



The Last Night of the Lazarus Brothers

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GLIMMER?" I SAID THE WORD, GIVIN' IT A TONE MEANT TO imply I knew what it meant normally, not what it probably meant now. "What the hell is Glimmer?"

Sittin' across from me at my table, well, really—just sorta occupyin' space more than sittin'—was an apparition I'd come to know pretty well over the past few years.

"Glimmer is the latest thing to hit town," answered the wraith. "Very powerful, very addictive, and as you might suspect, very illegal."

"Accordin' to the cops?"

"According to the cops," said the man sittin' with us, who looked just like the wraith down to the permanent frown etched in his face, "according to your Aunt Lucille; according to everybody."

That was a mouthful of trouble, and the presence and his doppelganger pal doin' the yakkin' knew what they were talkin' about. The specter in question was the ghost of Lazarus—yeah, John 11:1-44, *that* Lazarus—and he knew exactly how very powerful, very addictive and very illegal this Glimmer crap was.

After all, he was the first immortal it'd killed.

But not yet.

Before things get too complicated, I'll explain.

My name is Paul Morcey, and I'm a detective. I'm part of the one private investigations firm that can help you with problems that have more to do with phases of the moon and the alignment of the stars than with runnin' background checks or trailin' cheatin' spouses.

Now, don't get me wrong, we got

196 • The Last Night of the Lazarus Brothers

nuthin' against good honest work. I tell ya, give me a good, old-fashioned search-for-a-high-school-sweetheart job anytime. Cases like that don't tend to turn your hair white, or leave you with your spine pulled out through the back of your neck—you know? But when it comes time for the general population to hire up some protection against those thing that go bump, chew, swallow and burp in the night, we're about all there is.

As for the Lazarus brothers, well first off, they're not really brothers. As you probably know, Lazarus's been walkin' the Earth ever since Jesus did his PR swing through Bethany and worked his whammy on him. Now, Laz himself says he doesn't understand why he's still mobile. After all, his first question to Jesus when he found himself back in the flesh was whether he was going to die again, and was told;

“You must go the way of all men.”

For more than two thousand years he's been waitin' to travel that All Man Highway, but so far he's still kickin'. The strange part is when he first met his ghost. You see, being a made man, supernaturally speakin', it was only a matter of time before he heard about the Narkane and stopped in, which is where he met his dearly-departed self. True to form, his first question to his shade was about dyin'.

When his spirit told him it didn't know how he'd died, or when, but just that he would, Lazarus decided the way of all men was either to accept the absurdities of life, or just go buggie. The Narkane, of course, is the only place the two ever run into each other, and since they're the only people either of them can talk to that know all the same places and people and events and the such that they do, they tend to hang out together a lot. Thus their nickname of the Lazarus brothers.

Anyway, jumpin' back a bit, havin' no better topic at hand myself, I threw us forward into his mention of a new drug by askin';

“So, what makes this Glimmer so unique?” I thought this was an innocent enough question. With a sad smile on his face, the only kind he's ever been able to manage since findin' out he was goin' ta die again, Laz, he tells me;

“It's made from the bodies of faeries.” In a blink, I ran so far past “aghost” I couldn't even see the mile marker for it. Tilting my head, perhaps to make room, I squinted as I said;

“Run that horrible thought by me again.”

“Yes, don't worry. You heard him correctly.”

The ghost of Lazarus nodded after backin' up his better half, then took a moment to knock back a little of his Honolulu cocktail. It's odd, I know, but the disembodied can actually still drink liquor, and it'll affect them just as it did in real life, but—and here comes the real noggin' knuckler—only if it's a drink served with a little umbrella. Even weirder, don't think you can get away with just slammin' a mini-parasol in a boilermaker and then chuggin' yer way to disembodied happiness. Don't work. If it's not a drink that traditionally takes a rainshield, then it's no-taste/big-waste for the spook in question.