

# The cursed house

I couldn't believe it. It might be a pure invention of my imagination. But I have often thought to what occurred during this night and I slowly felt more and more convinced that I really saw it! This fur, dark like the night. These fangs, white like the death. And these eyes, red like the blood. Someone must know what happened to avoid the curse which is haunting me. I should start to write a book, a book you are probably reading at this time, where I'll tell you my fatal mistake. I hope you'll follow my advice.

The nightmare started one week ago. In the night, I was driving back to my home. It was extremely foggy outside and I got lost. I don't know how long I stood in this fog. Finally, I saw a light through the shadows. I couldn't see the road so I got off my car and I walked to the origin of the light. I was numbed by the frost. As I was getting closer to the light, I could see more distinctly what it was. A great dilapidated mansion. My body said me to go back and run away but I was extremely tired and hungry. The master of the place could point the way for me and, maybe, put me up for the night. I pressed the doorbell and then a painful scream sounded. The door opened by itself and I was pulled inside. Then the door closed, leaving me in the darkness.

Fortunately, I had some matches in my pocket. I lit up one of them and I began to explore the room. I was in a huge hall, surprisingly clean. I finally found the lightswitch and the whole place became illuminated. I went back to the door and tried to open it, without success... The master of the place would apparently not like me to leave his mansion. My whole body was shaking. There was no choice, I had to explore the place. I walked through a long gallery. There were pictures on the walls. Their characters seemed to follow me with their eyes. The corridor, which was completely soundless before, became suddenly submerged by whispering. As the fear was overwhelming me, I ran to the closer door, opened it and jumped into the room. When I closed it, the voices stopped. I paused and took a huge breath. How did I end up in this madhouse? I finally had a look on this new place. I was in a bedroom, perfectly clean. The sheet of the bed was made of silk. A sweet perfume of roses floated into the room. I was so tired... I fell down on the bed and I passed out.

It was a strange dream. I became again a child. I was into the arms of my mother. She was rocking me, singing a beautiful lullaby. I was safe... I looked up to this face. She was smiling. "You've nothing to worry about", she said "I'm here". Slowly, I returned to a deep sleep.

A stinky smell of rotten flesh woke me up. I opened my eyes and I arose. I was in a dirty dungeon, imprisoned. The perfume of the bedroom was probably a trap. The sound of footsteps was getting closer to me. When I saw the creature, I almost fainted again: a mix of a wolf and a human was standing just in front of me, its bloody eyes looking on me. Its fangs were

shining in the dark. It handed me a bowl of soup and said with a bestial voice: "You have to restore your strength before the sacrifice". It began to laugh and got away from me. I tried to think, looking for an exit. There was no hope. I don't know how long I stood into this cell. After a certain amount of time, another sound of footstep, faster, has sounded. Then a miracle happened. A woman, a real person in this place of monsters reached to me. She was exhausted. Between two breaths, she said: "I can help you to escape from this nightmarish place and avoid the death. Take this and use it at the right moments. It can be really helpful". She handed me a packet. Voices sounded in the distance. "I have to go", she said. I nodded and she restarted to run. I hid the precious present of the woman in my pocket, just in time. Other monsters ran through the jail, without any look to me. When I thought they were far, I opened the packet. A little knife, inlaid with jewels, was shining inside. I've never seen a wonder like that before, but how a so little thing can be helpful against monsters? As the time was running out, I felt my will decrease. Finally, my jailer came back. It unlocked and opened the heavy door as if it was made of twigs, unchained me and caught me by the collar of my shirt. Its face got closer to mine. I could smell its rotten breath. It opened its mouth, showing its sharpened fangs and said:

"The time has come to go to the final step. You have no hope, no escape, you are alone" It spat on the ground and laughed again. After that, it threw me on the hard and cold stone, caught my leg and dragged me in a long and dark corridor. I was almost stunned by the collision. At the end of the corridor, there was a big wooden door. My jailer opened it with a large key and pushed the heavy door. Behind it was a huge and dark cave. Two rows of monsters, more scary the ones than the others, were demarcating a path which was ended by a large rectangular stone. There was another door at the opposite of the cave. If I success to create a diversion, I could have some chance to reach it and escape. As I was organizing my flight, my jailer was dragging me until the strange stone. When we finally reached it, I could take a closer look. On the edges of the stone, there some pictures were engraved. The first side represented a giant wolf, barking to humans, attached on a stone. On the next, he beast has killed the most of them and was drinking the blood of the last. On the last picture, the creature disappeared and some of its victims rose up. They had a dense fur on their skin, their teeth became fangs and their look became crazy. My blood turned cold. So that was what they do with their victims, they changed them into monsters!

"Hurry up!" said the creature. "There is no time to waste, the master is waiting!" It attached me on the stone. Its arms were thick and even if I tried to resist, it would attached me at last. When it finished its job, it moved back. Then, all the monsters began a slow and dark litany, in a language I couldn't understand. As they were singing with their deep voices, an earthquake began. It quickly increased and suddenly stopped. Then, a terrible shriek sounded, all the creature muted and the large door I took for an exit opened. A huge wolf was standing in the doorway. Its fur was dark

like the night, its fangs white like the death and its eyes red like the blood. All the creatures kneeled down and their master reached me. I suddenly remembered the knife I left in my pocket. Unfortunately, my hands were stuck so I couldn't take it. I cursed myself.

"Your feast" said my jailer to the wolf. Then the beast scored my arm with its talons and the pain rose up. The wound was burning but, with its claws, the beast cut the ropes of my links. My arm thought for myself and caught the knife. When the monster saw it, it uttered a terrified cry and moved back slowly. I threw the blade on it. A river of blood flowed when the knife sunk into its flesh. The monster had a last painful scream and fell down. Then, all its servants got crazy, running in any direction, scratching their own faces and crying: "The master is dead! The master is dead! I took the opportunity to escape. I reached until the door by which I entered and ran as fast as I could. In every corridor, the pictures on the walls had the same reaction than the monsters, crying and hurting themselves. I finally found the great exit door of the mansion. It was open. I ran out of this madhouse. I tried to reach my car but I didn't find it. Finally I saw it and ran the last meters between me and the freedom. I opened the car, sat in and start up it. I drove as fast as I could until I thought the creatures couldn't come get me. Then I slowed down and I took a huge breath.

"I can see that you survived" said a voice behind me. My blood turned cold and I turned over. The girl who saved me was sitting at the back of the car. I said:

"Who are you?"

"You don't need to know that", she answered. "I can see that you achieved to kill the beast, congratulations. At least, your sacrifice will not be unworthy."

"My sacrifice? What are you talking about?"

"The beast touched you and its poison is running into your veins. You will be soon one of them. I can only give you a sort of antidote which will counter the madness and ease the curse. Only one night by month, the beast which is in you will take control. This night, you'll have be locked up in a safe place.

Then she disappeared and I got alone a second time. So, it ends like that? I did all these things for nothing? I couldn't believe it.

Now you know what happened to me. Because of the poison, I'm slowly losing my mind. The servants of the creature are still alive and they will probably find another master. If someday you can see a mansion like the one I made the mistake to go, please, just flee as fast as you can and don't try to enter in.

Par Pierre Gallin-Martel