

His eyes were fixed on the contents of the toilet. He grasped his pocket with one hand. He felt weak and uneasy. Tate stumbled and flung his other hand out to stop himself from falling, somehow he managed to stay conscious. His hand slipped down the wall, it was wet.

Tate forced his eyes away from the contents of the bowl. He glanced round the cubicle. Under his hand were smear marks of blood. On the wall written in crimson blood were the words; *Terribilis est locus iste*.

He puzzled at the words. Trying to think rationally, he wondered what the words meant.

Tate wanted off the train. He no longer needed to know where everyone else was. He just wished he was off.

Still grasping at his pocket he looked again at the contents of the toilet. He could feel the thumb still there. He bent closer to take a better look. His eyes were not deceiving him. There bobbing in the water was a thumb with a tattoo of an eye on it. Tate slowly pulled out the bag from his pocket. In the plastic bag was a clean-cut thumb with a small tattoo that looked like an eye.

He stepped back into the corridor, his heart was racing and sweat had formed on his brow. The Silence broke. A child giggled in the distance. Tate ran down the aisles, back through the compartments towards the giggles.

Next to Tate's seat, a young boy about five years old sat with his back to Tate. The child wrote on the floor with a red crayon.

Everywhere Tate looked were the words *Terribilis est locus iste* written in crayon. He reached out to touch the child on his shoulder, but Tate jumped as a mobile phone rang on a table behind him. He had not realised the phone had stopped ringing before. He picked it up with a shaky hand and answered it.

A gruff voice said, "*Terribilis est locus iste.*" Tate dropped the phone on the floor. The child turned around and stared at him with bright red eyes, it grinned displaying a mouth full of crooked sharp teeth. Its nostrils flared as it sniffed Tate's scent in the air. Saliva dripped from its mouth. With a long grey lumpy tongue, it licked its thin pale lips. The boy thing shrieked and tapped its long thick fingernails on the floor. Tate was beyond fear.

Without thinking Tate pulled on the emergency brakes. Nothing happened. Outside the windows was still darkness. He ran to the nearest exit door and frantically pulled at it.

The door would not budge.

"You can't run," said the gruff voice.

Tate froze. He spun round. The childlike creature was sitting behind him. All of a sudden, it grabbed his legs, pulled, and bit down on his calf. Tate

screamed and fell against the door, which forced it open. He lay half in and half out of the carriage. It bit down again on the other calf, this time it managed to bite a chunk of flesh off. Pain shot through Tate's leg, he kicked out at it frantically, but the childlike boy laughed and pushed Tate out of the doors. He fell to the ground with a thud, and then all went dark.

Tate was startled by the hiss of a hydraulic door leading into the carriage. A uniformed woman carrying two metal jugs walked in, stopped at each of the occupants, and asked them if they wanted tea or coffee.

Tate hauled himself up as she drew closer. He watched in disbelief as she poured coffee into his cup. He thanked her and stirred it. He stood up and looked round the carriage, ahead of him tapping on a laptop sat the woman, further up was the balding man with a white shirt and at the far end was the young man.

Tate walked up the aisle slowly his heart was racing again. He couldn't have just dreamt that. Could he?

His legs ached. He passed the woman typing on her laptop. He glanced at the screen and saw those four Latin words on it. She glanced up and smiled at him. The younger man's mobile phone rang. He put down his magazine and answered the phone. He spoke in a soft voice, "Terribilis est locus iste."

Everything appeared to be normal in the next carriage, but Tate could sense something was wrong. A few people sat drinking coffee or reading newspapers. A young lady sat sipping her wine as she wrote into her slim leather bound diary, Tate had to look inside of it. He peered over her shoulders. There written inside were those four Latin words again.

Feeling uneasy, Tate picked up the pace. His legs ached and his head hurt like hell. Something urged him to go to the toilet. He had to check it.

Tate opened the cubicle door. Empty and clean. He looked down the bowl. Nothing. Just water. He entered and locked the door. He pulled out the packet with the thumb. He had to stop this shit, it was getting to him. Absent-minded he threw the thumb into the bowl and flushed it. He closed the lid and sat down. Severe pain tore through his legs. Blood seeped through his trousers. He pulled up his trousers legs. Two holes were in his calves. He blinked hard. This can't be real.

The toilet door flung open and a boy stood smiling at him. It took a few seconds for Tate to recognise him. The boy's smile grew wider revealing its ghastly teeth and his eyes glowed red with enjoyment. It jumped at him biting and clawing away. Tate screamed out for help, but the passengers ignored his pleas.

Tate was unable to fight the boy-creature off as it attacked him wildly biting chunks of flesh off from his body. Blood splattered up the walls. Tate's

screams echoed through the carriages. He punched and pulled at the child, but it would not stop. The child dug its fingernails into Tate's neck ripping at his vocal chords. Tate coughed and spluttered up blood. He realised there was no way out. With his last bit of strength, he wrote on the walls a warning, 'this is an evil place.'

Tate crumbled to the floor in a heap. The creature continued biting chunks from his lifeless body. The pain subsided as he began to let go into the darkness. He blinked up at the words he had written on the wall one last time, but in place of his words were Latin ones.

David Harris had just made it on time to catch the train. He sat down smirking to himself. He had got away with it. No chance of being caught now.

He glanced around the carriage, he noticed an older woman typing away on a laptop, a balding man listening to his portable CD player, a young man in his twenties reading a magazine and another man with black leather gloves sitting peering out of the window.

Harris smiled as he tapped his rucksack where his trophy of a bundle of blonde hair was placed in a plastic bag.