Dead Owls DO Dance

Bryce had been sitting inside of his car for the past 20 minutes by now, staring out the windshield at the extravagant mansion he’d pulled up to. Bryce had never considered himself a party person at all. He didn’t drink, didn’t smoke, couldn’t dance, couldn’t sing either.

…So how on Earth did he find himself being roped into a college graduation party…

He knew it would be a bad idea, he knew he wouldn’t enjoy it one bit, but when that frat bro several times his size strutted right up to him a week before graduation and all but shoved the invitation into his hands while slurring some excited, drunken sentiment about how WiCkEd CoOl and RaDicAL this party would be, he felt all but compelled to come along.

Bryce groaned in shame and held his head in his hands, leaning back against the driver’s seat. God he was so fucking stupid for showing up here…and he couldn’t bring himself to just turn around and leave either, he’d look like a giant asshole!

But if he stayed, he’d be at this loud, noisy, pushy party with all these people he didn’t know…getting hooked on all sorts of drugs and waking up in bed with people he didn’t know the next morning.

Oh well…he supposed it was better to just rip the band-aid off and march his sorry ass in there.

Bryce hauled himself out of his car and shut the door behind him, looking up at the mansion one more time. Apparently, the guy hosting the party was the richest guy on campus, and his parents were on some business trip. One had to feel bad for the maid staff that were going to have to clean up after all these rowdy adults that still tried to act like teenagers.

But whatever. Bryce soon found himself inside the mansion’s foyer. There were people absolutely everywhere, and Bryce barely had any room to move. He scrunched his body up so much that it hurt in a desperate attempt to avoid bumping into anyone. This gave him minimal success however, and he still had to offer quick, awkward apologies that the people he bumped into didn’t even notice. This only made him feel even more awkward and stupid.

Bryce eventually made his way to one of the houses living rooms. It was somewhat less crowded, but it made up for the lack of people with the obnoxiously loud music that was blaring from the speakers that were sitting on a cheap fold-up table from Walmart.

It hurt Bryce’s ears, but he’d neglected to bring any sort of earplugs along, and if he covered his ears, he’d risk drawing attention to himself, looking like a whiny loser who couldn’t handle loud music.

Bryce decided that he’d just skulk around the metaphorical back of the party, just to say he’d been to it, then sneak out once everyone was too drunk to notice him or care.

But as he leaned against the wall, uncomfortably browsing his phone, the same frat bro that gave him the invitation to the party in the first place approached him, holding several cans of beer in each hand.

“YOOO BROOOO!!!!” He shouted so he could be audible over the Avril Lavigne song playing on full blast. “SO RAD YOU DECIDED TO SHOW UP BRO, YO HAVE A BREWSKI MAN, FRESH FROM THE FREEZER MAN!!!!” The Frat Bro screamed, proceeding to shove a can of beer into Bryce’s hand. The Frat Bro ended up nearly knocking Bryce’s phone out of his hands and dropping several cans of beer on his feet in the process.

“OH SHIT SORRY ABOUT THAT BRO!!! AIGHT ENJOY!!!!!” The Frat Bro then ran off. Presumably to go enjoy a cold one with the boys.

Bryce just gulped. He’d never drank before…and now here he was, in the same situation that got him at this shitty party to begin with…

Oh well…just one couldn’t hurt, right?

Bryce snorted and then cracked the lid of the can open, smelling as the fermented piss aroma of the beer assaulted his nostrils, nearly making him gag and drop the can…but nevertheless, Bryce slowly brought the can to his lips and took a big swig.

…It tasted just like it smelt. If not worse. Bryce full-on gagged at this point and spit the nasty liquid all over the carpet. Lucky the music was so loud, and people were so busy dancing to it that they didn’t notice.

Even though the beer tasted like rotten cerebrospinal fluid that had been distilled with rat piss and blood, it was a very addicting type of ass taste. One could harken it to coffee that one got from a grocery store that came in a cardboard carton.

Bryce took another swig, his face scrunched up in disgust as the revolting liquid slid warmly and uncomfortably down his throat. Then he took another. And another. And another. And another. And now Bryce was standing in the mansion’s garage, laughing and rowdily talking with a huge group of people he’d never talked to once in his life as if he’d known them its entire duration.

“A-And then- A- um- And- And then I shaid-“ Bryce took a gigantic swig out of the gigantic glass bottle of alcohol he didn’t remember picking up. “You musht wo- \*hic\* WOark AT COCK SUCKER RECORDS!”

And all the people laughed so hard they couldn’t breathe. They laughed as if it was the funniest joke anyone had ever told in the history of anything ever. They laughed so hard that to Bryce’s ears, they all sounded the same. They laughed so hard their laughing blended into one, taunting, jovial cackle. Bryce’s vision was so blurred he couldn’t even tell one face from another. As far as he knew they all looked the same.

