Updated to be more realistic and less akin to torture porn

MY RECURRING NIGHTMARE by u/coffeejazzdude

Just to warn you, some of the contents of this story are downright disgusting. You have been warned.

You are reading this because I am writing this which means I am alive to tell the tale. Just because I lived does not mean though that I have experienced the happy ending that I would have preferred. Contrarily, my ending is rather depressing - or at least that's how I see it. Perhaps your life has been shittier than my life has been and you will writhe in jealousy as you read words that to you would reveal a life of luxury you had never dared to dream. I remain uncontent with my lot.

I am in my second year of high school and have become friendly with the sort of people that my parents and teachers would tell you to avoid. One of them is a person who I know from my summer job and tonight is poker night.

The game is five card draw.

(Skip if you already know the rules.)
You are dealt five cards that you do not show to your adversaries. You have one chance to exchange one or all of your cards. Whoever has the best cards wins the money.

The dealer does a quick insignificant shuffle and deals the cards. Once we have each been dealt our five cards, I take a look at my hand. I have been dealt the seven of clubs, the seven of diamonds, the seven of hearts, the seven of spades and the ace of diamonds.

I contain a grin so optimistic in it's origin that I pull a face muscle in keeping perfectly still. The people against whom I am playing look as though they could easily beat the shit out of me. If I win, I had better do it wisely.

« Raise you again, » I say, trying not to sound too boastful.

All players but one have folded their cards. They must have noticed how much I am trying not to grin the grin of a person who has been dealt a four of a kind of sevens.

It is time to exchange one or all of my cards should I desire to do so. I do not desire to do so. My adversary exchanges one card and we bet some more money. « Raise you again, » we are saying until I have bet all my money.

It is time for us to show our cards. I am first. I lay down my cards for all to see and the other players are amazed at what they see. If my opponent wants to win all the money instead of me, they will have to show me a stronger hand.

The opponent reveals the two of spades, the three of spades, the four of spades, the five of spades and the six of spades. It is a straight flush and it defeats my four of a kind. My jaw drops. I really really thought I had been assured a victory but alas I was not and now I am broke.

« You are out of money, » to me says one of my friend's friends. « I think you'd better leave. This is a respectable place reserved for people who have money. »

As I said, these people look as though they could kick the shit out of me and they look as though they will if I do not leave within the next ten seconds.

« Thanks for the game, » I say politely and they are already ignoring me and concentrating on their cards.

Normally I would take a bus but seeing as I'm broke, I decide I'll walk home. I've walked longer distances in worse weather. I'm sure nothing out-of-the-ordinary-terrifyingly-wrong will possibly happen.

A car comes at me from behind, just about to hit me but it slams the brakes, stopping an inch from where I stand. The headlights are pointed straight at me, blinding me.

« There s/he is! » somebody yells. Two seconds later, my four limbs are seized in one swift movement and I can not resist four large people who have full grip of my limbs. I put up my best fight but I am outnumbered and outmuscled and they restrain me in ropes from my ankles to my neck and so that I have become more snake than human.

My movements are clumsy and no matter how I wriggle, I cannot free myself. They throw me into the back of a car and take me for a long blindfolded drive to a butchery located across the street from a funeral parlour.

« This is where we mutilate people's genitals, » they say to me casually, pointing to a table next to an array of cleavers and knives. « You're young and will probably scream like a crazy banshee. People pay shit tons of money to watch that sort of thing. We host a channel for it on darkweb T*kt*k.»

I try to look as though I am not bothered by this dooming notion of ultimate repugnance even though I would rather be eaten alive by monkeys than to have my genitals mutilated.

Nobody says a word for a minute before another person says comically « haha, we're only joking… or are we? » and there is laughing - well not from me. I am not laughing.

« This is where we skin people alive, » somebody else says, pointing to another table, next to an array of cheese graters, knives and pokey things. « If you don't settle the fuck down right fucking now, we will skin you alive and earn advertising revenue while doing it. »

Advertising revenue? Have I ever purchased from their advertisers? Would that mean that I financed my own nightmare?

