THE PUMPKIN BOY

Written by

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INT. STEVE’S BMW - NIGHT

The BMW idles in front of a Halfway House.

Dave (19), wearing tattered jeans with an oversize white t-shirt, lights Steve’s (19) cigarette. Steve wears expensive jeans and brand-new Jordan shoes.

DAVE
So, do you think pumpkin boy over there is going to stay?

A boy with a pumpkin mask stands next door, looking at them.

STEVE
Naw, his grandma will make him evacuate.

DAVE
That’s one weird kid, man.

STEVE
Yeah, his sister died last year in some crazy accident.

Steve passes the cigarette to Dave.

DAVE
How so?

STEVE
Drank lighter fluid thinking it was mouthwash. They believe she killed herself but--

DAVE
--But what?

Dave ashes out the window of his friend’s BMW. He passes the cigarette back to Steve.

STEVE
I don’t know, Dave, but something is definitely up with that kid. Look at him just standing there.

CLOSE UP:

LIGHTNING! The pumpkin boy’s head turns slowly toward them. THUNDER. The large pumpkin helmet has only one eye and a triangle nose. He has an eerie smile. Liquid oozes from the side of his mouth.

EXT. THE HALFWAY HOUSE - NIGHT CURFEW 11:00PM

BIG JOHN, 48, wearing a Gold’s Gym tank top and workout pants, emerges from the garden front lawn. He knocks on the car window.

EXT/INT STEVE’S BMW - NIGHT

STEVE
Ahhhhhhhhhh!

DAVE
Ahh!

BIG JOHN
You two yelled like a couple a little girls! Ha! Ha!

The two snap back to where the pumpkin boy was just standing. The street is now empty.

STEVE
Shut up!

DAVE
Shut up!

BIG JOHN
Listen, I know you two are new to the Halfway, but it’s about that time.

STEVE
Okay, Big John.

DAVE
Okay. Big yawn.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The living room is full of Goodwill furniture. JESSIE, 34, BIG JOHN, 44, Dave, 20, and STEVE, 21.

Jessie opens up a notebook and takes attendance.

JESSIE
Steve?

STEVE
Here.

JESSIE
Dave?

KYLE
Here.

JESSIE
Big John?

BIG JOHN
Here.

JESSIE
New or not, let’s not try and be late again, okay fellas?

DAVE
We were just trying to get our last smoke in.

JESSIE
I don’t need to hear any rebuttal. Next time sit in the garden, or out back where we can see you.

STEVE
You mean you watch us at all times here?

DAVE
Just a little 1984-ish, wouldn’t you say?

BIG JOHN
Listen, guys, most of us are leaving for Hurricane Ian. It’s currently a Cat 3, but intensifying. It will be here Sunday, but most of us will not.

JESSIE
If you can’t evacuate, can we trust you to be left here all alone?

DAVE
Yes.

Dave looks over at Steve.

STEVE
We won’t have a BIG party.
(Laughs)

Big John squirms in his seat.

BIG JOHN
They really need to evacuate.

DAVE
We’re orphans.

Dave and Steve do a secret handshake.

BIG JOHN
How the hell could you afford that damn BMW?

STEVE
I saved up.

(Jessie laughs)

JESSIE
You mean sell drugs? We all know your M.O.

STEVE
You would know, wouldn’t you?

DAVE
You bought from him, didn’t you?

BIG JOHN
I guess if you refuse to evacuate, then you leave us no choice. We will be gone until the storm recedes. Hold the fort down.

INT. STEVE AND DAVE’S ROOM - NIGHT

Steve and Dave lie on their beds as the storm rages outside. Rain pelts the window.

STEVE
It’s a horrible idea.

DAVE
Why not? It’s a total catastrophe... nobody on the block is home. It would be like shooting ducks in a barrel.

STEVE
That’s fish.

DAVE
Same difference.

STEVE
We are NOT robbing our neighbor’s house.

Steve gets up from his bunk and walks into the dark living room. There’s no TV, only a HAM radio. The latest broadcast of the storm is in half static. LIGHTNING occurs frequently.

RADIO BROADCAST
A storm surge warning is going into effect for the following counties: Pasco, Hernando, Hillsborough and Pinellas.

STEVE (CONT'D)
See? It’s too nasty outside.

DAVE
It makes for the perfect cover... plus all the power is out and everybody has evacuated already.

STEVE
I’m not going to get into any trouble.

DAVE
I’m going alone then.

EXT. THE NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Dave, dressed in all black, speed walks towards a dark house. The storm is raging. He fights off wisps of wind. He jolts at nearby LIGHTNING and THUNDER.

EXT. THE WINDOW OF THE DARK HOUSE - NIGHT

Dave goes into his backpack and retrieves a jimmy bar. He wedges the window open right when LIGHTNING strikes to conceal himself.

INT. THE NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house has satanic symbols throughout. Dave walks slowly as the floorboard CREAKS, through the kitchen, towards the master bedroom. LIGHTNING strikes hard.

Dave opens the door. It CREAKS loudly. The bedroom has a pentagram painted on the floor with a circle of blood in the middle. LIGHTNING, LIGHTNING and THUNDER!

DAVE
Oh, hell no, I’m outta here.

As Dave is going to leave he spots a large shadow across the beam of his flashlight. It makes him drop his phone into some rubble.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Who’s that?

