

A Rebel Yell

Dave Ely

Thomasina sat at her kitchen table, staring into her coffee. How much could one person take? When would it stop? It was more than a little creepy. In a way it was odd that she should feel this way, in that she had studied the occult for years, was even a bit of a “self-styled Medium” herself. But the bizarre things happening around her house unnerved her. It began right after she moved in, first as plodding foot falls, murmuring unintelligible words spoken from an icy broken voice which came from within her own head. This waking her from her sleep. She kept thinking, was it real? Or was she in such an emotional state that was she imagining these things? Lights on, she never turned on? Microwave starting up of its own accord? Strange sounds and unexplainable happenings.

Thomasina was 36 years old, her husband had died very unexpectedly two years earlier. The necessities of life provided little opportunity to grieve the loss, which devastated her. They were best friends from child hood, then as teen agers “played around a bit” both feeling in the end they were too familiar with each other, nearly like brother and sister, or at the least cousins. After high school as is often the case, they lost track of one another, each marrying and living miserably until their respective marriages ended. They met at the high school reunion, and began dating, falling very deeply in love, and were soon married. Life was bliss for several years until his untimely death.

It was necessary for her to move not long after the loss. With little time to recover she moved to a modern sub-division in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Her home was very modest, well built, and less than twenty years old. Still going through “the motions of life” in her grief, it would be hard to say if she “liked” the house, but it was adequate and within her means.

Not long after moving in, she began to have feelings of uneasiness. She sometimes felt a presence, or sensed she was being watched. In some cases even feeling a bit light headed and out of sorts. This bringing to mind an article she had read about the possibility of a carbon monoxide leak from heating systems, prompting her to call an HVAC technician to inspect her furnace. The plumber could find no leaks, but did advise her that if her symptoms continued, they could do a more thorough inspection for which they would have to charge her.

It must be added here that Thomasina enjoyed almost daily use of marijuana, which she now was able to procure as a medicinal prescription grade, without worry of legalities. She also meditated and used incense in several ceremonies which she found comforting and soothing to her nerves. Depression loomed around every corner, keeping her spirits up was a daily chore. In her favor, she did not drink, nor had she ever.

Now staring into her coffee, shivers ran up her spine as she felt “the presence” near. My God she thought it’s the middle of the fuckin day in broad daylight, it’s not even waiting until night! She got a hold of herself and shook it off, going to the bathroom to wash her face. As she gazed into the mirror, the reflection of the wall behind her began to break up. First looking like a “heat wave” effect, as you might see coming off the hood of your car on a very hot day. The waves had a nearly “smoky” look which began to take form. Her breath caught, her heart began to race, she felt faint... The wisps of swirling heat and vapor began to take human form. The energy she felt was NOT a peaceful or loving presence. It then dissipated and was gone. She whirled around to see nothing ... nothing but the wall.

Shaken, she pulled herself together and quickly exited the house to stand in the bright sunlight. The warm sun calmed her, she returned for her coffee and sat on her patio remaining in the sun. Physically calmed now, though her mind raced with thoughts. What the fuck was going on? What she was experiencing was definitely not the spirit of her husband, his loving kind presence would be welcomed! She was actually expecting him at some point. This presence felt angry and cold... hate emanated from it. It felt dark and murderous. Then she considered that it might be all in her mind. Maybe she needed an eye exam, were the visions in the mirror real? Or some sort of retinal image from lack of sleep?

That evening she tried to distract herself, first reading a book but finding that too quiet, she turned on the TV to watch some old favorite sit-coms. Finally giving that up, still too nervous to think of going to bed, she felt that a warm bath would help her to sleep. She began filling the tub, adding some luxurious essential oils. Stripping off her clothes, she climbed into the water, allowing it to run till it was nearly up to her chin. The light was subdued, only two small scented candles illuminated the room. The hot water rushed in and surrounded her, wrapping her in a momentary peace. Shutting it off... the house fell silent.

As she lay there, thoughts took her back to her youth, to her childhood friend who was to become her husband, her failed marriage that fell between

those years, then his ultimate death. Thoughts of him brought her a calmness and an inner peace. She basked there.

Her heart leapt when the plodding footsteps began again! They were muffled ... shuffling... she was unable to breathe as the steps grew closer. Was the door locked? Would it even matter? She was naked... completely exposed with no weapon. Would weapons matter? The footfalls stopped, there was an eerie silence... Her skin crawled, her body began uncontrollable shaking. The air moved gently, as if a small window were opened. The candles flickered. At the same moment a foul odor overwhelmed her, a wretched mixture of decomposing flesh and excrement.

In the dim light, as earlier in the day the “vapor” began swirling and shifting before her, finally taking on a shadowy wispy human form. Although appearing more lifelike, it showed no depth or color, the only thing that felt real to her was the horrible stench which permeated the air. There were hollow eyes which grimly stared at her.

At this point her fear began to transition to anger, which she felt welling up. What would happen if she struck out at it? Would it disappear? Could it strike back? Before any answers came to her, in her head a gravelly toned voice spoke words which rang out against her own inner dialog.

“I am here, I will always be here... this house does not belong on sacred ground.” The voice echoed... How could a voice other than her own be coming into her head? The voice growled and laughed. “I am with you!” the voice rang. Jesus it knows my thoughts! The voice laughed again.

Thomasina felt both her fear and anger begin to dissipate as the inner voice continued.

“My name is Benjamin Conroy Anderson, of the 14th Alabama Infantry, Wilcox’s Brigade. I fought valiantly and died on the very ground beneath this house. This is hallowed ground and should have been left as such. All of these houses will burn... they will *all* burn.”

Abruptly the form began to withdraw within itself, as a vaporous vortex it finally disappeared, the voice no longer ringing in her head.

She woke the next morning in a quandary, what to do? What had happened the previous night? Was she losing her mind? Was the apparition real? If real, she had to say she was no longer afraid of it. She thought of all the brave men

who had fought and died in that area, though his last words troubled her. “All these houses will burn... they will *all* burn.”

Again though, she thought am I crazy? These words had come to her through her own mind, yet not in her voice. She decided it was time to take action! Picking up her laptop, she began a google search of listings. Where to begin? Paranormal Ghost Hunters? Exorcists? Local Psychiatrists? As she thought and began her search, next to her on the table out of nowhere, her decorative candle ignited... the wick flaming brightly...