

TALES OF THE MACABRE

Written by

James Steele Haney

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Candle-lit jack-o-lantern sits on front porch of a weathered, one-story house. Neighborhood is quiet.

FREDERICK (V.O.)  
(suspenseful)  
According to the legend, the  
Crimson Witch appears out of  
nowhere in plain sight...

INT. HOME OFFICE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

FREDERICK VALTESE (mid-30s, tall, mysterious looking, thin, serial killer eyes, Vincent Price-type voice) sits at a tiny, dim-lit desk speaking into a vintage microphone with a lit-up box that says "ON-AIR."

FREDERICK  
... with her blood-red hat and  
gloves, she uses dark magic to  
spellbind her victims—causing them  
to confuse reality with dreams. You  
will only ever see her move when  
she's ready to kill. Then, that is  
the time you'll hear her deathly  
scream.

He presses a button. A FAKE RADIO SCREAM and then HAUNTING ORGAN MUSIC plays.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)  
Thank you for listening to Tales of  
the Macabre. I'm your host,  
Frederick Valtese. We've got a  
special and haunting program for  
you this Halloween night. But first  
we have a quick word from our  
sponsor.

Frederick hits some buttons on a radio board. 70S COMMERCIAL-TYPE MUSIC PLAYS beneath radio announcer.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (O.S.)  
This radio program is brought to  
you by Chew-Chew Pop Bubble Gum...  
where the flavor lasts and the  
bubbles blast—now in scrumptious  
juicy grape and delectable sour  
apple. Chew-Chew Bubble Pop.  
Available at your local grocer.

FREDERICK

Now, we have a vintage radio tale  
we've dug up from the grave. All  
the way back from nineteen-thirty-  
eight... this is "Lights Out."

The radio program LIGHTS OUT: IT HAPPENED begins to play. Frederick hits button, killing the "ON-AIR" light. He turns down the volume. Leans back in chair and SIGHS. He closes his eyes to relax for a few moments. He picks up an old, handwritten note that reads, "For my bestest buddy, the next Vincent Price. Never give up. XOXO, Nanna."

He glances at a framed, desktop photo of him and NANNA (70s, sweet, grandmother-type) and then SIGHS.

A LOUD THUMP. Frederick looks confused, then walks out.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT DOOR

He opens front door to find smashed pumpkin remnants lying on his door and porch.

FREDERICK

(to self)

Dumb kids.

(yells)

Real funny, fuckers!

Closes door.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Frederick grabs a beer from fridge, opens it, and swigs. He leans against counter annoyed and then LAUGHS UNDER BREATH.

FREDERICK

When did I become such a  
sanctimonious prick?

LAUGHS AGAIN and swigs beer. He pours coffee grounds in coffee maker and turns it on. Coffee begins to drip into coffee pot. Hanging on refrigerator door is a joyously loving photo of him and NATE (late-20s, handsome). He takes it off fridge, looks at it, SIGHS, then throws in the trash can.

A LOUD THUMP. He sprints toward front door.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

Not this time, assholes.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

He quickly opens front door.

FREDERICK  
 Alright. Very fuh-

THE CRIMSON WITCH (tall, thin figure, with a red sheer sheet over their entire body, crimson red witch hat and gloves, and red, pointy heels) stands at door holding a jack-o-lantern. The pumpkin remains are no longer on porch. Frederick stares confusedly for a moment.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)  
 Wow.  
 (laughs)  
 The Crimson Witch. Very impressive.  
 You must be a listener.

The Crimson Witch stands there, almost lifeless. Frederick notices puddle of blood sitting below each heel.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)  
 Man, you're committed.  
 (reaches back inside)  
 Here. Take the rest of this candy that's left over. You deserve it all. There's even some Chew-Chew Pop Bubble Gu-

He goes back to hand her bowl of candy and she is gone. Her bloody shoe prints remain from where she was standing and the lit jack-o-lantern faces him. He looks around.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)  
 Where'd you go?

He closes door.

INT. LIVING ROOM ENTRYWAY - CONTINUOUS

He opens bubble gum wrapper and starts chewing. He glances out window. He blows a bubble. POP and a DING simultaneously.

INT. HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

A DING wakes up Frederick. He sits up quickly toward his radio board and microphone as the vintage tale ends on radio. He hits button and the "ON-AIR" box lights up.

FREDERICK

It's Frederick Valtese, and we're back from that chilling tale of the past. If you're still awake and haven't turned into a pumpkin yet, enjoy this next spooky story... straight from the archives.

