throwing herself against the barrier.

BAM! BAM! BAM!

Squaring his shoulders, Carmen steps forward.

CARMEN

I think...this might be my fault.

Everyone's reaction is instant, cautious expressions clearly visible as they all take a step backwards.

LUCIFER

(accusing)

Did you kill her!?

CARMEN

No! No...I'd never kill an innocent person like that.

NADIRA

(suspicious)

Which means you've killed before?

Carmen looks conflicted, sighing and running a hand over his tired face.

CARMEN

(to himself)

God, of all the places...

(addressing the group)

It's complicated.

Everyone looks majorly unconvinced. Anna even pulls Nadira behind her.

ANNA

Would you hurt any of us?

CARMEN

No, not at all. Look, I only brought it up because I just think that, given some of things I've done, I might have spooked this...girl.

Carmen looks to Austin for reassurance.

AUSTIN

It does kinda make sense. Ghosts are particularly good at reading humans. In fact...

Austin takes a moment to study everyone around him. He takes note of Lucifer holding the knife, of Anna and Nadira holding onto one another, of Dorothy and Carmen.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)
(to Carmen)
I don't think it's just you.

ANNA
What?

Austin turns towards the whole group.

AUSTIN
I mean, look, he's killed someone before, Lucifer here is holding a knife, you two...

ANNA
My name is Anna.

AUSTIN
(counting with his fingers)
A young couple in love, one who's name is remarkably close to that of this ghost girl. And me.

DOROTHY
You?

AUSTIN
I came here with the intent to remove her. Of course she's lashing out, she feels threatened, by all of us.
(gesturing to Nadira and Anna)
By what we might represent to her...
(gesturing to Carmen, Lucifer and himself)
...or how we could hurt her.

Austin ends his speech with a proud grin.

DOROTHY
Okay, so what can we do to help?

Everyone turns to Austin once more, everyone except Lucifer.

LUCIFER

(pointing at Carmen)

Wait, are we actually just going to ignore the fact that this guy openly admitted to killing someone?

DOROTHY

Dearie, I think now is a time for all of us to put aside our differences and work together.

(turning to Carmen)

I will have your word though, that no harm will fall upon us while we stand by your side.

CARMEN

I swear. I promise, I'm really not a bad guy.

LUCIFER

(grumbling)

That remains to be seen.

AUSTIN

There are more of us anyway, if it comes to it, that is.

No one looks particularly assured by this fact, but they allow Carmen to stand by them once more.

NADIRA

So will you remove her?

AUSTIN

Actually, I might have a better idea.

LATER

Everyone is standing within a six-pointed incantation that Austin has drawn on the ground in chalk, one person at each point. Austin, noticing Dorothy's expression, reveals his new plan.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)

I've crafted this so that it's not a total banishment.

LUCIFER

Why the hell not!?

Carmen elbows him roughly to shut him up, helped by Anna and Nadira's matching glares.

AUSTIN

What I'm hoping to do is reset her loop. She'll believe she has gone right back to the start of the day and, hopefully, that should be enough.

DOROTHY

Thank-you.

Nodding, Austin reaches for Lucifer's dropped knife. Wiping the frost off with his sleeve he presents his left palm, which is covered in old scars.

AUSTIN

Once my blood touches the ground the spell will begin, and it can't be stopped. Do you understand?

Everyone looks at one another, assessing the reality of the situation before nodding solemnly in agreeance.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)

That means you all have to do exactly as I say.

Lucifer raises his hand slowly.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)

Yes.

LUCIFER

(pointing to the knife)
Do we also have to...

AUSTIN

No. Sacrifice is only demanded from the one who drew the circle.

Lucifer looks intensely relieved, as does everyone else.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)

Okay. It's now or never.

Austin turns to Dorothy.

DOROTHY

Do it.

CLOSEUP < AUSTIN'S HAND >

Austin brings the knife to his palm.

CLOSEUP < AUSTIN'S BLOOD >

A number of thick red blood drops fall to the ground where they hiss before sinking through into the chalk lines of the circle, which start to glow just like the Ghost Girl.

INT. ENCHANTED CIRCLE. CONTINUOUS.

