



Remains
to be
Seen

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Blurb: Khloe Morgan is rescued by Benjamin Asher after being attacked by a horde of zombies. Her would be rescuer harbors a secret. Will Khloe be able to accept it? It *remains to be seen*.

Remains To Be Seen

Karen Michelle Nutt

She bolted awake with a gasp, going for her dagger, but the weapon wasn't strapped to her belt. It took a moment to realize she wasn't in the forest, but in a room. Blood splattered her clothes and she had a bandage wrapped around her arm.

Her gaze riveted to the door as a man entered. "Good, you're awake," he said. "I brought you something to drink. Think of it as soup in a glass." He handed it to her, but she made no move to accept it, wondering if it contained a sleeping potion or worse... poison. She didn't know this man. Sensing her trepidation, he took a sip first then offered the glass again. "I promise you it's what you need right now."

Her fingers curled around the glass. "Who are you?" she asked over the rim. Her voice sounded like she ate sand and she cleared her throat.

"I'm Benjamin Asher and before you ask, you're at my home. I found you at the edge of the forest and brought you here."

She took another gulp of the soup, wondering what was in it. It tasted wonderful. Then again she was starving. She couldn't think of the last time she'd eaten meat. "Did anyone else make it out alive?" Her group had been attacked by a zombie horde. If Benjamin hadn't come along...

"I found only you, Miss..."

"Khloe Morgan." Her gaze slid over her host with curiosity. The lighting gave everything in the room a greenish tint, including her host. Benjamin's one eye was the color of amber, but the other eye was milky white. The imperfection did not distract from his looks, but gave him an air of mystery, his injury a badge of courage to survive. "I thank you for everything, but I should go." She attempted to stand. Big mistake.

Luckily, Benjamin reached her before she fell on her face. "I gotcha." His big hands gripping her shoulders and helping her to sit back down on the bed.

"Thanks, but I'm okay."

"That remains to be seen," he told her. He gave her a hint of a smile, but there was a note of sadness in that one eye. He'd seen terrible things as they all had once the virus spread, taking loved ones and turning them into monsters. She wondered

whom he had to kill. A wife? A son? They were all killers now—human and zombies alike. It was the humans against the monsters and a race against who would survive.

“You should stay here a few days,” he told her.

She wanted to argue how strong and fit she was, but why bother when they both knew the truth. Besides, she had no place to go. Her friends were dead, if she were to believe what Benjamin said. “You’re right. I’ll rest a few days.”

He gave her a curt nod. “Feel free to roam the house, but stay out of the upstairs bathroom.”

Her brows furrowed at the strange request. “Why?” she asked before she could stop herself. Curiosity always got the better of her.

“Trust me,” his gaze met hers, “you’ll be sorry otherwise.” At the door, he glanced at her again. “I’ll be out for a bit. I need to hunt for food.”

With the zombie epidemic, there weren’t any supermarkets. Everyone had to hunt for meat and grow their own vegetables. “Be safe.”

He grunted a response and left before she could ask him what he said.

She finished off the soup and wished there had been more. God she was so tired and she hadn’t slept in a real bed in a long time. She slid beneath the covers and soon drifted off to sleep where dreams haunted her. The attack... the screams... so much blood...

She woke with a start and it took her a moment to realize she was safe, but she’d slept the day away. The sun had set, leaving the room in shadows. She pushed back the covers and swung her legs over the edge of the bed. Placing her feet on the floor, she stood with caution and her reward...? Not falling on her face. Her movements proved awkward and stiff, but she’d been in a fight so of course her limbs were rebelling.

“Benjamin?” she called for him from the doorway of the bedroom then proceeded to the living room in search of her host, but only silence greeted her. Then she remembered he’d left earlier to hunt for food and probably wasn’t back yet.

With nothing to do but wait for his return, she decided to investigate her temporary home. The downstairs sported a living room, a kitchen, and the bedroom she occupied. She checked out the downstairs bathroom last. A blue shower curtain lined the tub and seashells decorated the toilet seat cover. Her lips curved when she spotted a real prize. “Toilet paper,” she whispered, joy seeping into those words as if she’d found a pot a gold at the end of the rainbow. These days, toilet paper was better than treasure.

No mirror hung above the sink, but she spotted a towel next to the soap dispenser. She reached for the faucet and turned on the water to wash the foul taste from her mouth. What she wouldn’t do for a toothbrush. She spit and blood splattered the porcelain and something swirled around the basin. Her hand snaked out stopping it before it rolled into the drain. Picking it up, she stared at the molar, root and all. Then she remembered the fight. She’d been knocked in the face by one of the zombies. The blow must have loosened a tooth, maybe more.

On instinct she glanced up to inspect the damage. “No mirror.” She frowned, finding it odd that Benjamin would remove it.

She headed out of the room and glanced at the stairs, knowing there was another bathroom up there...perhaps with a mirror. Benjamin warned her she wouldn’t like it,

but if he left it a mess, who cared? She gripped the stairwell and dragged her body up the stairs. Her legs giving her a heck of a time, each step seemed to take all her concentration. She hoped the awkwardness would pass once she healed. At this rate, she'd be easy picking if zombies attacked the house.

Upon the landing, she spotted three doors which to choose from. "Will it be door number one or two or three, Kloe Morgan?" She chose door number two and got lucky. Her hand searched for the light switch and flipped it. She frowned, wondering what Benjamin had meant by his odd statement. The room appeared clean and unused.

As she stepped inside, something caught her eye in the mirror. She whirled around, her hand reaching for the dagger she didn't have strapped to her belt. "Crap!" She slammed against the sink and her scream proved *horror-flick* worthy, startling her further as it echoed off the walls.

Nothing stood there. No threatening zombie, nada. Not even a picture on the wall. Talk about being jumpy. She was glad no one was here to witness her meltdown.

She took a ragged breath and chastised herself for being foolish. There were no monsters lurking in Benjamin's bathroom. She turned toward the sink again and her gaze caught her reflection. Not believing what she viewed, she touched her face and the reflection mimicked her actions. "No, no, this can't be happening." Her gaze landed on her arm wrapped in cloth. She hadn't questioned the reason for it, but now she tore at the makeshift bandages, tossing them into the sink. She stared in disbelief, her breath catching in her throat. Bite marks marred her flesh that had turned a ghastly shade of molted green.

She'd been bitten. Her gaze shifted to her reflection again and the hideous monster leered in delight. One milky eye, flesh greenish in color, hair matted to her scalp... "I'm a—"

"Zombie," a male voice said.

Her gaze riveted to the door where Benjamin stood. Realization slapped her in the face. His milky eye...his greenish pallor...the grunts that took a moment to understand. He was one of them, a zombie...like her. "Nooooo!"

"I told you, you'd be sorry if you came up here," he said. "You weren't ready to see what you've become, but don't worry. I'll take care of you until you are." He held up a glass. The liquid was as red as...blood. "It's fresh. The hunt proved successful."

The End