

THE THIRD BOWL
(A Cereal Killer Story)

by

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FADE IN:

INT. COREY'S KITCHEN - DAY

COREY and DEXTER, twenties, sit opposite each other at Corey's kitchen table. Corey's unshaven and morose, in a schlumpy bathrobe. Dexter's a lot happier, in designer casuals. Both are overweight - but nothing a few sessions in the gym wouldn't cure.

Corey, though, will have problems in later life, if he keeps putting away the stuff he's eating now: a heaping bowl of chocolatey cold cereal. He attacks it with a vengeance, but it doesn't seem to lighten his mood.

DEXTER

And I'm telling you, Corey. The cops will never catch this guy. And, from what I hear, it's just starting. Like, one or two, so far. But it's gonna spread. Like wildfire. And the cops'll never catch him. You know why?

Dexter pauses. Drum roll, please.

DEXTER

'Cause it's not a guy.

Corey ignores him completely, finishing up his first bowl. He pours a fresh mound, from the multi-colored cereal box beside him. Adds milk, from a carton on the table. Then starts slurping down, again.

Dexter pulls a cigarette from behind his ear. An old-style kitchen match from his pocket. He thumbs it into flame, lights the cigarette, and takes a luxurious drag. Blows a plume of smoke into the air. He doesn't seem to care if the smoke bothers Corey.

And Corey doesn't seem to mind, anyway; he's too focused on his cereal.

Dexter contemplates the cigarette, in his hand.

DEXTER

I know, I know. The program. "The Seven Steps." To Cadbury. Only thing it did was turn us into chocoholics.

Dexter pats his stomach.

DEXTER

Screw that. Better off smoking these things. You only live once, right?

Corey's still chomping away.

DEXTER

Right. Anyhow, to get back to my story. Way I hear it, there's no trace evidence. At least, nothing to trace back to the killer. No toxicity, in the blood. No sign of explosives. No murder weapon. No sign of forced entry. Nothing. Nothing but blood, and death. Pretty gruesome stuff. And it hasn't made the news yet. And it won't. 'Cause they don't know what the fuck's going on, and they don't want to start a panic, with another serial killer story.

Dexture gestures with his cigarette, toward the cereal box. A masterpiece of bad design, garish letters screaming KOKO KRUNCHEEZ, with hysterical optimism.

DEXTER

Absolutely no nutritional value. Whatsoever. None. I'm telling you, man. That stuff'll kill you. That is some evil shit. Hersheys, now. Three Musketeers. M and M's, even. They're way better for you. I swear.

Corey's clearly not convinced. His second helping almost over, he empties out the box, and sets it back on the table. Pours more milk into his bowl, and starts gulping down KOKO KRUNCHEEZ again.

DEXTER

It's that third bowl.

He shakes his head. There's sadness in his eyes, now.

KABLOOOM!!

Corey EXPLODES, splattering blood, bone, and innards all over the kitchen table. Miraculously, Dexter's untouched.

But the cereal box...

The KOKO KRUNCHEEZ logo morphs into a leering, demonic face. Arms shoot out from its sides, and grab the milk carton, bowl, and spoon, from the table. Stuff them into the demon's mouth. It crunches them down, grinning at Dexter. Who flips it the finger. With an audible POP!!, the demon vanishes.

DEXTER

That's the one that does it.

COREY (O.S.)

Dex? Dexter? Is that you?
I thought you were--

Dexter turns around. Corey's there behind him, in bathrobe and stubble, as before.

DEXTER

I am.

Corey gapes at the bloody mess, in his kitchen.

COREY

What the hell happened?

DEXTER

Welcome to the after-life, amigo.
I tried to warn you. "Don't buy KOKO KRUNCHEEZ," I said. "Don't buy KOKO KRUNCHEEZ." And, did you listen? No.

COREY

Oh, I'm sorry. I must've left my spirit radio in my other pants.
So, what are we, now? The talking dead?

DEXTER

Oh, ha! Funn-ny. Very funny. There's this demonic killer cereal out there, masquerading as chocolate treats, looking to murder the world, and you're making jokes.
We have to do something.

COREY

Like... what?

DEXTER

I don't know. Organize. Find a way to--

COREY

Helloo-oo! We're dead!!

DEXTER

So?

Fine. Fine. You just--

And, as the two friends argue it out, we

FADE TO BLACK