Austin bows his heads, speaking slowly and quietly under his breath, muttering something that can't be heard over the sound of the Ghost Girl throwing herself against the purple dome harder than before. She has caught on to what is happening.

Under the combined efforts of the Ghost Girl and Austin's spell, fractures start to spread across the top of the protective barrier, and a rushing wind even picks up within the incantation circle. Dorothy and Carmen share hard, determined looks of concentration. Anna and Nadira both close their eyes and Lucifer looks absolutely terrified.

Suddenly, Austin falls to the ground, pressing his hand to the glowing incantation, which flares with light and causes everyone to raise their hands to their eyes for fear of being blinded.

OVER WHITE.

Somewhere in the blinding white aftermath Austin calls out.

AUSTIN
Hold hands, now!

CLOSEUP < HANDS >

We see a rough, large hand grasp a thin hand with black nail polish.

A hand with black nail polish grabs one covered in blood.

A hand with an old watch on it grabs a girl's hand.

The girl's hand grabs another girl's hand in a glove.

The gloved hand links up with a wrinkled hand.

Another wrinkled hand is softly cradled by a large, rough hand.

INT. AUNTY RUTH'S PIE SHOP. NIGHT.

The emergency services have arrived and the snow has died down. Through the now visible windows a snow plough can be seen busy clearing the way out of the petrol station.

Inside the diner, it's like nothing abnormal ever happened. Cheesy, poppy Christmas music plays through the overhead speakers, cups of coffee and tea sit on the counter, unbroken, and the booths have been returned to their previous state. Even every single paper snowflake and tinsel garland are back in their rightful places.

Keeping out of the way of the authorities, Carmen and Austin stand side by side. Occupying their old booth together, Nadira and Anna cuddle close together, Nadira with a blanket over her shoulders. To one side, Dorothy can be seen talking to a POLICEMAN, who is clearly trying to convince her to also take a blanket, to little success.

Wrapped up in his own blanket, Lucifer stands awkwardly by the counter.

JENNIFER (O.S.)
LUCY!!!

Lucifer turns to see JENNIFER (21, a Michigander), ploughing through everyone in her way as she sprints across the diner at full speed, throwing herself at him.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry!

Lucifer stumbles under her vigorous checking of his person, laughing out loud.

LUCIFER
Nice to see you too.

JENNIFER
I shouldn't have left you, I
shouldn't have asked you to take my
shift. If I'd known about this
storm, I'd never.

LUCIFER
It's okay, I'm not hurt. Just a
little cold.

JENNIFER

When I finally saw your text - was that a Firestarter reference? - I knew something wasn't right.

LUCIFER

No, really, it's okay. I just got spooked, the snow can make you see things and there sure was plenty of that.

JENNIFER

Really?

Jennifer looks ready to cry and Lucifer pulls her into a hug.

LUCIFER

Yes, you silly goose.

Over in their booth, heads pressed together, Nadira and Anna are half-asleep. A muffled *ping!* prompts Anna to reach into her pocket and bring out her phone. Her aunt has finally replied, and with a cheesy, heart-eyed gif. Nadira stretches up a sleepy arm to Anna, who passes the phone over. Nadira smiles upon seeing the message before putting the phone back down. Anna adjusts Nadira's blanket so it's spread over both their shoulders as they both close their eyes.

Still at war with the policeman and his blanket, Dorothy is refusing to back down.

DOROTHY

No, I'm not some frail old lady, thank-you. I've lived an awful lot longer than you, young man, and I know how to take care of myself just fine.

The policeman looks aggrieved at Dorothy's stubbornness.

POLICEMAN

You've just spent an entire night out in the worst snow storm this side of Michigan has seen in decades. Please, you must be cold, just take the blanket.

DOROTHY

I'm not in the slightest bit cold. In fact, I've never felt warmer.

POLICEMAN

That can't even be possible.

DOROTHY

Are you calling me a liar?

POLICEMAN

No. I-

DOROTHY

We ate *warm* pie, there were *warm* heaters, everyone was very *warm* and accommodating.

The policeman looks exhausted, almost like he'd happily ditch being a policeman altogether right then and there.