A VINTAGE RADIO GHOST STORY PLAYS. He turns off "ON-AIR" box and lowers volume. He leans back in chair and relaxes as he chews bubble gum. He looks confused and pulls wad of gum out of his mouth, observing it.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

What the-

He gets up and walks out.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

He stares in bewilderment at a freshly brewed pot of hot coffee and beer he was drinking in his dream.

INT. HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

He opens front door.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

He finds a single lit candle sitting on his doormat. He looks around and sees no one. He bends down to grab candle, revealing the Crimson Witch standing behind him inside house. He comes back up, unknowingly completely covered in blood.

He blows out the candle. A DING.

INT. HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

A DING wakes up Frederick. He sits up quickly toward his radio board and microphone as the vintage tale ends. Clock reads 3:33am. He hits button and "ON-AIR" box illuminates.

FREDERICK

Thank you for listening to Tales of the Macabre. Up next is one that's sure to give you nightmares. The legend of the RikkorRokkir—a Kentucky witch that creaks in the night... searching for their next victim.

A VINTAGE RADIO SCARY STORY PLAYS. He turns off "ON-AIR" box and lowers volume. He gets out of chair.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Frederick looks a bit disheveled and preoccupied as he rinses off his face. He stares at himself in the mirror.

FREDERICK

Wake up, dude.

He opens mirror medicine cabinet and grabs caffeine pills. He takes one, swallows, and then slaps his cheeks to wake up.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Frederick pours a cup of hot coffee and begins to sip. He leisurely strolls into living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

He looks through old 1930s records next to a record player. He peeks out front window and notices his jack-o-lantern is still lit from earlier. He opens front door.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Frederick steps outside, lifts up the pumpkin, and blows out the internal candle. He jumps as he unexpectedly sees the Crimson Witch standing in the middle of street holding a jack-o-lantern underneath a flickering street lamp.

FREDERICK

Oh, shit!

(breathes heavy)

What the fuck?

(beat)

Very funny, dumbass. You can go home now!

He turns around to go back inside and looks down. His jack-o-lantern is lit again.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)

(under breath)

Loser.

He bends down to blow out. He stands back up and the Crimson Witch stands in front of him. He jumps.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)  
Jesus Christ! Fuckin' hell! Mary  
and Joseph.

He turns back to look at street and she is gone. Then turns back to look at her. She is not there anymore. 1930S MUSIC BEGINS BLASTING from inside the house. He slowly and fearfully walks toward the opened front door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frederick enters house to find a record playing and copies of the same picture he threw away of him and Nate covering the walls, ceiling, and floor. He grabs a baseball bat by door. He nervously makes his way to turn off record player.

SILENCE, but we hear the VINTAGE RIKKORROKKIR TALE PLAYING from his office. He continues to stand there listening.

FREDERICK  
Hello?

He hesitantly makes his way to office with baseball bat.

INT. HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

He enters room and walks toward his radio board. He turns volume down. SILENCE once again. He listens. He moves slowly, revealing behind him the Crimson Witch standing in the corner. He stands there trying to hear something. Anything.

The Crimson Witch appears next to him and SCREAMS. She reaches toward him with one red-gloved hand. Frederick bleeds from eyes, suffocating.

A VINTAGE BLACK AND WHITE HYPNOTIC SPIRAL FILLS SCREEN BEHIND HIM WITH HIS BLEEDING EYES. THE VINTAGE SOUND OF A BIG CROWD APPLAUDING AND LAUGHING.

A DING.

FREDERICK (V.O.)  
We hope you enjoyed the hauntingly  
disturbing tale of the Crimson  
Witch.

INT. HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

FREDERICK

The legend remains that if you tell her story, you too will fall victim of her dark magic. Guess I better sleep with one eye open tonight.

(vampire-like laugh)

Happy Halloween, and don't forget to tune in next week for another spine-chilling evening with us. These are the Tales of the Macabre. I'm your host, Frederick Valtese... vanishing into the shadows.

He presses a button and "ON-AIR" box turns off. 1930S MUSIC PLAYS from his radio. Frederick leans back with a SIGH of relief. A beat as he closes eyes and takes in the orchestral music.

We slowly pan around and close in on the framed photo of Frederick and his Nanna... revealing behind them, in a near distance, the Crimson Witch.

FADE TO BLACK.

The Crimson Witch SCREAMS.

THE END.