

ECHOES OF KERBEROS

Written by

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ROBERT, our hero, is an exhausted husk of a man in his late thirties. As we open, we see him coming through his apartment door. The apartment is like any other studio apartment in any other seedy low-rent neighborhood in LA. His furniture is sparse. Just a couch, a little coffee table, and a bed that is likely 8 years past needing to be replaced. He seems to live alone, but he likely has roaches for roommates. You'd think he had a hard day, but truth be told, he's had a hard year or two. Frustrated, he throws his keys on the small table in the center of the room and walks to the small refrigerator in the corner. He opens it. There's nothing in it but air and cold beer. He grabs one, walks over to his couch and turns on the TV. It doesn't really matter what's on. He is about to drift off to sleep when his cell phone rings.

ROBERT

Hello?

VOICE (V.O.)

Robert Miller?

ROBERT

Yes. Who is this?

VOICE (V.O.)

(With a British accent)

Never mind who this is. If you want to stay healthy, you'll do exactly what I say.

Robert stares at his phone in disbelief.

ROBERT

I don't know who this is but if this is some kind of joke, I...

VOICE (V.O.)

(Emphatically) I know where you life and I know where Sarah lives. So you better do what I say.

A text message alert. A picture of Sarah, Robert's girlfriend, walking into her apartment flashes on Robert's screen. Robert sobers up and puts down his beer.

ROBERT

What do you want me to do.

VOICE (V.O.)
 When I call you tomorrow, you will
 follow my instructions to the
 letter or you will suffer.

ROBERT
 OK. OK!

The caller disconnects the call. Robert stares at his phone for a few minutes and goes to bed. He stares at the ceiling, unable to sleep.

2 INT. ROBERT'S APARTMENT - MORNING 2

As the sun rises, Robert stares up at the ceiling. He turns off his alarm and gets out of bed.

CUT TO:

3 INT. ROBERT'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 3

Robert stares into the bathroom mirror about ready to get into the shower. He looks like shit. Didn't sleep. Couldn't sleep. He turns on the cold water and throws some in his face. This does not work.

4 INT. ROBERT'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 4

Robert has dressed up in a suit and tie. He stares at his phone for a while. The phone rings. Robert's heart jumps. This is what he's been waiting for, he thinks.

ROBERT
 Hello?

SARAH
 Hello, honey.

ROBERT
 Oh, hey. Glad it's you.

SARAH
 Are you OK?

ROBERT
 Yeah, I'm fine. What's up?

SARAH
 Was thinking we could go out
 tonight.

ROBERT
Yeah sure. Regular place?

SARAH
Definitely. I've been craving the
French Onion soup all week.

ROBERT
Sounds good. I love you.

SARAH
Love you too.

Robert hangs up the phone. He's relieved.

ROBERT
Must have been dreaming

He flashes a little smile, picks up his keys and walks out
the door.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. ROBERT'S APARTMENT'S GARAGE - DAY 5

Robert gets into his car.

CUT TO:

6 EXT. ROBERT'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 6

Robert's car leaves

CUT TO:

7 EXT. FREEWAY - CONTINUOUS 7

We see cars from above on their way to their daily drudgery.

CUT TO:

8 INT. ROBERT'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 8

Robert is listening to a local talk radio station. He is
extremely tired. He keeps glancing over to his phone to be
sure that he dreamed the whole conversation from the night
before.

9 EXT. WORK PARKING GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

9

Robert parks his car and walks towards the building where his desk is. He constantly looks at his phone. So far, so good he thinks; no random phone call. He walks inside.

CUT TO:

10 INT. OFFICE BUILDING BATHROOM - DAY

10

Robert is in the middle of doing his morning constitutional. As he sits he starts playing a game of solitaire. Half way through, the phone rings. Unknown caller. Robert's pulse starts to race. He answers.

VOICE

Hello Robert...

ROBERT

Who is this?

VOICE

You know who this is. Don't say another fucking word. Do what I say and Sarah stays breathing. You finish whatever your fucking doing and I want you to tell your boss to fuck off and quit. Do it or else.

ROBERT

Can I have until lunch? Sarah is here and I don't want to have to explain.

VOICE

Fine. You better be out of there today. She's not safe. Trust me.