Bryce’s brain could barely process it as he grabbed two bottles of whiskey, one in each hand. He screamed something that he couldn’t even discern at this point. His last remaining brain cells connected to deduce that he was about to drink all four beers at the same time. Bryce looked straight up at the ceiling and began to pour the alcohol straight down his throat. More specifically, he literally poured it down his throat. He emptied out every bottle, filling his lungs full of the hot, fermented liquid, and his air supply immediately cut off as he stumbled against the wall of the garage. He slunk all the way down it, coughing and sputtering. The whiskey he managed to choke up streamed onto his mouth and onto his shirt. The crowd of people gathered around him in concern as Bryce’s lungs burned and as the life faded from his eyes and he slumped to the ground.

“…SOMEONE CALL 911!” Someone screamed, and on cue, one woman ran into the next room to try and phone the police. One of the people in the group ran over to Bryce’s corpse and began to furiously and desperately attempt to perform CPR on him. It was almost comical. A poor, awkward introvert going to a party, then getting so blackout drunk on beer that he drowned on it.

 Bryce’s death truly was second to none.

 As the man tried his hardest to resuscitate Bryce, Bryce suddenly sat straight up and opened his eyes. The man backed away fearfully as Bryce slowly turned his head towards the crowd, and smiled a disturbingly long smile that almost literally went ear to ear. Bryce opened his eyes, which were now a hypnotic orange and yellow pattern with beady, black pupils in the center of them.

“What the fuck…?!” One of the partygoers called out.

Bryce’s corpse stood up as if it was possessed. It then began to laugh as every window in the mansion shut itself and locked, followed by every door doing more of the same. One of the more muscular partygoers ran up to the door and began trying to break it down.

 And while he did that, Bryce’s body began to change. His brown hair started to turn black, and the existing strands began to accumulate and fuse into each other, becoming a head of black feathers which soon began growing all over his face. Bryce’s ears shrank away into mere holes in the sides of his head, and large plume of feathers grew out of what were once his eyebrows, growing past his head and standing proudly. Another plume grew out of the corners of his eyes. This set was slightly smaller than the first, but no less proud. Topping off the changes to his head, Bryce’s nose and upper lip fused together into the upper part of a beak.

The rest of the partygoers in the garage backed away fearfully, bunching up against the garage door while that one guy kept slamming his shoulder against the door to the rest of the house, vainly hoping that it would open and grant them an escape from whatever this hellish creature that was emerging was.

Bryce’s fingers flattened out and turned a deathly black as he continued to cackle maniacally. Following that, his fingers all melded into each other, and his thumbs rotted away. Afterwards, the same black feathers on his head began to furiously grow all over his arms. They then began to widen vertically and continue to fluff out with feathers until Bryce now had full, magnificent, deathly wings.

Bryce then kicked his shoes and socks off, then got on his knees and used his beak to tear up the waistband of his pants, then stood up and allowed them to fall off. The feathers had already consumed his legs, and were reaching his feet.

His big toes rotted into nothing just like his thumbs, and the rest of his toes fused into two large, razor-sharp talons, and two more grew from his heels. A sizeable fan of black tail feathers also began to grow out of his lower back. And as that change was happening, Bryce’s shirt began to change as well, the sleeves disappearing entirely and turning into a stark-white button-up shirt that rode up his lengthened neck. His jacket also changed as well, losing the sleeves just like his shirt, then turning a bright pink hue. Afterwards, the zipper vanished entirely, being replaced by a singular, bright-gold button that held it closed. Finally, a sleek, pink bow grew right out of his neck as if it were a part of his body.

The creature that was once known as Bryce began to giggle wildly as he stepped closer to the cowering crowd of people.

“NOW NOW NOW, WHAT’S WITH THE LONG FACES EVERYONE? I WAS TOLD THERE WAS A PARTY GOING ON! OHOHOHOHOHOO! AND I ALSO HEARD…” Barnaby reached his talon behind his back and pulled out a gigantic, rusty knife.

“…IT WAS TO D I E FOR!”

The massive owl-ghost began to laugh maniacally as he chased down every partygoer in the garage, stabbing them repeatedly until they were dead. Their screams only motivated Barnaby to kill them faster. Sure they all sounded in painful terror now, but once they were all free from those mortal shackles, they’d all be shrieking with joy!

Barnaby cackled once again as the man trying to break the door down finally broke through, screaming for everyone at the party to run for their lives. And Barnaby couldn’t have that, oh no no no. He needed everyone here dead! The party couldn’t get into full swing until all those spirits had cast away all their pathetic, fleshy, restricting mortal bodies.

As Barnaby sauntered into the foyer of the mansion, through the fleeing, screaming crowd of partygoers, he could see one lady attempting to phone the police with hysterical tears in her eyes. Barnaby strode over to her faster than the eye could see and gripped her head with his talons and she screamed in horror, crying for her life.

“COME NOW, WE CAN’T HAVE ANY PESKY PARTY-CRASHERS SHOWING UP! OHOHOHHOOO!” Barnaby screamed. He then snapped the woman’s neck so hard her head was turned 180 degrees. He then stomped on the phone so hard that it was shattered into hundreds of pieces.

Barnaby then turned his attention to the screaming of the crowd as they desperately searched for any way out of the house of death they’d found themselves in…

It wouldn’t take long for the walls to be painted with blood, and the floor tiled with lifeless corpses. Now all Barnaby needed to was set up everything for the REAL party that was sure to follow now! A party that would last until the Second Coming. A party that sure to be the time of all of their DEATHS!