

## The Curse of Room 150 (Part 1)

“And never lick a dancing turtle.....Goodnight everyone!”

The shot glasses shattered loudly, the weight of his femurs crushing them still undefeated against any adversary known to man. The tray immediately flipped and landed face down, causing five belts of Lynchburg’s finest to cascade quickly all over the stage. Trying to act naturally, we all exited our respective instruments. The gig was over, but it was still relatively early, the once crimson sun just a few hours into its resting place. This golf course job was a relatively new one, and we attacked it with our usual vigor, as well as with our usual thirst. The turnout was very good. A lively, rambunctious crowd heightened our senses, and we were invited to food and drinks afterwards by some good friends for an after hours celebration. After a quick discussion amongst the troops, we agreed to check it out.

“We going to the party, Ryan?” John asked, removing broken glass from the bottom of his shoe as he spoke. His words were slow but still recognizable.

“You know it, Johnny” Spike replied. “I’ll round up the boys. Right after this shot. Or two.”

John then only smiled, reached into the cooler, and glanced back at the stage. The Jack Daniels was slowly seeping into the platform, each drop taking its own sweet time to soak every pore. *God, I wish that was me*, John thought to himself, and headed towards the van.

The party was incredible. Lots of wonderful people, excellent food, and of course, booze. Stephen and Jimi were having the time of their life, their cholesterol rising 30 points or so from the porterhouses hot from the grill.

“How do you want yours, Steve? Rare, medium rare, or well done?”

“Yes, that sounds good” Steve answered, spinach dip on his chin.

Tim was also smiling, a crowd of people around him laughing, some touching his hair, questioning its authenticity. Spike was below in the basement trying to hustle some pool, wondering when they started using thirty balls on the table. The shots continued to flow, blood levels beginning to rise, common sense beginning to lower.

After a couple of hours, it was about time to head back to the hotel. Jimi, sober, began to try to gather his band mates, offering his services to drive the vehicle back to Grove City, our home for the evening. This is never an easy task, this time being no different.

“YOU GUYS ABOUT READY? Jimi bellowed, waiting for an answer. “YOU GUYS READY?”

“*One more game, double or nothin’ dammit*” was Spike’s response, overheard and muffled from the basement.

“*You know, I had a good time with you tonight..... We should get together again some time*” John sobbed, saying goodbye to his bottle of bourbon, now alone on the loveseat.

“*Is this salmon fresh?*” Steve wondered aloud, still hunching in the refrigerator.

“*No, I swear I like chicks*” Tim insisted, trying to convert a skeptic.

With a few more screams and an eye roll or two later, the band finally converged towards Jimi and the keys. Their appearance slightly varying from the time they had arrived. Spike now staggering, blue chalk smeared on his face, attempted to hug his hosts, punching John in the arm as he did so. John’s left eye popped open, a look of relief now on his face. He slurred his thanks as well, checked his hair in the wallpaper, and headed out. Tim was hugging everyone, twice, grabbed a twelve pack to go, gave everyone one more hug and walked toward the van telling Steve it was time.

“I’m comin’, Goldie” Steve acknowledged, frost on his nose, grapes in his hand, and unable to straighten.

Once the brown Dodge caravan was at capacity, we began to pull out, hooting, hollering and honking as we did. We were deep in the heart of Zanesville and we all realized we unsure how to get back to the hotel.

“Just follow the directions backwards” Spike suggested wisely, drunk but confident.

“Heeeeeey, fuck that.....I got a shortcut from somebody at the party....this is the way we want to go...”

(DEEP OMINOUS MUSIC ROARS IN THE VAN)

It was here that the mood began to change. The bouts of jovial laughter, the band of merriment, the post gig bonding, the jokes about Jimi’s shoes, all these things were about to come to an abrupt, screeching halt. An evil was entering us now, we hadn’t seen it coming, but we certainly knew when it arrived. A dark cloud of evil, one that will forever linger in the souls of us all: never, ever to be forgotten.

“You got our room key, Jimi?”

“You’re in 150”.....