Dave walks around in a small circle trying to locate his phone with the flashlight. He kneels down to search for it amongst the junk that lies around the house.

He is on all fours searching with his flashlight. His flashlight beams across a pair of kid’s shoes pointed at him.

DAVE (CONT'D)
What the...

He looks up to see a boy with a pumpkin for a head, holding a butcher’s knife. The Pumpkin boy thrashes down and slices Dave’s throat, making him gurgle blood for a few seconds until he lies there motionless.

INT. STEVE AND DAVE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Steve chops a sandwich in half with a knife.

STEVE
C’mon man, where are you?

Steve looks down at his watch and then back out of the window. Outside is clearing up, but it is still raining. He texts and calls Dave multiple times.

STEVE TEXT
Hey man, where are you? Everyone will be back soon, hurry it up!

Suddenly Steve gets a text from Dave.

INSERT PHONE.

DAVE TEXT
I need your help to carry this stuff and the Playstation 5 is yours, okay?

STEVE TEXT
Okay! I’m in. What house did you hit? I’m OMW.

DAVE TEXT
5672.

EXT. THE NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dressed in all black, Steve lifts the broken window and enters the house. He looks around with his flashlight to see junk around everywhere. LIGHTNING and THUNDER!

Steve dials Dave’s number but he can hear it ringing from another room. He walks towards the ringing.

STEVE
Dave?

The ringing gets louder and louder. Steve slowly opens the bedroom door as it CREAKS. LIGHTNING and THUNDER! There is an open oval room with something splattered red in the middle.

Dave lies there in the middle of a candle lit pentagram. Dave’s neck is cut open and blood everywhere. The phone is stuck inside the wound, flashing, making his blue postmortem veins protrude. THUNDER.

STEVE (CONT'D)
What the fu--

The door slowly creaks behind him. LIGHTNING reveals the Pumpkin Boy wielding a large butcher’s knife. The pumpkin boy steps left, blocking the only exit. THUNDER.

STEVE (CONT'D)
What did you do to Dave?

The pumpkin boy holds the knife above his head and runs at Steve. LIGHTNING! Steve tackles him like a linebacker and the knife enters his back in the process. THUNDER.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Ahhh!

The pumpkin boy scrambles up and disappears into the dark.

There is a mirror on the wall. Lightning displays the knife stuck in Steve’s right shoulder. He reaches around to grab the handle of the knife. His hands are too shaky to perform the procedure.

His cell phone rings. Dave’s cell phone rings. Steve doesn’t know what to do: take out the knife or answer the phone. He chooses the blade.

At the exact moment the blade comes out, Steve unleashes a giant roar directly over his friend’s body. His face is full of anguish. A flash appears from a cell phone 10 feet away, from something about 4 feet high.

The flash blinds Steve. He accidentally kicks one of the candles surrounding the pentagram and the room catches fire.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Oh, no!

EXT. THE NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Big John and Jessie view hurricane damage as they pull into their driveway.

INT. THE HALFWAY HOUSE - DAY

There is a large, open, vacant area. The power is back on.

BIG JOHN
Hello?

Big John looks at Jessie with contempt.

INT. STEVE AND DAVE'S ROOM - DAY

The two look around at the empty bedroom.

JESSIE
Why is this house empty, John?

BIG JOHN
I don’t know, boss... they’re not answering their cell phones either.

JESSIE
What’s burning? Smell that?

EXT. THE NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

The neighbor’s house is now ablaze. Steve runs down the sidewalk with one arm dangling, back to the halfway house. He sees Jessie’s Dodge Durango pulled into the driveway.

INT. THE HALFWAY HOUSE - DAY

STEVE
Listen! Dave’s been killed and there is a crazy boy with a knife, and he--

JESSIE
--What? Wait. Hold on a second there.

BIG JOHN
What are you talking about?

STEVE
The pumpkin boy! The Pumpkin Boy!

BIG JOHN
Who?

Sirens blare from far away.

STEVE
The kid next door... he’s crazy! He killed Dave and stabbed me with a butcher’s knife, look!

Steve turns around to show his bloody wound.

JESSIE
What the heck are you talking about Steve? Who killed Dave? It was just you two in the entire neighborhood.

STEVE (CONT'D)
You gotta believe me!

EXT. THE NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

The neighborhood is alive with people and sirens. They are returning to see what damage the storm has caused to their homes. Everyone watches the blaze as the cops surround the house next door.

A crying kid comes running out of a burning house. He hands a phone to the lead cop. The cop looks at the picture.

INSERT PICTURE.

Steve holds a butcher’s knife, standing over his dead friend’s body.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. THE NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE - DAY

The firefighters pull out Dave’s burnt corpse. They try and save the house but it collapses into a heap of fire and ashes.

EXT. THE HALFWAY HOUSE PORCH - DAY

The three occupants of the halfway house hear the collapse. They come out and are immediately met with orders.

COP#1
Get your hands in the air!

COP#2
Get on the ground, now!

They comply.

The cops huddle around the phone to get a better look at the image they are looking at. They pick their heads up one by one, looking and pointing at Steve.

COP#3
That’s him.

The three cops haul Steve up by his arms and cuff him.

STEVE
Wait... what’s this about?

COP#2
You’re under arrest for the murder.

THE END