

DO YOU BELIEVE IN GHOSTS?

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One-Hour Pilot
"Whitlock House"

Brandy Rivers
Industry Entertainment

ACT ONE

EXT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - EVENING

A warm summer evening on balmy Long Island. LIGHTNING BUGS sprinkle the darkening sky. A sign out front, WHITLOCK HOUSE creaks in the light breeze. Through the front window:

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - VARIOUS

Floating through the halls and the main floor. The architecture is from the 1800s, but the decor is distinctly 1960s. Into the KITCHEN clad with a vintage stove, past the old wooden staircase, painted PORTRAITS of past generations cover the walls. Passing each window, daylight dwindles until we land on the front door which CREAKS OPEN.

CHYRON: **JULY 1965**

SAMUEL WHITLOCK (40s, gangly) stands on the porch now aglow in moonlight. He pushes the door ajar, followed by several eager 19 year olds, MARK (stalwart), STEVE (antagonistic), SHARON (privileged), BARB (phobophile) and TOMMY (anxious). They carry suitcases, marveling at the inside of the house.

SAMUEL

Welcome to Whitlock House. Leave your bags there, I'll give you the grand tour.

They drop their bags inside the door before following Samuel deeper into the house, walking through the main floor.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

This house was built in 1840 by my great great grandfather, George Whitlock. Back then, Long Island was all farms. There wasn't even a bridge yet for you city folk to come to the island.

He leads them into the KITCHEN.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

My great great grandmother Etta Whitlock was known for her pies. People would come from all over the island to buy her peach pie in the summer. Some people say they can still smell the scent of pie baking in the oven.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

Cobwebbed books cover floor to ceiling bookshelves. A leather chair sits in front of an old brick fireplace.

SAMUEL

This study belonged to my great grandfather, Benjamin Whitlock.

Barb turns to the group.

BARB

(whispers)

Benji the Butcher.

Sharon nudges her to shut up, but too late. Samuel heard her.

SAMUEL

Yes, unfortunately known as Benji the Butcher. He prided himself in collecting books from all over the world. He had a great mind, but tragically it went, in the worst way. He's believed to have massacred his entire family before putting a shotgun in his mouth. Fortunately though, one person survived, my grandfather, Samuel Whitlock... the first, obviously.

Samuel smirks, guiding the group out of the room.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Samuel leads the group down the hall.

SAMUEL

Although tragedy struck this house, my grandfather had too many memories with his mother and his younger siblings, that he didn't want to leave. He claims to have heard them giggling, running, playing... which happened more often than the screams.

The teens exchange a wary glance. This place is creepy. They look in each room, unassuming bedrooms for the most part.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

My great grandfather slept here, his brothers and sisters were scattered in the other rooms.

(MORE)

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
You're welcome to stay in any room
you'd like.

One of the doors is closed. Tommy tries to open it, but it's locked.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
Don't-- That's just a storage
closet. No need to go in there.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - MAIN FLOOR - LATER

Samuel heads back down the stairs as the group follows him. He opens a closet door at the bottom of the stairs.

SAMUEL
Extra linens are in here.
Everything you should need,
utensils, pots, that kinda thing
are in the kitchen. Just be
careful, most of it is very old.

SHARON
We will.

He reaches into his pockets, handing the keys to Mark.

SAMUEL
My number is on the refrigerator,
don't hesitate to call if you need
anything. Otherwise, I'll be back
in the morning.

MARK
Thanks, Mr. Whitlock.

SAMUEL
Have a good stay, kids.

With a smile and a wave, Samuel heads for the door. The door shuts, leaving the group alone. Barb bubbles with excitement.

BARB
Isn't this place great?

SHARON
Well, you've outdone yourself,
Barb. I'm definitely creeped out.

Mark puts his arm around Sharon.

MARK

Oh, come on. I'll protect you from
the scary ghosts.

Steve puts his arm around Barb.

STEVE

Yeah, we'll protect you ladies.

Clearly, Tommy is the 5th wheel. He forces an uncomfortable smile.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - DINING ROOM - LATER

The 5 sit at the table, drinking, laughing. Empty bowls of spaghetti sit in front of them. Steve empties the bottle of wine into his glass.

MARK

Easy there, buddy.

STEVE

That's weird, I didn't realize I
invited my Mom on fuckin' summer
break. Lay off.

Tommy's eyes wander around the room. Barb and Steve get up from the table, heading for the living room. They put on a record and start to dance.

SHARON

Don't worry, guys. We'll clean up.

Sharon and Mark get up to clear the table. Tommy notices and helps. Sharon gives him a smile of gratitude, which he exchanges. Just then the LIGHTS FLICKER. Tommy FLINCHES, dropping one of the bowls as it SHATTERS to the floor. Steve and Barb come over, seeing the shards of glass on the floor.

TOMMY

Shit.

STEVE

Way to go, man. That's probably
gonna cost us a fortune.

TOMMY

Sorry, uh... I'll pay for it.

MARK

It's okay, Tommy.

Mark picks up the broken pieces. He notices Tommy is pale.

MARK (CONT'D)
Hey, you alright?

TOMMY
Yeah. I just um...

Tommy's hands are shaky. Suddenly a CHILLING LAUGH is heard.

SHARON
Okay, what the fuck was that?

Tommy's heart THUMPS in his throat. He pales as he stumbles to his feet, nearly knocking his chair over, quickly leaving the room. Once he's out of earshot:

STEVE
Jeez, Hoop. Way to bring the freak.

MARK
Knock it off, man. We've been friends since we were kids.

STEVE
Was he always such a buzzkill?

SHARON
Come on, let's just enjoy our night, please.

Sharon takes Mark's hand, and the couples dance to the music.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

Tommy's fingers dig into the porcelain sink, terrified. He runs the water, cupping it into his face, shutting his eyes hard, struggling to control his breath.