As best I can, I will myself to die but my will to die is not powerful enough to kill me.

« Wait a moment, » says a creepy person, « do you think s/he's a virgin? »

What a creepy question. No wholesome moments are ever begun after a creepy person who has tied you up in ropes converses among similarly minded people about whether you are or aren't a virgin. The discussion is comical to them but they agree that instead of torturing me, they'll instead offer me as a sacrifice at a fancy dinner party that is happening across the street at the funeral parlour.

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Time passes. There is no sex stuff.

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I am at a fancy dinner party, still tied up in ropes only now also tied to a wooden stake with a second series of rope that further hinders my every movement from my neck to my ankles. Despite my best efforts, I may as well be a statue for I cannot move a muscle.

The food smells amazing. I have not eaten for a while. I can see an array of delicious desserts with a very posh selection of drinks. In spite of the vile attendants, it looks like it is a very fun party.

Somebody speaks into a microphone: « ladies and gentlemen, let us pray. Oh great god of pain, accept our offering of a virgin's agony and make our lives worth living. Let each of the virgin's screams be to you a blessing and a reminder of how we love you and want only to serve you with all the unfiltered suffering of a virgin that we have to offer. May every single of of the virgin's screams bring you to orgasm so that you will bless us out of sheer delight. Amen. »

« Amen. »

I wonder if I have been absent from society long enough for somebody to have mentioned it to the police. Perhaps the police are looking for me now. Maybe they will arrive at the last minute and save my life. Alas, it does not happen.

Without a single notion of sympathy, a needle and some drugs get injected into my jugular vein by somebody who I can't see but I can feel their breath as they whisper into my ear, « that's to heighten the pain. Enjoy. I know I will. » They smell creepy and ugly.

VROOM. That is the sound of a chainsaw. They are going to chop me into pieces starting with my feet, then my ankles, then my calves, then my knees, then my thighs, and then my you-know-what, on and on and up and up until I stop making noise and not a moment before. Bets are being placed on when I will scream the loudest. I can hear them very clearly.

« I've got money that says the first finger they rip off will be the index. » « You're on. »

« Double or nothing says they use bolt cutters to cut off the thumb. » « No way. They're going to yank it off with pliers. »

I am frightened in a manner of which I never thought I would ever be frightened. I am afraid of mutilation. I am afraid of pain. I am afraid to die of mutilation and of pain. I do my best to keep my cool. I do not want to give them the satisfaction of my terror.

Somebody else speaks a prayer into the microphone and I think they have lit a ritual fire that they will use to burn the evidence.

Some other people within earshot are talking about eating my remains. I do not know if they are joking or not.

« Or we chould make her/him eat her/his own body as we chop it up, » someone suggests to someone else and they go on to discuss the idea with the same enthusiasm one might have for discussing movies or music.

The chainsaw stops working. I am satisfied by this equipment malfunction but it does little to actually release me from my choppy fate.

« What do you mean it's out of gas? Why didn't somebody fill it? » « Well to be fair, we didn't know we'd be sacrificing a virgin tonight. » « True. I guess these things happen. »

Someone then says: « wait a second, we can use the axes! » I immediately hate this person.

« Brilliant. » « Genius. » « Can't believe I didn't think of that, » people are saying, sold into the notion of hacking me to death.

More bets are happening now. They are discussing at full volume the thickness of my rope and how many swings of the axe it will take for first blood.

Even if you aren't religious, you would probably be praying if you were in my shoes. What could you possibly have to lose?

I become dizzy with dread, my eyes start losing focus, everything I can see is moving in loop de loop circles and I black out before I can formulate a single sacred word.

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When I awaken, I am where I was when I blacked out. I am wearing the same clothes as from before, only I am not tied up in a rope anymore. The ropes have been cut and I free myself without resistance. A quick inspection of my person finds me whole and without damage other than the needle hole in my jugular vein and rope marks all over my person. I am without my keys, my phone and my wallet.