The call goes dead.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING BATHROOM - OUTSIDE OF THE STALL -
CONTINUOUS

We hear the toilet flush.

12 INT. OFFICE - ROBERT'S CUBICLE - DAY

12

Robert pretends to work. Why even try really. Noon was coming very, very soon.

There was no possibility of keeping focus on his work. What in the hell was happening? Sarah walks up to Robert's desk.

SARAH

Hi honey. Are we still down for dinner tonight?

ROBERT

(Absent mindedly)
Yeah. Sure.

SARAH

Gee. Nice to feel wanted.

ROBERT

No, I'm sorry. I barely slept last night. Didn't mean to be short with you.

SARAH

It's OK. I love you anyway. I'll see you there. Oh can you follow me home after diner? There was this weird guy hanging outside my building.

INSERT OF CLOCK TICKING AWAY. 11:45, 11:46....

CUT BACK TO:

Robert staring at the clock. He is sweating profusely. Finally he stands up and walks to his boss's office. He leans in and talks.

ROBERT

Hey DEBRA? I've been meaning to tell you.

DEBRA

Yeah, Robert?

ROBERT

I love your suit.

DEBRA

Thanks! See you after lunch.

As Robert walks off, his phone buzzes. New text. It reads: "I am watching you. Do you think I'm stupid? I'll give you a second chance. End of business. Or else."

ROBERT
 (Under his breath.)
 Fuck.

As Robert leaves the building, he continues to sweat the end of the day. Doesn't that guy know how much he needs this job?

13 INT. LUNCH ROOM - DAY 13

Robert tries to eat his lunch in peace. This couldn't possibly come at a worse time. A text comes across his phone: "Tick Tick, Robert!"

14 INT. OFFICE CUBICLE - AFTERNOON 14

The clock continues to tick closer to 5:00 PM. Debra passes by Robert's desk.

ROBERT
 Hey, DEBRA? I need to quit. I'm
 sorry.

DEBRA mouths "Call me" and Robert walks away.

15 INT. ROBERT'S CAR - NIGHT 15

Robert drives to the restaurant. He feels relieved somehow. He needed the job, but it was sucking his soul out. He used to have dreams and plans. But this asshole was dangerous. He had to walk away to keep Sarah safe.

16 EXT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS 16

Robert parks the car in the lot next to the restaurant. He walks in.

17 INT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS 17

Robert gets seated. Time lapses into an hour. Robert looks at his watch. His phone rings.

VOICE
 Hey Robert! You disappoint me.

ROBERT
 What? I quit my job. I did what you
 told me to.

VOICE

Ah yes. But I told you to tell your boss to go fuck off. You didn't do that. I told you to do exactly what I told you to do and you didn't. And now she has to pay.

ROBERT

You monster! What did you do to her.

VOICE

Right now? Nothing. We're both here at her and she's taking an unscheduled nap. If you want to see her safe, you're going to have to get here fast.

ROBERT

I'm on my way. If you hurt her so help me I'll kill you.

VOICE

Oh patience my friend. We'll see soon enough.

18 INT. ROBERT'S CAR - NIGHT

18

Robert speeds down the road to Sarah's apartment. He's got to save her. He's got to help her. A text comes on his phone. "Tick, Tick Motherfucker! She's running out of time." He throws his phone down to the floor board of his car.

ROBERT

I'm coming honey. Hold on!

19 INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

19

The door is slightly ajar. Robert races in to find a man in the shadows while Sarah sleeps on the bed in the corner of her studio apartment.

ROBERT

Sarah! You better not have hurt her. She's my whole world, asshole!

VOICE

Holy shit! You're actually standing up for yourself? Well, son, you can call me Crawford, if you'd like. Dirty words don't win you any friends.

ROBERT

OK, Crawford. Why have you been doing any of this? What did I ever do to you.

CRAWFORD

Well, Robert. That's the thing. You didn't do a damn thing to me. You haven't done a damn thing ever. You go to work every day. You sit in that same chair. You dream of a different life, but you go home and drink yourself to sleep. Yeah. I know people like you and their just a damn waste of time and space.

ROBERT

How in the hell do you know anything about me? What in the hell are you talking about?