He opens his eyes, looking at his reflection, which HORRIFIES him. His face SPLASHED WITH BLOOD. He SCREAMS, backing away, falling to the floor. He looks at his hands... but they're clean, no blood. He gets to his feet, his reflection is as it should be...clean, no blood. He cries, frustrated. Is he losing it?

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Tommy walks in, but no one is there. The record needle has reached the end of the record. He looks towards the stairs.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tommy slowly searches for everyone. The wood CREAKS under his feet. He hears DISTANT LAUGHTER coming from one of the bedrooms. He heads towards it until:

SHARON (O.S.)

Tommy.

He jumps, turns to find Sharon in the doorway of one of the other bedrooms behind him.

SHARON (CONT'D)

We're in here.

Tommy follows her into:

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Barb, Steve, and Mark are sitting cross legged on the floor. Barb and Steve have their hands on the planchette of a ouija board.

TOMMY

Should they... be doing that?

SHARON

They're trying to contact Benji the Butcher's wife.

Sharon rejoins the group, but Tommy stays back. The windows are open, curtains blowing in the breeze.

STEVE

Ask her something else.

BARB

Okay okay... who murdered you?

The planchette starts to move. Everyone is transfixed on the board, except Tommy. His eyes go wide, staring at something behind Mark. Mark meets his gaze, glancing over his shoulder... but nothing's there. He looks back at Tommy.

MARK

What is it?

Tommy's breath quickens. He tries to form words, but his fear overcomes him, until:

TOMMY

No! Don't!

MARK
Tommy, what's going on?

TOMMY
We need to go!

Mark gets to his feet, leading Tommy out of the room.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tommy follows Mark into the hallway in front of the stairs.

MARK
What's this about? I thought you
wanted to come.

TOMMY
Something's not right, Mark. We
gotta leave.

MARK
Did you... take your pills?

TOMMY
(stung)
That isn't --

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT

From Sharon's POV, she watches through the doorway at Mark and Tommy. She can't hear what they're saying, but their body language is clearly tense.

Tommy touches Mark's arm, but Mark yanks it away. Mark reaches a hand into his pocket, pulling out his car keys. He gives them to Tommy, who pleads with him, but Mark is done. Mark comes back into the room, joining the group on the floor.

Sharon and Tommy make eye contact through the doorway. Tears form in his eyes before he runs down the stairs.

EXT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - NIGHT

Tommy goes down the porch steps towards the car. He gets in. Puts his head on the back of the seat, fighting tears. He looks back at the house one last time and starts the engine.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - MARK & SHARON'S BEDROOM - LATER

Crickets. An owl hoots. Sharon is fast asleep in bed. Mark stirs awake next to her. He wipes his eyes, sitting up. His feet hit the floor when A HAND GRABS HIS ARM. He turns quickly to find a scared, sleepy Sharon holding his arm.

SHARON

Where are you going?

MARK

I just need to take a piss.

SHARON

Hurry back, please.

MARK

Close your eyes. Go back to sleep.

He leans over and kisses her before slipping out of bed.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mark sleepily walks down the hallway. Suddenly a loud BANG comes from a closed door. He jumps, startled. He lingers by the door, putting his ear closer, waiting... Another BANG. He jumps back. Then he hears GIGGLING. He laughs at himself.

MARK

Barb.

He continues down the hall, finding the closed bathroom door. He reaches for the knob when the DOOR OPENS. Barb is on her way out, is startled to see Mark in the doorway.

BARB

Oh! Jesus, you scared me.

Mark, now genuinely scared, looks back at the bedroom door.

MARK

Weren't you just in there?

BARB

No, I was getting some water.

She holds up a glass of water. Weird.

BARB (CONT'D)

Steve isn't starting without me, is he?

She nudges Mark who forces a nervous laugh. She heads down the hall, going into the bedroom. Mark turns back, perplexed.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mark washes his hands. He looks up at the mirror, when he sees something behind him. He squints trying to get a better look, but then his eyes go WIDE with fear.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - MARK & SHARON'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Birds chirping, it's barely morning. Sharon wakes, feeling next to her for Mark, but he's not there. Then... a blood curdling scream comes from down the hall.

BARB (O.S.)

Sharon!

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAWN

Sharon frantically runs down the hall, reaching Steve and Barb. The storage closet door is open. Sharon looks inside to find the lifeless body of MARK. His skin now a cold blue, bruises cover his crushed neck, eyes and mouth open as if they're frozen... She lets out a bone chilling SCREAM.

TITLES: DO YOU BELIEVE IN GHOSTS?

INT. JIM'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

CHYRON: 3 MONTHS LATER

JIM RUSSO (25, intuitive) jolts awake. He catches his breath, sweat dripping down his forehead. He sits up, taking a leather journal from the nightstand, opening to a bookmarked page. He finds a blank space amongst pages of scrawled writings and dated entries. He writes: **Had the same dream. Yellow dress. Didn't turn around.**

Jim closes the journal, stuffing it into a nearby bag. His bedroom is bare, cardboard boxes strewn about. He climbs out of bed, crosses to a box marked CLOTHES and starts rummaging.

EXT. JIM'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Jim heads down the stairs of his brownstone apartment. His feet hit the pavement just as a raindrop falls from the sky, hitting his arm. Then another and another. He looks back to the door, considering, then continues down the sidewalk.

EXT. UNION SQUARE - DAY

Jim exits the subway station to a complete downpour. He frowns, grabbing a newspaper from a nearby stand, darting across the street.

INT. EISENBERG'S SANDWICH SHOP - DAY

A drenched Jim enters, dropping the soaked newspaper. The shop is bustling, the SIZZLE of the flat top is heard as burgers are flipped. WAITRESSES pass by with trays of pastrami sandwiches and coffee pots.

Jim's eyes find MARGARET HAYES (40, sharp) already sitting in a booth. As Jim approaches, she looks up at him, exhaling the smoke from her Pall Mall, smirking.

MARGARET

The psychic who didn't know it was going to rain.

JIM

Who says I didn't know? Maybe I just hate umbrellas.