How can it be that I am unharmed? What happened between when I blacked out and now so that I am a no longer bound by rope nor bound for torture?

There are corpses all around me, some are short and some are tall. Old corpses, young corpses, all around are corpses. Corpses here, corpses there, corpses everywhere, everywhere a corpse is all that I can see.

They look as though they died instantly and unexpectedly. You can see one person slumped over holding a corkscrew, as if having intended to open another bottle of wine. Other people are dead with forks in their mouths or are lying flat on the floor. Whatever killed them did it quickly and without hesitation. They died dressed in their best outfits. Their faces are either obscured or unfamiliar.

At least they look dead to me. I am not a doctor. I am far from qualified to determine with certainty who is living and who is dead. Perhaps they are alive and well and merely sleeping. I do not care to find out. Where is the nearest door, I wonder, and how quickly before it takes me out of the building?

I hope they don't wake up and try to stop me. As best I can, I try not to step on anybody but sometimes I think I've woken something. For a moment, I thought I saw someone move but it must have been my imagination because they are clearly not moving.

There is a hallway that leads to somewhere else. It is lit electrically and without issue. Spread across the ground are more people who are either dead or sleeping motionless. The exit is right there. It is a very dignified and lovely exit. I grab a grief pamphlet on my way out.

I leave the funeral parlour, close the door behind me, and walk down the street, pretending that it is perfectly normal to be there at this time of night.

It will take hours for me to walk the rest of the way home. I eventually come to a payphone and dial my nation's toll free emergency services number.

« What is your emergency? » asks a phone operator on the other end of the line.

« Hi, I was just at a funeral parlour and there are at least a hundred people there, either dead or unconscious. I would have phoned you from there but I was worried they might all wake up and murder me barbarically, » is my reply, and I provide the address on the grief pamphlet before hanging up. I am too freaked out to be social with emergency services and law enforcement. I do not provide my name nor my location.

Nothing else noteworthy takes place during the rest of the walk. All I can think about is relive the nightmarish events of the evening and to wonder how the police will react.

Many hours, many kilometers and many miles later, I arrive home. My legal guardians are furious at my tardiness without having phoned them. When asked to explain myself, I leave out the part where I get abducted and nearly murder-tortured. I am unsure of how they would react and whether they would believe me.

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Days pass and I am shocked to find no mention in the news of police receiving an anonymous tip to visit the funeral parlour and to discover hundreds of dead or unconscious people. Maybe it’s nothing to worry about. Maybe it’s something to worry about.

Days pass some more and no matter how I try, I can’t concentrate on anything except to relive the dreadful events of that fateful night over and over and over again in my mind so I cannot converse nor study, which are two of the only things people expect of you at school. My friends and teachers have noticed a change in my demeanor but I tell a plausible pleasant lie and they ask no more about it.

I often wonder what was in that drug that they injected into my neck. My neck has not stopped hurting since that day right at the injection spot. During my more paranoid moments, I wonder if maybe I am actually getting tortured right now and that the reality I perceive is no more than a coping mechanism to take my mind away from my misery.

I cannot stop thinking about the drugs they injected into my neck and what it may be doing to me. Maybe I am stoned and being tortured right now. Oh my. Perhaps I am about to die.

Or what if the drug was something else. I would very much like to know.

I use the entirety of my secret stash to buy new locks for the front door. My legal guardians are confused but I tell them truthfully that I am terrified at the thought of a stranger using my own house key to break into our house. They sympathize with my position and discuss the subject no further.

Days go by and I barely sleep at all nor do I eat. I am making awkward decisions in light of obvious options. Something cannot or will not let me sleep. Or maybe I am sleeping and this is my dream. I can't tell anymore. I just want to sleep.

My friends, legal guardians and teachers can all tell that something is different about me but I do not tell them about my experience.

