

INT. DR. WILDE'S LABORATORY - NIGHT

A single LAMP glows in the darkness, casting the lab in shadows.

DR. WILDE, A SCIENTIST, does sciency stuff at a TABLE covered with BUBBLING BEAKERS and TEST TUBES. Behind Dr. Wilde, a ZOMBIE (<MRS./MR.> WILDE), lurches around, cleaning up the lab.

<MRS./MR.> WILDE
<MOANS>

DR. WILDE
I know it's late, Dear, but I am so close.

As if they might explode. Dr. Wilde combines the contents of the beakers.

In the background, <Mrs./Mr.> Wilde's MOANS GROW LOUDER, almost frantic.

DR. WILDE (CONT'D)
(excited - not paying attention)
Wait! I think I've done it!

Before Dr. Wilde can celebrate too much, a ZOMBIE HAND hands the scientist another beaker.

DR. WILDE (CONT'D)
(without glancing at the zombie)
Not now, Dear. I just made a--

The hand drops the beaker and grabs the scientist.

DR. WILDE (CONT'D)
(finally looking)
Wait! What are you--? No!

Dr. Wilde is pulled O.S. The scientist SCREAMS.

<Mrs./Mr.> Wilde's MOANING becomes triumphant.

TITLE CARD

"Murder by Zombie"

EXT. HARRY & JOE'S OFFICE DOOR - DAY

The door reads, HARRY & JOE, PRIVATE DETECTIVES.

SHADOWS OF ZOMBIES shift across the door. We hear ZOMBIES MOANING.

We push in on the lettering as HARRY narrates.

HARRY (V.O.)

Business was lousy, but what do you expect during the zombie apocalypse? Who cares about crime when your neighbors want to eat your face?

(beat)

We do. That's who.

INT. HARRY & JOE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

HARRY sits at a CLUTTERED DESK, bored. JOE, a zombie, shuffles around the room, MOANING.

HARRY (V.O.)

Name's Harry. Harry Pants. That's Joe, my partner. Yes. Joe's a zombie.

HARRY (ALTERNATE DIALOGUE)

Name's Harriet, but you can call me Harry. Harry Pants. That's Joe, my partner. Yes. Joe is a zombie.

Joe finds something mundane, picks it up, and takes it to Harry.

JOE

<Moans>

HARRY

(taking it - humoring Joe)

Thanks, Joe. Yeah. That's a big clue. We'll definitely solve it now.

Joe eyes linger on Harry's hand hungrily. Starts to lean over to bite it.

HARRY (CONT'D)

(bored - pointing)

You know what? I think I saw another important clue over there.

Joe hesitates, drops Harry's hand, and starts shuffling in that direction.

HARRY (V.O.)

The zombie apocalypse wasn't what everyone expected. Sure, zombies are rotting corpses with an appetite for your gray stuff, but they also come back with a single-minded desire to make up for their biggest regret.

Harry watches Joe rummage around looking for clues.

HARRY (V.O.)

Joe's regret? When <he/she> was alive, <he/she> was a lousy detective.

The office door bursts open with a CACOPHONY OF ZOMBIE MOANS. REBEL and BEN WILDE, siblings, rush in and slam the door behind them.

BEN

There are so many zombies out there!

REBEL

One of them tried to sell me car insurance.

HARRY

You know how people used to say that no one regretted not spending more time in the office? Turns out that isn't true.

Joe starts toward the siblings, MOANING HUNGRILY.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Joe. These are clients. They brought us a big case.

Joe hesitates.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Why don't you bring them some water?

Joe shuffles to the sink and fumbles with some cups.

HARRY (CONT'D)

(to Rebel and Ben)

Don't mind him.

(indicates seats in front of desks)

Have a seat.

They sit.

REBEL

You are Harry and Joe, the private detectives?

HARRY

That's right.

Joe manages to fill the cups in spite of zombie hands and shuffles over to the siblings, splashing water all over the place.

HARRY (CONT'D)

What can we do to help you?

REBEL

Oh, it's awful. Our <father/mother> has been murdered!

Joe hands the two their cups. They are all-but empty. The zombie shuffles around the desk and stands next to Harry.

HARRY

Murdered, huh? Seems a bit pointless these days.
(realizes they are being insensitive)
We're sorry for your loss. You want us to find out whodunit?

BEN

We know who did it. Our <mother/father - spouse of the murdered person>.

Harry and Joe are surprised.

REBEL

(explaining)
<She's/he's> a zombie.

JOE

<Moans incomprehensible comment>

HARRY

Joe says that isn't murder. It's just Mother Nature biting you in the butt--or brains. I guess, give my regards to your <father/mother> and stay out of <his/her> way. At least they're together again, right?

REBEL

No. You don't understand. Our
<father/mother> didn't come back!

JOE

<Surprised exclamation moan>

HARRY

(same time)

Excuse me?

BEN

Our <father/mother> is a--
(beat)
WAS a brilliant scientist. <He/she>
was working on the cure. <He/she>
must have found it.

REBEL

<Mom's/Dad's> biggest regret was
not helping more in the lab, so
<she/he> stays there with
<him/her>. But <he's/she's> very
careful.

BEN

But this morning, we found
<him/her> with bite marks and
scratches all over <his/her> body.

REBEL

But <he's/she's> not a zombie.
<He's/she's> just lying there. A
corpse.

JOE

<Moans elaborate question complete
with expansive hand gestures>

The siblings stare at the zombie. Harry doesn't seem to notice.

HARRY

(prompting)

And you need us to...?

REBEL

Find the cure.

BEN

It's gone missing. Along with all
our <father's/mother's> notes.