

## **“A Deadly Dare” by Alexander Lee-Rekers**

*A dark night, a quiet street. Derren and Gus stand together at the door of Number 78.*

**DERREN:** What are you waiting for? Knock.

**GUS:** I'm going to.

**DERREN:** Doesn't look like it.

**GUS:** I'm preparing myself.

**DERREN:** Really? Looks a lot like not doing anything at all.

**GUS:** Why don't you knock if you're so eager?

**DERREN:** *Not* going to happen. I'm your back-up, here if things go wrong. That's what we agreed on.

*Gus looks at Derren, sizes them up.*

**GUS:** I'm keen to hear exactly what you think you're going to do if I run into trouble.

**DERREN:** If Cutter opens the door and, y'know, kidnaps you or attacks you, then I can go for help.

**GUS:** That's not back-up! Not if you run away at the first sign of trouble! They'll be interviewing you for the Netflix true-crime show: witness number one.

**DERREN:** Fine. I'll jump on his back. Grab his arms, or something.

**GUS:** Probably shouldn't. He's super old. His arms might snap off.

*Pause.*

**DERREN:** How long have kids been doing this?

**GUS:** As long as they want to get accepted in this town, apparently.

**DERREN:** Do we know how long it's been since anybody's seen this Cutter guy?

**GUY:** They say he only comes out late at night to walk his dog, Attila.

**DERREN:** *(Sarcastically.)* Yep, so that's another reason to knock on this door and run. Creepy old, like, probably serial killer and his demon dog. *(He sighs.)* Let's get this over with. Knock.

**GUS:** What if he's lonely?

**DERREN:** Cutter? He's got Attila.

**GUS:** What if they're both lonely?

**DERREN:** Not our problem, Gus.

**GUS:** I feel sorry for him, now. What if we knocked, but instead of running we ask him how his day's been?

**DERREN:** Gus that's insane!

**GUS:** I bet he's really nice. I bet he has great stories about olden times.

**DERREN:** Or a mantelpiece full of skulls.

**GUS:** Derren? What do you think will impress the kids in town more? If we do what everybody else does ... or if we befriend the one person everyone else is terrified of.

*Derren thinks. Then steps up and knocks.*

**GUS:** I'm proud of you.

**DERREN:** I'm proud of us!

*The sound of a door opening. Gus and Derren's faces fall: they do not like what they see. Sounds of a dog barking as they both run as fast as they can.*

**DERREN:** *(While running.)* You happy?