CRAWFORD

Oh, look over there. On the table.

Robert looks. It's his phone. He reaches into his pocket and... Empty.

CRAWFORD (CONT'D)

You left it here. Yesterday. Like a fucking idiot.

(Laughs hysterically)

I have an idea. Turn on the lights, Robert. Turn them on.

Robert turns on the lights. Crawford comes out of the shadows. He looks like Robert, but better dressed, glasses, a suit and tie.

CRAWFORD (CONT'D)

Surprise, Robert. Surprise.

Robert falls to the sitting position in a chair. He rubs his eyes. He can't believe what he's seeing.

CRAWFORD (CONT'D)

I'm sure you want a little explaining. I know you, motherfucker. I know everything about you. I am you, you little shit.

ROBERT

I don't understand.

CRAWFORD

You never got a call from me. I came here earlier. Then I got into your car and then you drove to the restaurant. You never got a second call from me. You drove here. And here we are, motherfucker. Here we are. Here we are.

ROBERT

What?

CRAWFORD

(Yelling)

YOU LEFT YOUR PHONE HERE!
YESTERDAY. ARE YOU A DAMN IDIOT?

ROBERT

What does this mean?

CRAWFORD

Well, that's the interesting part, Robert.

(Singing from "I Am the Walrus")

I am he as you are he as you are me...

MARCUS

(Singing)

And we are all here together

A peaceful figure, MARCUS, dressed in white, comes out of the shadows. He seems very peaceful, almost angelic.

ROBERT

And who the hell are you?

MARCUS

Just another alter, Robert. Weren't you aware of us?

(Singing)

And we are all here together.

ROBERT

What the hell are you talking about?

MARCUS

You left your phone here. We had to quit that job, Robert. It was killing us slowly. Sarah is going to understand. DEBRA is going to understand. We weren't happy.

(MORE)

MARCUS (CONT'D)

We needed to quit, but you needed a little push.

CRAWFORD

Yeah, a little fucking push.

MARCUS

Manners, Crawford!

(beat)

Truth is, Robert. We are happier now. Can't you feel it? Don't you see it?

ROBERT

No. I mean, maybe. I still don't understand what went wrong.

MARCUS

Remember when you were touched Robert? As a kid? Crawford and I were born that day. We've been trying to keep you safe this whole time. But lately you've been just heading down this self-destructive path. Drinking to keep our voices quiet. No, no, no. That just simply wouldn't do.

CRAWFORD

Nope. Wouldn't fucking do.

(To Marcus)

Whoops, sorry Marcus. I'll try to do better. Robert, I'm the one who got you to ask girls out. And Marcus is the one who helps you fall in love. I'm the one who helped you make them happy in bed.

MARCUS

That's true. We had to save us, though. You were ruining us. And now, you know everything.

ROBERT

None of this really makes any sense. Are you saying that...

MARCUS

We have multiples. We are many. And Crawford and I are just two of the many. Most of them are not too helpful.

CRAWFORD

Little Bobby just likes to hide in a little ball. One of these days, he's got to grow the fuck up.

Crawford again nods apologetically.

CRAWFORD (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Never learned to talk pleasantly.

ROBERT

Sure. No problem. Wait... I'm still having trouble here. What the hell is next?

MARCUS

Find something that makes you happy, Robert.

CRAWFORD

Or we'll have to step in again
(Laughing)
Just kidding. I don't think this plan will ever work again, Marcus.

MARCUS

No, I don't.

CRAWFORD

I've always wanted to go to Paris.

MARCUS

Paris is lovely this time of year, Robert.

ROBERT

Paris is lovely this time of year.

SARAH

What did you say?

Robert looks around. Marcus and Crawford have disappeared as if they were never there.

ROBERT

I said, Paris is really lovely this time of year.

SARAH

Wanna go? You quit your job finally. I've learned I need to be patient with you. You come around, you always do.

ROBERT

I'm really sorry. I've not really been myself lately. I promise that things will be different from now on.

Robert looks at Sarah. He realizes that he never told her that he quit his job.

SARAH

Yeah, DEBRA will understand. I'm glad you finally got to meet Crawford and Marcus. We will be so much happier.

As we pan wide, we notice that Robert is entirely by himself in his apartment.