

# **Asylum**

Psychological Thriller Collection Book 1

by  
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## Chapter One

The night wind blew in from eastern Ontario into the rural majesty that is southern Maine, already signaling the woe of early winter setting in. It was the kind of wind that cuts through the human body into the soul, leaving a chance of natural renewal that is the change of season.

Bruce Adler shivered as he exited the staff entrance of Androscoggin State Hospital which is in between Wayne and Winthrop in the county. Adler had joined the hospital when he was just an intern, and found himself staying on as house staff. He had told himself many times over the years that if he would just hang on long enough, that the coveted position of Chief of Behavioral Medicine would be his.

A sharp sound from the rear startled Adler to the point of distraction, and he instinctively began to walk a bit faster to his BMW and pulled out his keys. After a few more sharp sounds, he ran for the car and groaned when his remote failed to work when he pushed the button on the key chain holder. As he got closer, he heard the trees rustling unnaturally and saw he was all alone versus whatever he was up against. The last thing he checked was his smartphone, and saw he had no signal bars. The next thing he saw was the lock on the driver side wasn't there.

The wind literally slammed him off the car, and he somehow stayed on his feet and did a slingshot around the

rear of the car. He saw to his utter disbelief that the lock on the passenger side was also missing, and began to breathe with great desperation. As he backed away from the car, his mouth was covered and his body picked up by whatever this was. The last thing he saw was the parking lot as his head got slammed into it.

The phone rang in the darkness. A sole hand reached blindly up and then over to find the phone, and then pull it under the covers. “Yeah.”

“Hey kid, it’s your Uncle John.”

“Hey Uncle John, it’s...*oh my God*...jeez...real late.”

“Yeah whatever. Listen. Did you watch the news tonight?”

“Nope. Sorry, but the news is something I no longer enjoy like I used to.”

“Did you go to school with Bruce Adler?”

“Yup, and if it wasn’t for him, I wouldn’t have gotten my medical degree or my license for that matter. Why are you asking about him?”

“Andy, I’m sorry. I really am. I called you, and woke you up out of a sound sleep.”

Andy sat up in bed, and turned on the bedside light. “It’s an occupational hazard at this point. Now, you were saying about Bruce?”

“He’s dead, son.”

“Dead tired?”

“No. Dead as a door nail. The Maine State Police found him an hour ago outside Androscoggin State Hospital near his car. Apparently, the Chief of Behavioral Medicine Dr. Mark Simon thought you were an emergency contact of some kind and had trouble reaching you. He called me, and then I called you.”

“Do they have an idea about what happened to him?”

“He got slammed head first into the parking lot real hard.”

“Oh for God’s sake. Who the *hell* would do *that?!?*”

“I have no idea, and neither do the locals. There was a storm coming, so maybe an Act of God?”

Andy rolled his eyes. “Yeah. Sure. Right. Anyway, let me jump off of here and make some calls. This is some crazy ass world we live in now, huh?”

John seemed taken aback from his nephew’s tone and attitude. “OK. You take care, and if you need anything, call me.”

“You know it. Bye.”

“Bye.” John hung up, and looked at the phone.

His wife Lisa came out of the bathroom and looked at him. “Was that Andy?”

John nodded. “I called Andy, and talked to Andy. It sounded like Andy, but it wasn’t Andy. You know what I mean?”

Lisa smiled, and sat down on his lap. “I think you can appreciate how busy he has been the past few years, so he’s just trying to cope with his loss just like he did when his Mom died.”

John lifted her up, and stood up. He looked out the window. “I should have been there for him then. None of that is easy for him. There’s been so much pain and tragedy in this family.”

Lisa was on his side, rubbing his back gently. “He has a lot of strength going for him. I’m sure he’s fine, and if he’s not I’m sure he’ll call us.”

The moment Andy hung up the phone, he got out of bed and immediately headed for the deck and quietly slid the door open so he wouldn’t disturb the neighbors. He shut his eyes, and listened. There were five things he heard.

Distant sirens.

People talking.

Car horns going off.

The wind blowing.

Sounds of lovemaking.