Margaret hands him a napkin, which he uses to clear the rainwater from his eyes. Peeling off his sopping wet jacket, he sits down across from her, cupping a mug of hot coffee.

MARGARET

I ordered you a roast beef on rye. Hope you're hungry.

JIM

Thanks.

MARGARET

Are you all unpacked?

JIM

Almost. How have you been?

MARGARET

Throwing myself into work has certainly helped, but...

JIM

I was sorry to hear about your husband.

MARGARET

Thank you. It was sweet of you to send a card. But, work is what we are here to talk about, so --

JIM

Right. So, how did you convince WSU to give you a parapsychology lab?

MARGARET

You underestimate me, Jim. I explained to the Dean that parapsychology is a legitimate science that just isn't mainstream yet. Our main goal is to attempt to expand people's knowledge with the research and work we'll do.

JIM

Sounds promising, if we can do it.

MARGARET

Which is where you come in. Have you been studying like I told you to? Honing your skills?

JIM

Yes. Here and there.

Margaret is not convinced.

MARGARET

You always were a terrible liar.

JIM

It's hard practicing skills I've had since I was a child.

Margaret picks up her lighter, faded brass with a gold trim. She holds it out for Jim.

MARGARET

Here. What do you see?

Jim takes the lighter, closing his eyes. A quiet moment passes before:

JIM

I see an older gentleman. White hair, green eyes. He's wearing a tan suit... No, a uniform, Army maybe? He likes cigars.

Jim opens his eyes, Margaret nods in amazement.

MARGARET

See what you just did there? You were able to gather facts about a person, my Father in fact, just by touching his lighter.

JIM

Right, psychometry.

MARGARET

Exactly, which isn't a term most people even know, or understand. But the work we'll do can open minds to all aspects of parapsychology. It's an incredible opportunity we've been given. That is, if I've convinced you to work with me.

Jim sits back in his seat, contemplating. Then:

JIM

I'd love nothing more, Dr. Hayes.

Margaret smiles as their sandwiches land on the table.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Not your typical college campus. The concrete jungle, the streets of New York City make up the veins of this campus. Gray skies overhead. The bustle, the rush of city life enmeshed with the chaos of college life.

Through the crowded sidewalk, find Tommy back at school. He clutches his books, passing in between other students, trying his best to be invisible. Then he sees it:

A group of STUDENTS huddled on a sidewalk in front of the English Building. A black and white photo of MARK, smiling, bright, alive. Students hug and console each other, saddened by tragedy.

Tommy breezes by, averting any potential eye contact, but is STOPPED by a woman, DIANE CASSIDY (30s, tenacious) holding a notepad.

DIANE CASSIDY

Hi there. My name is Diane, I'm a reporter for the Hollymont Harbor Times. Did you know Mark Hooper?

TOMMY

Um, no, sorry...

Tommy pushes past her. Diane watches suspiciously as he goes, then approaches the group holding vigil.

INT. WSU - SCIENCE BUILDING - CLASSROOM - DAY

Tommy fights off his nerves as he sits down. He wipes the sweat gathering on his forehead. TWO GIRLS sitting in front of him begin to whisper.

GIRL 1

They were at the Whitlock House.
You know, that haunted house on
Long Island. I heard they found him
in the morning choked to death.

GIRL 2

Oh my god, I can't imagine. Sharon
must be beside herself. Did they
find who did it?

GIRL 1

No, the case is still open. Scary
to think a murderer could be going
to our school.

Tommy swallows hard, shutting his eyes tight. He wishes he was anywhere but here.

INT. WSU - PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - DAY

Jim enters the lab, if you could call it that. WSU PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB is written in marker on a tattered piece of paper taped to the door. The main area is dimly lit, a few desks are scattered about.

Margaret emerges from the back of the office carrying a camera, which appears to have additions made to it.

MARGARET

Ah, Jim. Perfect timing. Come.

He follows her to a nearby table, a white sheet hanging behind it. She points to an X on the ground.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Stand there. Put your hand there.

She points to a metal sheet connected to wires. His hand slowly moves towards it.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Careful not to shock yourself.

Jim quickly pulls his hand back.

JIM

What?

MARGARET

Well, it has high voltage
electrical currents running through
it.

Jim swallows hard, slowly putting his hand back down.
Thankfully, he's not shocked.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Say cheese.

Margaret snaps his picture. Jim is puzzled.

JIM

What was that for?

MARGARET

I built this camera from an old
thirty five millimeter. I believe
I've found a way to measure the
radiation emanating from you, or
your aura. The current isn't
necessary, but it helps.

JIM

Oh...

MARGARET

It's one of the many experiments
we'll be conducting in the lab.
Come, let me show you some of the
other tools I've built.

Margaret leads him to another table where various devices
are. Mangled metal soldered together, a wooden board with
playing cards glued to it, wires connected to a meter and a
tiny bell.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

All of these will help us
experiment with psychokinesis, ESP,
biofeedback training, you get the
idea.

JIM

Well, I'm happy to help you with
any of that.

MARGARET

I actually need you to do something
of the utmost importance.

Jim waits in exciting anticipation, until Margaret hands him
a clipboard.

JIM

What's this for?

MARGARET

Volunteers. We have a campus full
of young people. We can't have a
lab without subjects, can we?

Off Jim as he eyes the sign-up sheet, unmoved.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Jim stands outside the English Building. His eye catches the
vigil for Mark, still taking place. As a group of STUDENTS
exit the building, Jim prepares himself. He smiles, exuding
friendliness as best he can.

JIM

Excuse me? Are you interested in --

Left and right, Jim is being ignored like he's invisible. He
tries again. He gets a few stares, but no one is interested.

He struggles through the sea of people when suddenly he has a
FLASH: Sharon kissing Mark, they're laughing. Happy.

He snaps back, looks behind him and watches the back of
Sharon's head disappear in the crowd. He doesn't know what it
means... yet.

