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DOUBLE WALKER

A DRAMA

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DOUBLE WALKER - A DRAMA

written by

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Synopsis

A man’s shadow is murdering anyone who angers him. The police cannot connect him to the crimes so ask psychologist Marie Dobbs for her assessment and find out if he really is troubled, holds a deranged mind or a cunning killer. Will Dobbs find the truth of the Double Walker before it’s too late?

Cast of Characters

DR. MARIA DOBBS

RUTH

BENEDICT ARNOLD

SHADOW

ACT I

Scene 1

Setting: A small office. Day. A curtain covers an implied window back center. Near it is a desk and chair. On the desk is a telephone and Intercom. Another chair is in front of it, to the side.

At Rise: DR. MARIA DOBBS sits at the desk. RUTH enters from stage right handing DOBBS a file.

RUTH

Dr. Dobbs, your next patient has arrived. Here's his file.

(DR. MARIA DOBBS scans the file.)

DR. MARIA DOBBS

Interesting. Benedict Arnold. His parents must have a cruel sense of humor.

RUTH

Mr. Arnold claims his shadow is responsible for murdering several people. Detective Jamison requests you confirm or deny his previous evaluations.

DR. MARIA DOBBS

(reading file)

Meaning they haven't a clue on this one. Is Mr. Arnold alone?

RUTH

Yes, but...

DR. MARIA DOBBS

But?

RUTH *(concerned)*

You've had numerous patients but this one... eerie.

DR. MARIA DOBBS

Eerie as in a Great Lake or Halloween?

RUTH

Halloween, at midnight, in a haunted house kinda eerie.

DR. MARIA DOBBS *(sighs)*

Yikes. Okay, only one way to find out. Send him in.

RUTH

Yes, ma'am.

(RUTH exits. BENEDICT ARNOLD enters quickly sitting nervously wringing his hands with head lowered.)

DR. MARIA DOBBS

Good morning, Mr. Arnold. Have you dropped something?

(ARNOLD keeps his head lowered.)

BENEDICT ARNOLD

No.

DR. MARIA DOBBS

Do you know why you are here?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

To understand my problem and define a solution.

DR. MARIA DOBBS

You have summed up my task nicely. Yes, to understand the problem before setting a course of correction. You have had sessions with other clinicians?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes, and they all use big words to say I'm seeing things.

DR. MARIA DOBBS

So, you disagree with their diagnosis?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

They said I'm delusional, my problem vague and convoluted.

DR. MARIA DOBBS

Well, a delusional disorder is a form of psychosis where a person believes his visions are real even after evidence to the contrary. Do you feel maybe-

BENEDICT ARNOLD *(interrupting)*

There was never evidence to prove I was imagining anything. Delusions contain a certain degree of truth do they not?

DR. MARIA DOBBS

Yes, in certain cases. You seem to be well informed in the psychological process, Mr. Arnold.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

I believe my complaint is not delusional but very real.

DR. MARIA DOBBS

Perhaps you overstated or embellished what you-

BENEDICT ARNOLD *(interrupting)*

Do not assume I lied! It upsets me immensely!

(DOBBS is shaken by his outburst and sits quiet for a beat.)

DR. MARIA DOBBS

Mr. Arnold, I certainly did not intend to suggest you lied. I will listen with an open mind. First, I would like to learn a little of you, your likes, dislikes, friends, family...

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DR. MARIA DOBBS

Your dilemma is akin to Jimmy Stewart and his invisible rabbit Harvey.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

More like Jekyll and Hyde.

DR. MARIA DOBBS

Interesting. But it is a shadow. It moves with you, stops with you. How can a shape without substance, one that mimics your every move, harm anyone?

BENEDICT ARNOLD *(agitated)*

I'll tell you how. It killed Meg and my parents because they infuriated it! It will kill again! I cannot control it!

DR. MARIA DOBBS

The electrical storm seems to be the root of your dilemma. It frightened you and when we are in a state of fear our senses mobilize at every level even our imagination can run amok. Tell me what happened with Meg?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

We had an argument. I went for a walk. When I returned the police were there. She had been strangled. A neighbor saw Meg alive at the time I left. I told the police of the Double Walker but they believe it was me but can't prove it.

DR. MARIA DOBBS

And your parents?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

They pestered me to find a job, so I went out looking. When I came home, they were both strangled. Out seeking employment verified my whereabouts.

DR. MARIA DOBBS *(contemplates)*

Hopefully, we can rid you of this Double Walker.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

So you believe me?

DR. MARIA DOBBS

I keep my beliefs in check until all the data needed to verify or produce evidence to the contrary is established.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Polite and professional rhetoric meaning no.

DR. MARIA DOBBS

I need to assimilate the information and learn more of you.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Just like the others...

DR. MARIA DOBBS

The imagination is a sensitive emotion, especially when prodded by an electrical storm.

(ARNOLD stares at the floor.)

DR. MARIA DOBBS

You can raise your head, Mr. Arnold.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

No, it’s angry.

DR. MARIA DOBBS

I assure you we are alone.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

I assure you, we are not.

(stands angrily)

It’s amazing how little faith people have in the afflicted by

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT)
labeling their problems as falsehoods when we scream for help!

DR. MARIA DOBBS
Mr. Arnold, please. We can discuss this rationally.

BENEDICT ARNOLD
I sensed empathy in you. I thought you might believe.

(ARNOLD storms out. DOBBS composes herself then taps the intercom.)

DR. MARIA DOBBS
Ruth? Has Mr. Arnold left the office?

(pause)

I see. No, no need to go after him.

(DOBBS picks up the telephone.)

Hello? Homicide? Detective Jamison please. Yes, I'll hold.

(A dark figure appears from behind the curtain grasping DOBBS by the neck.)

SHADOW
You were told not to upset me...

(LIGHTS: down)

(FINAL CURTAIN)



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