Brrriiinnngg!

DOROTHY (CONT'D)

Ah, and that'll be for me. Now, if you'll excuse me.

The policeman looks more than happy to part ways with Dorothy, wrapping the blanket he'd been trying to give her around his own shoulders as Dorothy retrieves her phone.

DOROTHY (CONT'D)

Oh, Claire, sweetheart! Yes, yes,
I'm all right-

Dorothy passes by Austin and Carmen as she takes her phone to a quiet corner of the diner.

Unsure of what to do with himself, Carmen is hovering besides Austin, half watching him as he scribbles fresh notes in his journal, half keeping an eye on the police and his van outside. He points to Austin's left hand, that has been wrapped tightly in an Aunty Ruth's tea towel.

CARMEN

Does it hurt?

AUSTIN

Not really. Anyways, I'm quite used to it.

CARMEN

Used to it?

Austin puts his book down, turning to face Carmen so they can talk.

AUSTIN

Back at home, in Australia, I run a
small haunting removals business.
Here.

Austin reaches into his backpack and produces a card, handing it over to Carmen. On the front of the card is the acronym **H.H.H.**, with the words *Happy Hour Hauntings* in fine print underneath.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)

(lowering his voice)

What did you mean earlier, about
your past, that is? So, you're a
hitman I'm guessing.

Carmen doesn't reply instantly, a silent debate going on in his head, visible in his conflicted expression.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)

Look, I'm not judging here, I'm
just a curious bystander. Plus, the
odds of us every crossing paths
again are literally zero.

CARMEN

Not statistically speaking.

ASUTIN

Practically zero then.

Carmen sighs, pocketing Austin's card.

CARMEN

Yes. I'm a hitman.

AUSTIN

Fascinating.

Carmen looks mildly concerned by Austin's response, Austin's facial expression being very similar to when he was admiring the raging Ghost Girl.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)

Is that a job that has you
travelling a lot?

Carmen thinks.

CARMEN

A bit. Mostly east cost, New York
and some.

AUSTIN
And do you-

But before Austin can continue, the PLOUGHMAN comes stomping through the front door to the diner, announcing:

PLOUGHMAN
Roads are clear.

As the ploughman exits and the remaining police start assembling themselves, Carmen leans down to whisper to Austin.

CARMEN
If you'll pardon my sudden
departure, but I'm going to slip
out quietly while I still can.

Austin nods in understanding, offering his hand. Carmen grabs it and the two shake.

AUSTIN
It was a pleasure to be haunted
with you.

Carmen can't help himself but laugh.

CARMEN
You are one of the strangest
individuals I've ever met, but it
was a pleasure, all the same. I
suppose I don't know who else I'd
rather be haunted with.

Austin grins as the two look across the diner and upon the people they just shared the most extraordinary evening with. Anna can be seen gently waking up Nadira. Dorothy is still on the phone, positively beaming, and Jennifer isn't letting Lucifer out of her sight, keeping a firm grasp on his arm as she drags him towards the door.

EXT. PETROL STATION. NIGHT.

Everyone is leaving. Cars are pulling out of the petrol station and the emergency services have turned off their lights as they drive away. The petrol station and pie shop are both dark except for the big lights over the gas pumps.

EXT. AUNTY RUTH'S PIE SHOP. NIGHT.

A closed sign hangs in the door of the pie shop.

INT. AUNTY RUTH'S PIE SHOP. NIGHT.

Inside the pie shop, all is still and quite. The booths are empty and clean.

INT. KITCHEN. AUNTY RUTH'S PIE SHOP. NIGHT.

The kitchen is all locked up, everything put away.

INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM. AUNTY RUTH'S PIE SHOP. NIGHT.

In the bathroom the ice is gone. All is still. Focusing in on one of the mirrors, a light flickers suddenly revealing the reflection of a girl in a yellow sun dress wearing a scarf and a pair of mittens. She is smiling.

The lights flicker off and the reflection is gone. There is no one standing in front of the mirror.

EXT. PETROL STATION. NIGHT.

We see the empty dark petrol station, the lights above the gas pumps now switched off and all cars gone.

SUPER: ...and to all a good night!