INT. WSU - PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - DAY

Margaret is soldering a lever onto one of her experimental
tools from earlier, smoking a cigarette, humming a tune. DEAN
HARPER (40s, polished) walks in. When she looks up and sees
him, she quickly removes her safety goggles, straightening
herself, snuffing out her cigarette.

MARGARET

Oh, Dean Harper.

DEAN HARPER

Hello, Margaret. I thought I'd come
offer my well wishes in person on
your... new endeavor.

MARGARET

Well, thank you, sir. I appreciate that.

DEAN HARPER

I was... also hoping we could talk about a serious matter.

MARGARET

Oh, of course.

DEAN HARPER

As you know, we lost a student this summer, Mark Hooper.

MARGARET

Yes, I did hear about that. What an awful tragedy.

DEAN HARPER

Yes, it is awful, and we have a lot of grieving students and staff here at WSU. There have already been rumors swirling about this house he was killed in, and with the nature of your work, a few faculty members are worried that you could potentially hinder that process.

MARGARET

Oh, well I can assure you we have no intention of doing that. To be frank, sir, I just don't think they fully understand what we do here, which is why the lab is so important. Take for instance, this tool I've just built.

She motions to her work.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

I call this the Spinner. It's something I've designed for testing and training psychokinesis, which is the ability to move something with your mind. Do you have a quarter by chance?

Dean Harper hesitantly reaches into his pocket, procuring a quarter, handing it to Margaret. She puts it into the device, pulls the lever, which causes the coin to roll down, gaining speed, before spinning onto the table.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Now, as the coin spins, we'll ask our subjects to have the it come up heads or tails, using their minds, or psychokinesis.

Dean Harper looks on, incredibly skeptical.

DEAN HARPER

And you believe people can move things with their mind?

MARGARET

Well, we don't know yet. That's what the research is for, but there are people that have gifts and abilities that can be honed and strengthened... Like for example, you have that beautiful Thunderbird, don't you?

DEAN HARPER

Yes. A '55 convertible.

MARGARET

Right. I'm sure you love taking it for a drive on a sunny day, top down, maybe going a little faster than you should be.

DEAN HARPER

All men have their vices.

MARGARET

Of course. Now, what if I asked you to drive a stock car on a track going 200 miles an hour. How do you think you'd fare?

DEAN HARPER

Well, I've certainly never gone that fast. I'm not sure how well I'd do on a track.

MARGARET

Exactly. Although you can drive, and drive well, you may not naturally have the skills necessary to be a stock car driver. The stamina, the depth perception, the reflexes. Although, you can always practice.

Dean Harper nods, understanding. Margaret is good at this.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

It's the same with parapsychology. There are people who naturally have the skills necessary, ESP, telepathy, psychokinesis... All terms that may seem kooky, but are very real. They just need to hone those skills and understand them. And that's what we'll be doing here. It's nothing to be afraid of.

DEAN HARPER

I trust you'll do good work, Margaret. I've always known you to be a smart woman. All I ask is that we communicate on what you're doing here so we can both do our jobs properly.

MARGARET

I'd expect nothing less.

DEAN HARPER

Wonderful.

They share a smile as Dean Harper goes to leave.

MARGARET

Oh, Dean.

He turns back as Margaret tosses his quarter back to him. He catches it in his hand before leaving the lab.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - LATER

Jim looks down at his clipboard. 3 signatures. He exhales, approaching a hot dog stand.

JIM

Just a dog with mustard and kraut, please.

The VENDOR hands it to him, Jim slips him money with a nod.

He takes a bite, walking over to a bench where a woman is playing guitar, SUSANNA (20s, genuine). She's singing *José Feliciano's Poquita Fe* in Spanish. He takes a quarter out of his pocket, drops it into her open guitar case. She smiles at his gesture, and he pauses to bask in her beaming smile.

Jim sits down on the bench. She finishes her song, taking her guitar off her shoulder for a brief break. Jim motions to a group of pigeons on the ground in front of her guitar case.

JIM (CONT'D)
Your fans are a wild bunch.

Susanna looks over, laughs.

SUSANNA
And can you believe, they don't
even pay admission.

JIM
Well, they're getting quite the
deal, if you ask me.

Jim throws them a piece of his hot dog roll. They ascend onto
it, pecking it to pieces. Susanna joins him on the bench.

JIM (CONT'D)
That was a beautiful song you were
singing. I caught a few words, but
my Spanish is a little rusty.

SUSANNA
Oh. Mi pobre corazón, co tan
poquita fe. It means my poor heart,
so little faith.

JIM
So it's a love song?

Susanna laughs.

SUSANNA
For some.

JIM
Well, you're very good, and you
have a beautiful voice.

SUSANNA
Thank you.

Jim wipes his hand on his pants, extending it to her.

JIM
I'm Jim Russo.

SUSANNA
Susanna Mendes.

They shake hands, sparks fly.

JIM
Glad I decided to eat lunch outside
today.

Susanna gives him another beaming smile.

JIM (CONT'D)

So, your father taught you to play?

SUSANNA

(surprised)

Yes, actually... he was one of the best guitar players in our village. Everyone was jealous of how well he could play.

JIM

And I bet now they're jealous of you.

SUSANNA

I do my best. What do you do?

JIM

(unenthused)

I'm a... research assistant. At a lab here at WSU.

SUSANNA

You don't seem thrilled about that.

JIM

Well, let's just say I thought things would be a little different, that's all. Say, what are you doing later tonight? It's probably not safe for you to play after dark.

SUSANNA

I can take care of myself.

JIM

Oh, I wasn't implying that you couldn't... I just... I have to get back to work, but I'd like to ask you out to a movie tonight. Do you like Marlon Brando?

SUSANNA

Who doesn't?

JIM

Well, his new film is playing over on Bleecker Street. How bout I meet you over there, say 7:30?

SUSANNA

Alright. Jim Russo.

Off this fortuitous lunchtime encounter...

INT. WSU - PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - DARK ROOM - LATER

The room is lit in red as Margaret hangs her developed aura photos. Jim stands next to her as the photo of himself from earlier develops. It's not a very flattering picture, but he's surrounded by vibrant colors.