Tonight, I cannot sleep again. I need some fresh air. It's time to go outside again. Enough neighbours are present they so that I feel less likely to be abducted for a second time. I go for a walk around the block and just happen to cross paths with my friend with whom I was playing poker the other night. We exchange a friendly greeting.

« Would you like to play another game of poker sometime? » my friend asks me.

« Count me out, » I regretfully reply. « I'm flat broke plus I still go to school. »

The subject abruptly changes.

« Was that you who was getting sacrificed a couple of nights ago at that party where everybody died ? »

I become wary. Why does my friend know that I was nearly a human sacrifice?

« I thought for sure you were fucked, » my friend continues. I wanted so badly to help you but I was being detained by police for questioning in a different incident. Then everything went black and I didn't wake up until a day later and you had already left the scene. »

Wait. The police were there and they didn't help me?

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In the speed of a blink, I'm back at the virgin sacrifice party, wrapped in rope like a human-turned-snake and being held onto a table by at least three different strong people.

« Enough blather. Let's get this party started! » somebody yells.

I scream a scream I never dared to ever dream that I would ever dare to scream. I can't see it but I can feel it - axes being thrust against my feet. It doesn't take long at all for the axes to pierce through the ropes and then my socks and then my skin and then my veins and then my muscle and then my bones and then the muscle on the other side of my bones, and then the veins and then the skin. The volume of my screaming and wailing is met with a round of applause and I wake up in my bed.

It was only a dream. I was only dreaming that I was having my feet hacked off by axes… or was I? Perhaps the dream was the reality and this is the dream. Perhaps the reality is that my brain moved my consciousness into a less painful fantasy as a coping mechanism. The only way to know for sure would be to die. I'll just have to wait and see what happens. This is not the life I ever imagined I would lead.

Or perhaps just perhaps this is my second chance. If the dream was only a dream and reality is still reality, then I have everything to gain by not having been brutally sacrificed by creeps.

Perhaps now is the time to be honest with myself and to live the life I've always dreamed of living. I only have one life.

I sleep the best sleep I've slept in goodness knows how long and I dream things I had not dreamed for years and years in a good way. The dreams were indeed lovely dreams.

The next morning I make waffles for breakfast and since it is not a school day, I go for a stroll.

« Hello, » to me says a vaguely familiar person and they call me by my name. « You were really really really stoned the last time we spoke, five or so days ago at that dinner party where you were tied up in ropes, about to get hacked with axes and then you made an unprovoked declaration that you would help me out with anything in exchange for me cutting away the ropes that were preventing you from moving your arms, legs and torso. »

I reply politely that I don't remember any of that and ask how I can be sure they are telling the truth?

« You were wearing two shirts that night. While I was cutting through your rope, I sliced a hole in your first shirt that was so large I could see through to your second shirt. It was an accident and you said you hated that shirt anyway. »

Yikes. I was indeed wearing two shirts that day and I indeed had come to loathe that outer shirt. I recall having wondered why I had ever chosen to wear it. If this person is being truthful about having saved my life, then I would owe them a very very excellent favour in return.

« I bet you're wondering what happened, » the person continues. « I'm with [my nation's secret police force]. We've been investigating that cult for decades and we finally have enough evidence to dismantle them so that they never commit their crimes against humanity ever again. »

The person shows me a piece of government identification that looks legitimate, though I probably wouldn't be able to distinguish fake from real government secret police identification.

« You were chosen at random by my teammates and me, who had already gotten ourselves accepted into the cult. We used you as bait to attract an audience at a catered party and then we poisoned the main course. The idea was to kill them with poison and to arrest whoever survived but by a freaking unlikely coincidence, the funeral parlour turned out to be haunted. A group of ghosts made all our handcuffs vanish into thin air then they did ghost stuff to make us all faint as well. While I was fainting, I managed to cut your ropes with a nearby axe before I passed out as well, » the person explains.

I've changed my mind about owing this person a favour. If anything, they owe me a favour.

