

Wide Awake: An Alex Casey Thriller

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The embers of the springs, a harmless union of forest folk, became a hellish congregation of supernatural believers. I was tasked with investigating the alleged murder of Thomas Zane, a famous writer taking a break from his fame in Night Springs, Michigan. His death had been tied to the cultist organization. My original sources led me to investigate the Night Springs Lodge where I currently reside. The janitor had been tied to Zane's kidnapping in the room 2 cabins down and he set a meeting in the abandoned train station past the town sign. I had no trust in him as he seemed to be very friendly with the lodge owner and for a janitor had known too much but, with all my other leads running dry, he was my best thread to Zane's murder.

The janitor had come from the darkness of the train tunnel. His nametag read his name, Ahti it had plastered on it, he seemed old and fragile. In his hands was a box containing a cassette tape labeled #4B. He was quick to welcome me and discuss payment and I asked him where he got the tape from, and he said his boss had access. However, as we kept talking I saw a mark on his arm, a branding symbol. I realized at that moment I was speaking with one of the possible assailants and as he saw what I saw he dug for his pocket knife. I bolted away gripping my gun and shooting him point blank. After checking the box the tape was the lone resident of its wide and expansive innards. The tape however wasn't what I was looking for as I entered my lodge room I played the tape realizing it was a recording of my room allowing me to find the camera and my next suspect, the lodge owner.

The man standing in front of me's name was Rudy Smith. After glancing at his name tag I had realized unlike Ahtis had a full name. The man also seemed just as joyful as the last suspect. I had broken my TV to give reason and distraction for my visit. I had asked him if he could fix it and he seemed unaware of Ahtis's current predicament doing just as I had asked. I had held the door open to his office entering and looking through a guest list on his desk with one name crossed out room 4A Zane was not listed on the list and by guessing I picked tape #4a the room on the screen showing Zane sleeping in his room. Then as the clip hit 11:30 pm a man with large branding on his back pulled him away, now before the man could return I set my plan in motion. I would wait till that time and lookout for a member of the cult to lead me to Zane dead or alive and their base of operations.

I watched as the clock hit the well-known time and someone came out of Zane's room Rudy Smith and he seemed to hold an unfinished book, something of Zane's. I observed him as he drove off and followed him swerving around to seem ways away from him. Eventually, he had pulled up on a dirt road and stopped off to walk the rest of the path. The trail of the moist dirt path had led me to a charred and rundown Super 8. I expected the embers to run a large operation somewhere big but the place seemed too big and quiet to be an organization base. As I had entered the vacant rooms I came across a naked body upon a cross in room #4B and looking at the face it had been ahti burning for the sins of his end. In front of the body was the packet of pages labeled Wide Awake By: Thomas Zane. Then as I grabbed the manuscript an explosion began behind the cross burning Ahtis's corpse and trapping me in the hotel. Before I could turn however, footsteps crept behind me as Rudy had stabbed me in my chest.

Now as Casey had wallowed in pain the page in front of him opened up describing the death that came of him. He screamed out in agony as the life within him fell out of his body. I had hoped Casey would be the character to save me but sadly he wasn't the one to free me from my own damnation. My love Barbra, if you can still hear me, I am sorry for the darkness that took you over. The power at be will be my greatest challenge but, even when it wears your face, I know you haven't been fully scratched out. I will save you no matter how many stories I write. I will not stop. I will not stop my sweet sweet Barbra till we are both finally **Wide Awake**.