MARGARET

Look at that aura, Jim.

She points to some of the colors.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Now, it's believed blue usually represents the presence of incredible intuition, which given your gift, doesn't surprise me. This orange shows you're confident, maybe a bit cocky at times.

Jim smiles at Margaret's slight jab.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

However this red... usually indicates a deep seeded anger, or a longing for something.

Jim becomes visibly uncomfortable. He attempts a joke.

JIM

Well, I hadn't had any coffee yet, so perhaps it was a longing for some caffeine.

MARGARET

Perhaps. We're still working on figuring out what it all means.

Margaret heads out of the dark room, leaving Jim to linger on his photo a moment more.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. WSU - PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - DAY

Margaret puts on her coat. She turns to Jim.

MARGARET

I have a staff meeting to get to.
Are you able to stick around for a
bit, incase the phone rings? I put
up flyers for the lab with our
number on them, so wouldn't want to
miss any calls.

JIM

Yeah, sure. And if we get any calls
about paranormal sightings?

MARGARET

Take down their information,
unfortunately most end up being a
waste of time. People looking for
fame or fortune. There's an
extensive process to validate
anything like that, but I'll handle
whatever comes in, don't you worry
about it. Let's hope to get more
volunteers tomorrow, hm?

Jim tries to hide his disappointment as Margaret leaves the
lab. Jim looks up at the clock, it's 1:30pm.

INT. WSU - PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - LATER

Crumpled up balls of paper surround a trash can.

JIM

Chamberlain for 3.

Jim shoots, misses.

JIM (CONT'D)

Denied.

He crumples up another piece of paper when the PHONE rings.
He picks it up.

JIM (CONT'D)

WSU parapsychology lab.

The Caller speaks in a Marilyn Monroe-esque voice.

MARILYN CALLER

Yes, hello. I was wondering if you could help me.

JIM

I can try. What is it that you need help with?

MARILYN CALLER

Do you help with hauntings?

Jim perks up, grabbing a pen and paper.

JIM

Yes, we do. Can I have your name, please?

MARILYN CALLER

Can't you tell who this is?

JIM

Um, no. Do I know you?

MARILYN CALLER

It's Marilyn...

JIM

Marilyn?

MARILYN CALLER

Yes. It's me, sugar!

Jim hears laughter and other voices in the background and is suddenly annoyed, realizing it's a crank call.

MARILYN CALLER (CONT'D)

I was hoping you could help me
haunt a few men, starting with that
DiMaggio fella --

Jim hangs up the phone, pissed off. There's a knock at the door, he turns around to see Tommy standing in the doorway.

JIM

You lost?

TOMMY

I don't think so. Is this the
parapsychology lab?

JIM

Yeah.

TOMMY

I was reading in the library about parapsychology, it said you deal with things that can't be explained. Does that include ghosts?

JIM

I've had enough of my time wasted on jokes today, alright?

TOMMY

No, it's not a joke. I swear.

Tommy looks sincere, but Jim is still annoyed.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

I was at the Whitlock House. That night. And I think I saw something.

Jim is intrigued. He motions for Tommy to sit down.

INT. WSU PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - LATER

Jim's tape recorder is rolling. He speaks into a microphone, sitting across from Tommy. He takes notes in his leather journal.

JIM

The date is September 2nd, 1965. Here with me is Tommy Decker, who claims to have seen paranormal activity at The Whitlock House, located in Hollymont Harbor, Long Island. Most recently known for the house where Mark Hooper, fellow student, was found strangled to death. Tommy, I'd like for you to begin with what you were doing in the house.

TOMMY

Some people I know, friends I guess, decided to spend the night there this summer, so I went with them. People say it's haunted, and creepy things happened there.

JIM

And why do people say that?

TOMMY

Well, a lot of people have died there. I mean, a long time ago, people in the Whitlock family were murdered. But, no one else has died there until...

JIM

Alright. What happened while you were there?

TOMMY

Well, we all heard things, loud banging, horrific laughter. But, I started feeling sick, and I saw... I didn't want to tell anyone because I knew no one would believe me. I tried to tell them we had to leave, but...

JIM

What did you see?

TOMMY

The lights were flickering, I thought I saw blood all over my face... And then, I saw this woman. She was dressed all in white, dark hair, black teeth. Hollow, empty eyes.

Tears well in Tommy's eyes.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

After that, I couldn't stay, so I went back to the city. The next day, I found out Mark was murdered. The detectives have been investigating it, they've questioned everyone that was at the house, the owner... But, I'm afraid whoever did that to Mark... it wasn't human. I couldn't tell the cops, they'd think I was crazy. But, then I heard about your lab, I was hoping you'd believe me.

Jim hits the stop button on his tape recorder.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

So, can you help me?

JIM

Well, there's only one way to find out. Can you take me to Hollymont Harbor?

Off this risky proposal --

EXT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - DAY

Tommy's car arrives at Whitlock House. The sun is shining, birds are chirping, the leaves on the trees now a bright orange and red. Jim approaches the front door. Tommy follows, hesitantly. They find the front door chained and padlocked shut.

They go searching for another entrance. They reach the back of the house to find a kitchen door. Jim pulls on it, but it's also locked. Just then, Tommy pulls out a pocket knife, pops open the lock. That was easy...

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM - DAY

Jim flips the lights on. It's the bathroom where Tommy saw blood on his face. Jim turns the water on, running his fingers underneath. He looks in the mirror, nothing out of the ordinary.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Tommy and Jim walk into the dining room... or at least it used to be. The room is devoid of furniture. It's completely empty. Jim, perplexed, turns to Tommy who scans the room in disbelief.

TOMMY

I swear, there was a table right here. We were all sitting out it. The lights flickered, and we heard laughter...

Jim eyes Tommy, a look of skepticism.

JIM

Alright, just... be quiet for a second.

Jim stands in the middle of the room, closes his eyes. He waits to see or feel something... but he doesn't. Tommy waits, hopeful. After a few seconds, Jim opens his eyes.

