

The same eerie darkness that had been stalking him outside, was now seeping in, gradually surrounding the cubical.

Tate watched in horror as it slowly spread; the window; the walls; even the toilet disappeared into the emptiness.

Fixing his eyes on the disturbing entity, Tate backed away towards the rear of the carriage, studying the darkness ooze onto the aisle, leaving a mass of void behind it.

Tate's attention turned to the faint humming of the phone behind him. Should he answer it? Would they even be able to help?

He ran to it. Stumbling through the carriages. All the while, looking back as the gloom slithered effortlessly behind him.

The automatic doors hissed open then shut as he made his way through the lifeless carriages, giving as much leeway between him and the darkness as he possibly could.

He seized the phone, pressed the answer key and held it to his ear, listening. The ghostly whisper came:

Terribilis est locus iste

Tate stood fixed. The terror gluing his feet to the floor. The handset gripped unsteadily to his ear. This isn't happening.

Then silence.

Without warning, a deafening wail screamed through the earpiece. Tate threw the phone down, as though holding a scalding poker.

More whispers drew closer; the darkness was now in the next carriage. It appeared to be calling him.

Wisps of black air flew from the nothingness, rising up smothering the ceiling, sensing its way.

The train shuddered.

Someone must be driving the damn train.

Tate captured one last look at the darkness before turning, swiftly making his way to the end of the carriage.

He passed the personal CD player lying on the table, the headphones still quietly pumping out a continuous beat. He passed the laptop, and stole a quick glance at the screen. The four eccentric words still flickering on it.

Naturally, Tate didn't want to hang around. He sprinted to the driver's door; twisted the handle; it was locked.

One way or another he had to get in. He took a few steps back; collected his thoughts; ran at it top speed. Shoulder first, he smashed directly into the door. *Oh Jesus Christ, that hurt.*

He noticed a small window, just at head height. If he could break the glass he'd be able to reach the lock.

Tate searched for anything that would help him break the window. Next to him, fixed to the rear of a seat, was a fire extinguisher. He snatched it and violently attacked the glass, pounding it hard until the pane smashed.

Behind him, he could hear the whispers gradually gaining.

Terribilis est locus iste

He turned to face it. Horror struck. The faces he had once seen; Ms laptop, Mr drumming fingers, Mr mobile phone; they were there, their hazy black features struggling to break free from the inky horror. There seem to be others as well, faces from his sordid past. Were they ghosts? Or something more sinister?

Tate had no time to think, he pushed his hand through the shattered glass, viciously ripping his skin, unlatched the lock, pulled his blood-drenched arm back out, opened the door and hurried through, securely locking it behind him.

He rested his relieved head on the wall next to the door. His heart thrashing against his ribs, chest heaving, breath trying to catch up.

He gazed at the vacant driver's seat. Who the hell was driving? *What kind of nightmare is this?*

Somehow, Tate needed to stop the train. He sat in the chair and searched around. Buttons; lights; switches; dials, it was all too much.

Just as he was giving up hope, a bright red button caught his eye.

EMERGENCY STOP.

He slammed his fist hard onto the button.

Nothing. Didn't even budge. He threw his face into his hands. *Please, get me out of this dream.*

He let out a deep sigh and peered through the large window in front of him.

All around was... nothing. No lights, no movement. Zilch.

Something caught his eye, just there, beside him. He dared to turn and face it.

He didn't look up, instead, concentrated his stare on the strangers clothes; tattered and bloody.

It spoke. 'Give me back what's mine or you will be cursed' His voice was distorted.

Just ignore it.

Please go away.

Suddenly, the Six-foot stranger pounced, landing onto Tate's lap, staring him straight in the eyes. His teeth; black and rotting, his face; putrid, oozing yellow pus and covered in sores. Tate knew him, but from where, he couldn't quite say. He didn't want to know.

Then there it was. Tied around its neck so tightly, was an electrical flex. Oh God, he killed this thing no more than four hours ago.

'The evil eye, where is it?'

What the hell was this 'dead' man talking about?

Tate had no time to stop and chat. He grabbed the excess flex and pulled down hard, wrapping it around the arm of the chair.

He slid out from under the struggling corpse, and stood there, refusing to believe the sight before him.

The door behind him began to shake aggressively. He turned to see the darkness skulking through the broken window. It had arrived.

There was nowhere for him to go. Zombie behind him; death itself, staring him straight in the face. What could he do?

He slid into a corner between them, hands over his ears to block out the haunting whispers; eyes closed, not to see when the end was near.

He screwed up his face ready for the final impact. This was it.

There was a loud crash as the door was ripped from its hinges.

With such a force, it struck his head, knocking him unconscious.

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Tate could hear voices, faint and muffled. Were they talking to him? No, each other. He slowly opened his eyes, his eyelids felt heavy and sore.

He blinked once; he could vaguely make out four silhouettes; blinked again; he could see a man in white plastic overalls talking to three other uniformed Police Officers. *Thank you, God.*

'Ah, Mr. Tate, you've come back to us.'

A relieved smile rose from Tate's lips. These saviours were undoubtedly a sight for sore eyes.

The officer walked slowly towards him. A big chap, six-foot five give or take a few inches. 'We were obliged to search you for identification sir.' He said with a convinced smile, 'Looks like we found more than we bargained for.'

The Officer held up both hands, in one, a pair of leather gloves. In the other, a plastic bag, inside, a severed thumb in clear-wrap.

'Sir, I'm arresting you for the mass murder of more than thirty passengers on this train...'

Tate stood to his uneasy feet. He didn't murder those poor people; they'd disappeared - Hadn't they?

He gazed behind the officer.

There was blood everywhere, ceiling; floor; over the windows; across the chairs. Everything was covered in thick, congealing blood.

As he was led out of the train, something grabbed his arm; it was the nice tea lady who had served him coffee hours before.

She bent towards him and smiled. An evil whisper left her mouth.

'This place is dreadful.'