

SURPRISE!

Written by

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INT. ANNE'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

The room is dimly lit and messy, the walls are covered with zombie movie posters. The bedside table is covered in cups and a meager pile of birthday cards.

ANNE (22), wakes up, still in her pajamas. She looks around groggily. Her phone is still playing a true crime podcast.

PODCAST HOST

Little did she know that the sound
Sarah Beth heard from the kitchen
would be her last--

A door SLAMS outside Anne's room, followed by SLOW TRUDGING FOOTSTEPS and RUSTLING.

Anne leaps out of bed, grabbing the BASEBALL BAT leaning against her wall. She stands by the bedroom door, bat raised, then second guesses herself and hides in her slatted closet.

INT. CLOSET - AFTERNOON

The sounds grow louder outside Anne's room. The door opens and Anne watches the intruder through the narrow slats.

Anne raises her bat, but sits frozen. A shirt falls on Anne's head and she gasps. The intruder turns and rushes to the closet, pulling the doors open.

The two meet eyes and Anne screams.

The intruder, GRACE (29), looking frazzled and wearing a ripped sweater, covers Anne's mouth with her hand.

GRACE

(Hushed) What are you doing in
there?

Anne rips Grace's hand away.

ANNE

What are YOU doing here?! --I
thought you were a murderer. I
could have killed you.

Anne gets to her feet, gesturing to the bat.

INT. ANNE'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

GRACE

Good, you brought that. I lost all my weapons on my way over here.

ANNE

Weapons?

GRACE

(Seriously) You haven't seen? It's all over the news, they're everywhere Anne.

ANNE

Who?!

GRACE

Zombies.

ANNE

Oh come on, don't fuck with me like that.

Grace pulls Anne to the window and they peak through the blinds. Across the street, a single zombie walks slowly towards the house. A low GROWLING is heard.

They pull back from the window.

GRACE

It all happened so fast. I don't know how I made it here in one piece. Mom, Dad, I couldn't get through to them, I--

Grace notices Anne's pajamas and gives her an exasperated look.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Were you just asleep? It's-

She checks her phone.

GRACE (CONT'D)

-3:30. You know if you woke up a little earlier and brushed your hair maybe someone would hire you.

She runs her hand over Anne's hair. Anne pushes her hand away.

ANNE

Mom and Dad could be dead and
that's what you're worried about?!

GRACE

Okay, okay.

ANNE

Oh my god. Mom! I didn't even hug
her the last time she came over. I
just yelled at her for trying to
set me up with Jerrod.

Anne is crying now.

ANNE (CONT'D)

And she knows I don't date boys,
but I know she's trying.

She breaks down in ugly sobs.

Grace pats her back awkwardly and checks her phone.

GRACE

Hey, hey. I'm sure they're okay.
Dad has all those guns and --

ANNE

And I never went hunting with dad!

GRACE

Really? I figured with all those
"pew pew" (finger gun) movies you
watch...

Grace picks up a figurine of a grisly zombie with its head
chopped off.

ANNE

Never... Oh my god, what are we
going to eat? All I have are Cheeto
puffs and half a baguette...

Grace gives Anne a disapproving look.

ANNE (CONT'D)

We're gonna have to hunt. (Sobbing)
I can't kill a dog--

GRACE

A dog? - I-- don't spiral Anne.

Anne's kitchen door BANGS open followed by multiple sets of trudging FOOTSTEPS and low GROANS, The bat still sits by Anne's side.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Come on, we should move.

Grace begins to move towards the bedroom door but Anne doesn't budge.

ANNE
Grace? Leah dumped me.

GRACE
When?

ANNE
Last week.

GRACE
Oh honey. Why didn't you tell me?

ANNE
I didn't want you to look at me
like...

GRACE
Like what?

ANNE
Like that. Like I'm one of you're
little projects to fix.

GRACE
What? (Pause) You're not broken,
Anne.

ANNE
Aren't I? Everyone acts like it.
Like I can't handle anything. Even
Leah.

GRACE
Well Leah's kinda a cunt.

ANNE
(Surprised) Grace!

GRACE
(Laughing) Come on she was.

Grace hugs Anne tightly.

GRACE (CONT'D)
You're going to let a mouth
breather tell you how to live your
life?

Anne smiles but still looks down at her shoes.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Anne... look, I know this sounds
weird but... I looked up to you
when I was in high school.

ANNE
I was like, what? Eight? Nine?

GRACE
And you did what the fuck you
wanted. God. Maybe I was jealous of
you. You could actually stand up to
mom. Nine year-old Anne would have
busted down the door the minute she
heard me come in.

ANNE
Well I guess she just had to grow
up.

GRACE
This is what you call grown up?

Grace gestures at the messy room. They can't look at each other for a moment.

Outside there is more commotion.

Anne grabs Grace's hand and the bat.

ANNE
Come on. We can do this. The two of
us against the world.

GRACE
(Getting caught up) Yeah!

The bedroom door shakes, the GROANING and MUTTERING is very loud now.

Anne finally raises her bat and charges.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Wait--

It's too late, Anne is gone.

PARTY GOERS (O.S.)
Surprise! (Singing) Happy bir-

Then the "THWACK" of Anne's bat.

INT. HALLWAY- AFTERNOON

There are a couple party goers in little birthday hats and cheap zombie makeup. They hold a handmade happy birthday sign.

Anne stands in the doorway, bat raised above the unconscious body of a middle aged man.

A party horn lets out a SLOW NOTE.

CUT TO BLACK.