« Just a minute, » I interject, « what about the cult? Are they all dead? »

« No, and now you're fucked, I'm afraid. You see, they want to have a second go at sacrificing you. I volunteered to abduct you so that I would have a chance to tell you what's going on. But you're going to get captured again, tied up again, and placed on a table ready to get chopped again. »

Of all the things this person could have said, that was the thing I was most afraid of them saying. It is bad enough as a nightmare but for it to become reality is worse than any fear I had ever had before this all began.

For a second time, I become dizzy with dread and lose consciousness, my numb body striking the ground as if it had been dropped there.

Time passes.

I become aware of being aware. Before I open my eyes, I already know where I am. I can hear chatter and gambling over how I am about to become mutilated. I am again restrained ankle to neck in thick unyielding rope.

I open my eyes just a tiny bit and find that I am suspended upside from the ceiling over another fancy dinner party, where people are making merry.

« S/he's awake! » somebody yells.

This time, I am not dreaming. This time, it is really happening. There is no getting out of it this time. I am going to die, it is going to be extremely degrading and painful, and I will hate every conscious moment of it.

Then, not in a dream, I scream a scream I never dreamed that I would dare to scream as two burning hot sticks are pressed over my eyelids and the pain is like nothing I have ever felt. For a moment I open my eyelids but that just makes it worse and there is no way to make it better as it hurts more and more.

Reacting to the pain, I try to kick and to writhe but I can't move and the inability to so much as to squirm just makes the experience even worse. It feels as if my eyes have been doused with gasoline and lit on fire. My screams are met with applause and cheer.

There is the undeniable vroom of a chainsaw that cust the rope that is suspending me from the ceiling. I'm still too distracted by my ocular pain so I barely acknowledge the awkward angle at which I hit the ground. I don't have the wherewithal to even tell if I broke any bones during my landing.

Vroom again goes the chainsaw and I can feel the vibrations against my toes. It is only a matter of seconds before I am hacked to death from the bottom up.

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I wake up yet again. If these nightmares continue, they will be the end of me. I consider telling my parents but they will probably think I'm making up lies and then they will suggest therapy, which I've heard is ok, but odds are it would just lead me to spending time in a mental institution, which would be a shitty way to the rest of my life, especially if this reality turns out not to be a pain-induced hallucination.

For the millionth time, I ask myself am I awake or dreaming and I will not know until I die.

Time passes. My eyes are ok now.

I am at a bus stop during a rainy afternoon and I am without an umbrella. A bus approaches but it is not my bus. A single person dismounts the bus and it is the person who works for [my nation's secret police].

« We failed again, » to me says the person. « We had convinced them to hold the sacrifice somewhere else and that place was haunted too. I'm wondering if it was bad luck twice in a row or whether there are ghosts actually following the cult. I'm really really sorry about your eyes. We rigged the internal torture lottery so that one of us would be the one to blind you. They wanted to use embers but we switched out for jalapeño peppers at the last second - it got the desired scream and nobody noticed the trick. It probably sucked for you but trust me, you would have hated the embers a thousand times more. »

Have you ever had your eyes burned with an individual jalapeño pepper for each eye? It sucks.

« Here's a lot of money, » says the person, handing me a thick envelope. « I know it's not as good as having your normal life back but it's the best we can do. We will continue our work on dismantling the cult but we will never include you again. For whatever it's worth, I'm really sorry if the rest of your life is fucked up now. You have to understand though, the fate you nearly suffered is not the worst thing that they have ever done. They cannot be allowed to thrive a single second longer than possible. »

The person returns to me my keys, my phone and my wallet.

« You were very smart to change the locks on your house, » says the person. « In your wallet, you'll find the cost of your new locks. You can put it back in your secret stash. »

Before I can say anything in reply, another bus arrives, the person embarks, and I am again alone in the rain. My bus arrives fifteen minutes late and only once I get on the bus does it occur to me that I could have afforded a taxi.