TOMMY

So?

JIM

Can I ask you, Tommy... have you suffered from anything like this before? Hallucinations, or --

TOMMY

(defensive)

What? That's...

JIM

It's okay, Tommy. It happens.

TOMMY

Other people heard things too. I wasn't the only one.

Jim looks around, his eyes land on a vent on the wall. He touches it, then finally feels something. He turns to Tommy.

JIM

Can I see that pocket knife?

Tommy hands it to him. Jim drags a chair to the wall, climbing on top of it. He uses the knife to pop open the vent, reaches inside and pulls out a tape recorder.

He gets down from the chair, rewinds a bit, then plays it. The bone chilling laughter comes out.

JIM (CONT'D)

Is this what you heard?

Tommy nods. Jim pops the tape recorder open, pulling out a tape labeled: **CHILLING LAUGHTER**. He shows the tape to Tommy.

JIM (CONT'D)

It's fake. Probably a recording the owner planted for a cheap scare.

TOMMY

But, what about the other things? The lights, the banging --

JIM

Bad wiring. Cats on the roof. It could've been anything.

TOMMY

What about what I saw? The woman?

JIM

Listen, Tommy. Our minds play tricks on us, especially when we expect to be scared. You've been through a lot, I think you're just trying to make sense of the trauma.

TOMMY

That's not what --

Suddenly they hear CHAINS RATTLE then a loud BANG. Jim and Tommy both hold their breath, keeping completely still. Another BANG, then a flood of LIGHT. They look up at the front door, which is now wide open. And on the other side... A Uniform COP holding a firearm.

COP

Police! Hands where I can see 'em.

Jim and Tommy look at each other, slowly raising their hands. Busted. DETECTIVE BILL ROCKFORD (40s, gruff) enters the house, looking at Jim and Tommy with disdain.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD

Got a call about someone trespassing. What the hell do you think you're doing in here?

JIM

We were just leaving.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD

That doesn't really answer my question, now does it? Do you know how many kids we've had coming in here vandalizing, stealing some sort of sick souvenir?

JIM

That's not at all what we're doing.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD

Gimme one good reason why I should believe that.

JIM

He was here that night.

Jim looks to Tommy, hoping for some back up.

TOMMY

It's true. Mark was my best friend.

Rockford softens. He gives Tommy a once over, then with a look of recognition.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD
Yeah... I remember you. You were
the one that left early.

Tommy gulps, nodding.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
Well, while I have sympathy for
what you've been through,
trespassing is against the law. I
gotta call Mr. Whitlock, see if he
wants to press charges. We'll have
you boys wait down at the station.

He motions to the Cop, who leads Tommy and Jim outside.

INT. HOLLYMONT HARBOR PD - EVENING

Tommy and Jim wait in the station. Jim is annoyed, mostly at himself. Detective Rockford walks by, a cigarette dangling from his mouth. Jim gets to his feet, follows him into --

INT. HOLLYMONT HARBOR PD - ROCKFORD'S OFFICE - EVENING

JIM
Excuse me, Detective?

DET. BILL ROCKFORD
I told you to wait out there.

Rockford sits down at his desk, snuffing out his cigarette before lighting another.

JIM
I know, but --

DET. BILL ROCKFORD
Sit. Down.

Jim's eye catches something on Rockford's desk. Autopsy photos of Mark. His neck is covered in strange bruises and scratches. The wheels in Jim's mind begin to turn.

JIM
What was the cause of death again?

DET. BILL ROCKFORD
Excuse me?

JIM
Mark Hooper's cause of death.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD
I'm not discussing an open case
with you.

JIM
Those scratches. Were you ever able
to explain them?

Rockford notices what Jim's looking at, quickly putting the
photos back in the file folder.

JIM (CONT'D)
Because those could possibly be
from an aggressive entity.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD
An entity? What, like a ghost?

JIM
Yes... I work in parapsychology. We
study these types of cases at WSU.
If I could just take another look--

Jim reaches for the photos, but Rockford is on his feet now.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD
Son, I will throw you into a cell
so goddamned fast your head'll
knock clean off your shoulders.

JIM
Ok, ok... I'm going.

Jim backs out of the office.

INT. HOLLYMONT HARBOR PD - EVENING

Jim sits back down next to Tommy as Rockford's PHONE RINGS.
They try to hear his conversation, hoping for good news.
Rockford hangs up the phone and walks into the hallway.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD
Must be your lucky day. Sam
Whitlock isn't pressing charges.

Jim and Tommy both let out a sigh of relief.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
But, I never want to see you back
in Hollymont Harbor, do you
understand?

They both nod as they leave the Police Department.

EXT. HOLLYMONT HARBOR PD - EVENING

Jim and Tommy walk outside as the sun is setting. Jim is suddenly hit with a realization. He looks at his watch, it's 6:30pm.

JIM
Shit.

EXT. BLEECKER ST. CINEMA - NIGHT

The Marquee reads MORITURI STARRING MARLON BRANDO AND YUL BRYNNER. Susanna exits through the revolving door, frustrated. She raises her hand to hail a cab. Just then, another cab pulls up, Jim stumbling out.

JIM
Susanna!

Susanna looks over at him, annoyed.

JIM (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry I'm late.

SUSANNA
The movie has already started.

JIM
I know, I'm sorry. It's a long
story, but I got held up with work.

SUSANNA
Maybe this wasn't such a good idea.

She walks down the sidewalk as Jim follows, pleading with her.

JIM
Please... let me make it up to you.
We can do anything you want.

She stops, looking back at him. She thinks for a beat, then:

SUSANNA
Anything?

INT. HECTOR'S CAFE & DINER - NIGHT

Sharon, Barb and Steve sit in a corner booth, picking at a plate of french fries. Solemn looks on their faces as other STUDENTS walk by, offering looks of pity. Sharon scoffs.

SHARON

God, I just wish people would stop looking at me like that.

BARB

You lost the love of your life, Sharon. It's tragic.