He opened his eyes, and everything seemed fine. The only thing he felt was the anguish of losing someone else

who was close to him, and even though he knew it was a part of life it still seemed unfair for some rhyme or reason that he couldn't wrap his mind around. The old him would have been freaking out, but the new him knew he couldn't very well afford even the notion of going backwards. He was a mental health professional with responsibilities to his clients as well as his colleagues. Even so, why was Bruce dead?

The knocking on his door pulled him out of his thoughts, and he shook his head as he thought about who it might be and why the hell were they knocking on his door in the middle of the night? He left the deck, and slid the door shut. As he left the bedroom, the knocking turned into loud pounding. He walked a bit faster, and got to the door. He took a look in the peephole, and saw Karen his neighbor on lived directly on top of him. Using the chain, he opened the door.

Karen said, "What's with the music?"

"What music?"

"The goddamn music I just heard beneath me. Do you have any idea what time it is?"

"Yeah. It's fucking late. There was no music being played down here. I think you made a mistake, and should go bother someone else with it. Good night."

Andy kicked the door shut in her face, and went back to the bedroom. The nerve of that stupid bitch, he thought. He

shook his head, and laughed out loud as he thought of the day ahead.

With a rush of energy, Andy snapped awake and took a moment to get his bearings. It was clearly just before the sunrise, and he was all alone to face another day. He looked at his smartphone, and realized that he had several missed calls and grinned when he saw that his uncle had called a few times overnight. He also noticed that Bruce Adler had called him at some point, and there was a delay in both the call and the message received. He accessed the message.

“Andy, this is Bruce. Someone or something is after me, and whatever they fucked with my car man. NO. NO LEAVE ME ALONE. NOOOOOOOOOOOO.”

Andy’s mouth popped open as he heard a roar, and Adler screaming for his life. Then, the phone dropped and was picked up. A strange almost filtered voice said, “You’re next.” Then, the call dropped.

Andy threw his phone away from him, shaking with a combination of anger and fear. He hated feeling like this, and he knew he would be useless at work if he wasn’t able to move past this long enough to focus on caring for others. He closed his eyes in an effort to use positive imagery, but what he did get didn’t make much sense to him. He saw darkness with red flames licking with the image reflecting off a far wall at the end of a long corridor that got hotter with every



step taken, and he could smell the burning flesh and the horrible screams of tortured souls.

Andy's eyes snapped open, and he was physically shaking and sweating. The room wasn't even warm. He had bad dreams that were worse than this, and was thinking it was a place that he really truly never wanted to be whether he was alive much less dead. Whatever the hell this was, he wanted no part of it. That much was certain. He also knew that if something felt and smelled real, it had to be a lot more than just a fantasy or wishful thinking.

It was real, and it was real to him.

The smartphone came to life, and it made him jump out of his skin. Without even checking the Caller ID, he hit send and put the phone up to his ear. "Who the hell are you?"

"I am your worst fear. A terrible thought that fucks with your whole day."

"I'm not playing games with you, motherfucker. Who are you and what do you want?"

"Who I am I think already know from what you just saw a moment ago, and what I want should be obvious even to a smart man like yourself."

"Oh yeah right. So you are the Devil?"

"Yeah. I am."

Andy shook the phone out of his hand, and turned away closing his eyes shaking his head. Taking a deep breath, he opened his eyes and eyed the phone intently. He was trying

to think about what to say and what he probably shouldn't say, and had the presence of mind to slow down like the professional he was. Once he had a plan in mind, he picked up the phone and put it up to his ear. "Seriously now, who is this?"

"Lucifer Morningstar, the Fallen Angel."

"How long have you been Lucifer Morningstar?"

"Since before the creation of your lost world."

"So, you're a love child from the sixties lashing out against the system and you picked me?"

"No. I am Lucifer Morningstar, and I have taken all of your loved ones away. Their souls were long since mine with their love of money and worldly things."

"Oh. So, you are saying that you are punishing me for taking the time and energy to improve myself to the point that I'm a New Creation and you are just as lost as the souls you claim to have?"

"You have chosen to sacrifice yourself so you can help others, and in turn you allowed your loved ones to be left behind in their sin."

Andy pretended to check a watch he didn't have. "Well, our time is up. See you much later." He pushed end and his mouth dropped open when he finally checked the Caller ID.

It was Bruce Adler's phone.