STEVE

I keep getting looked at like I'm some kinda criminal. Like I could do something like that to my best friend.

Steve is clearly upset and Barb reaches over to comfort him.

BARB

I know, baby. We all miss him. I can't believe the cops still don't know who did it. His poor parents.

Tommy enters the diner. He goes over to them.

TOMMY

Hey, guys.

Steve gives him a look of disgust, shaking his head.

STEVE

Come on, Barb. Let's go.

BARB

Shar, you comin'?

Sharon and Tommy make eye contact.

SHARON

I'll be there in a second.

Barb and Steve get up, Steve bumps Tommy on the shoulder on his way out.

SHARON (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, they're just upset.

TOMMY
They were always assholes.
(then)
Are you doing okay?

SHARON
What do you think?

Tommy nods. He sits down across from her, nervous.

TOMMY
So... I went back to the house.

SHARON
You did what? Why?

TOMMY
There's a new lab at WSU, they deal
with...
(hushed)
ghosts and things.

SHARON
This again, Tommy?

TOMMY
I just thought it wouldn't hurt to
talk to them. I took one of them
with me. He didn't find anything,
but I still feel like there's more
to it.

SHARON
You need to drop this. Seriously.
Mark is dead, and he wasn't killed
by some stupid ghost.

TOMMY
You don't know that... look, I know
it sounds crazy --

SHARON
Why can't you just accept that Mark
was murdered?

TOMMY
By who? Who murdered him?

Sharon is silent for a beat, then covers her face, making
crying noises. Tommy reaches for her, but she pulls away.

SHARON
I can't do this right now.

TOMMY

Sharon --

Sharon gets out of the booth and leaves Tommy sitting alone with the plate of cold, uneaten fries. As she leaves the diner, her face is as dry as a bone.

INT. WSU - PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - NIGHT

Jim unlocks the door, flicking on the lights. Susanna enters behind him.

JIM

Definitely not what I had in mind
for our first date.

SUSANNA

Well, your work made you late to
the date you did have in mind. So,
show me what you do.

JIM

Alright, well... it's not much yet.
We're still working on it. But this
is the WSU Parapsychology Lab.

SUSANNA

And that means...?

JIM

We study things that aren't easily
explained.

Jim brings her to one of the tools from earlier, the wires
attached to the meter and bell.

JIM (CONT'D)

My boss built this machine. It does
something called biofeedback
training. This meter will measure
your pulse and every time it gets
too high, the bell rings. We're
trying to determine if your body
can learn the sensation it feels
when the bell is ringing in order
to slow down your pulse.

SUSANNA

That's incredible. I'll try it.

Susanna holds out her wrist. Jim smiles at her.

JIM

Have a seat.

Susanna and Jim sit down across from each other. Jim readies the machine, putting the wires around her wrists.

SUSANNA

So, how'd you get into all this?

JIM

Well, I sort of have a gift myself.

SUSANNA

A gift, huh?

JIM

I can touch something or someone and an image will pop into my head. Over time, I realized what I was seeing was actual information. I can't control it, it just happens.

SUSANNA

So, you're a psychic?

JIM

Technically, yes.

SUSANNA

Do you know what I'm thinking right now?

JIM

No, it doesn't work like that.
But...

Jim pauses, unsure if he wants to continue.

SUSANNA

What?

JIM

Ok... I'm hoping this won't freak you out but, when I shook your hand in the park, I saw you, as a kid. You were sitting next to your Dad on that green couch in your house in San Juan. He was teaching you how to play the guitar. It was raining that day. His guitar was black, had a heart painted on it with the name Sandra in it...

Tears form in Susanna's eyes. Her face is unreadable.

JIM (CONT'D)

This is usually the part where women tell me there won't be a second date.

SUSANNA

No no... that's um... that's incredible.

Jim smiles, relieved.

SUSANNA (CONT'D)

But, how could you know all that?

JIM

I don't know how, but I do, and that's why we're trying to learn more about it. A lot of people are scared of it because it doesn't make sense to them.

SUSANNA

Well, I don't think you should be afraid of something you can't understand.

Jim cracks a smile, he's impressed by her.

JIM

You ready?

Susanna nods. Jim turns the machine on, watching the meter rise. The bell RINGS.

JIM (CONT'D)

Easy. Your pulse is racing.

Susanna laughs nervously. Jim smiles flirtatiously, delicately holding her wrists.

JIM (CONT'D)

Just breathe.

Susanna takes a breath closing her eyes. Her pulse slows down with each breath. She opens her eyes, smiling at him. He moves a strand of hair from her face, the meter starts climbing and the bell rings again. Jim retracts his hand as they laugh.

JIM (CONT'D)

Sorry.

Susanna breathes again, the bell stops.

SUSANNA

I see what you mean. The sensation.
I can feel it.

JIM

Yeah? Guess you're a natural.

Off their intense chemistry...

INT. JIM'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Jim arrives home, light as a feather. He pops open a beer, collapsing onto his couch. He turns on the TV, an episode of *The Fugitive* is on. He sips his beer and as he settles in, his eyes flutter shut and he dozes off.

JIM'S DREAM

The back of A YOUNG GIRL, no more than 6, in a yellow dress, stands on a street corner. She's holding schoolbooks in her arms, her hair swings around in 2 braids. In muddled dream-like sounds, we hear her laugh as a school bus approaches. But, when the little girl turns, she's not smiling. She's sad, disturbed. Haunted. She points a finger at him.

YOUNG GIRL

You knew, Jimmy. You knew.

Then, THE WOMAN IN WHITE, exactly as Tommy described, appears behind the girl. Her shriveled, clawed hand grasps the milky white hand of the young girl as together, they step onto the school bus. The Woman looks back one last time, revealing a sinister, rotten smile.

INT. JIM'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The sound of BREAKING GLASS scares Jim awake. The beer bottle is shattered to the floor, beer and glass everywhere around his feet. Jim is shaken, but collects himself. He digs into his bag, pulling out his notebook, flipping to an open page. With a shaky hand he writes:

She turned around. You knew. WOMAN IN WHITE.

He snaps the journal shut and carved into the leather cover in jagged letters *YOU KNEW*. He drops the journal to the ground, horrified.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. WSU - TOMMY'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Tommy is at his desk sleepily hovering over his books when three rapid KNOCKS at the door jolt him awake. He gets to his feet, opening it slowly to finds Jim on the other side, sweaty and frantic.

JIM

The woman in white. Tell me more.

TOMMY

What, you believe me now?

Jim pushes his way past Tommy, shutting the door behind him.

JIM

I saw her too. In a place where she shouldn't be. So --

Tommy is surprised, but also has a sense of validation.

TOMMY

Her face... it looked melted or...

JIM

What did she do?

TOMMY

At first she was just floating there. But, then she got closer to Mark... and it looked like she was wrapping her arms around him. And when she looked at me --

JIM

She smiled.

TOMMY

Yeah.

JIM

I need to get back into that house. I need to talk to the people that were there.

TOMMY

They said they didn't see anything, and they don't believe me.

JIM

Well, I do believe you... and I'm
sorry I doubted you.

Jim pulls the door open to leave.

TOMMY

Wait... if you're going back to the
house, I'm coming with you.

INT. WSU - PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - DAY

Margaret is going through beautiful, colorful aura pictures
of leaves and finger prints. The phone rings.

MARGARET

WSU Parapsychology Lab.

DEAN HARPER

I thought we had a deal, Margaret.

MARGARET

Dean Harper. What's wrong?

INT. WSU - DEAN HARPER'S OFFICE - INTERCUT

Dean Harper, bubbling anger but speaking in a low tone, sits
at his desk on the phone.

DEAN HARPER

I asked explicitly for you to
communicate with me about what your
lab was doing.

MARGARET

I have, sir.

DEAN HARPER

Then why am I getting a phone call
from a Detective in Hollymont
Harbor, saying he caught a Jim
Russo and a student trespassing in
the Whitlock House, asking about
the Hooper case? Suggesting it
could've been a ghost that killed
him?

Margaret shuts her eyes, stifling her anger. Fuck, Jim.

MARGARET

I see.

DEAN HARPER

Now, that surely would be something
I should hear from you, especially
since you assured me you wouldn't
be interfering with the case.

MARGARET

You're right. I'm sorry, there's
been a misunderstanding among my
staff, clearly. I'll get it sorted
out and I promise, nothing like
this will happen again.

DEAN HARPER

It better not.

Harper hangs up. Margaret lights a cigarette, taking a deep
drag. She turns at the sound of Jim and Tommy coming into the
lab. Margaret is furious, and Jim can see it.

JIM

Dr. Hayes... let me explain.

INT. WSU - PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - MARGARET'S OFFICE - LATER

Margaret and Jim are inside with the door shut.

MARGARET

Do you have any idea what you did?
Breaking and entering into
someone's home, not talking to me
first. You put the lab at risk. Now
the Dean thinks we're a bunch of
amateurs.

JIM

I'm sorry but --

MARGARET

You don't even know this boy, Jim.
You completely ignored everything I
said about the process and how we
do things. You just believed in
whatever he said.

JIM

I wanted to believe him... and I
was right to.

MARGARET

Why? What did you see?

Jim takes a beat, hesitant to divulge what truly happened.

JIM
Whatever is in that house... knows
things about me.

MARGARET
What do you mean?

JIM
I can't explain it, but I just need
you to trust me. If I can somehow
make contact with someone in that
house...

Margaret shakes her head, but Jim pleads with her.

JIM (CONT'D)
Look... I'd understand if you want
to fire me. I betrayed your trust,
and I was reckless. But, you've
been the only person to ever really
believe in me, the gift I have... I
swear, I wouldn't be pursuing this
if I wasn't sure.

She stares at him, unreadable. She lights another cigarette,
takes a long drag.

MARGARET
So... what's your plan?

JIM
What?

MARGARET
Your plan. You have a plan, don't
you? What were you coming here to
propose to me?

JIM
Oh... well, first I'd like to bring
Tommy on as our intern. He might
have a gift too, which makes him a
great subject for us, and I think
he can also learn a lot from us,
mostly you, along the way.

MARGARET
Fine... what else?

JIM

Well, we'd like to go back to Hollymont Harbor and meet with Sam Whitlock in the hopes that he'll let us in his house, the legal way... with your permission of course. I thought we could take your camera, see if we can capture the aura of anything in that house... think about what that could mean for us, if the tool you invented helps solve what happened to Mark Hooper. It could give the lab the legitimacy it needs.

Margaret knows he's right.

MARGARET

You get one more chance. And you'll be upfront and honest with me about everything?

JIM

Yes, of course. And I take full responsibility for whatever happens. Thank you, Dr. Hayes.

Jim turns to leave the office.

MARGARET

Jim.

He turns back.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Just remember... we're not detectives. This may open a lot more doors than you realize... for you, for that boy...

JIM

It's more than just this one case. If something paranormal killed Mark Hooper, we're dealing with something much bigger.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. TOMMY'S CAR - DAY

Tommy drives, Jim rides shotgun.

JIM

I need to make a stop. Exit here.

EXT. KINGS PARK HOSPITAL - DAY

They pull up in front of a massive brick building, ambulances parked out front. A sign reads KINGS PARK HOSPITAL.

JIM

Wait here.

Jim gets out, buying a bouquet of flowers at a stand before entering the building.

INT. KINGS PARK HOSPITAL - VIOLET'S ROOM - DAY

Jim slowly enters to find VIOLET (50s, though she looks much older) with white hair, asleep. Jim sets the flowers down on the table next to her. She stirs awake with a smile.

VIOLET

Jimmy!

JIM

Hey, Ma.

Jim gives his Mom a kiss and sits down next to her.

VIOLET

I'm so happy to see you, honey.
Here, let me make you a sandwich.

Violet goes to sit up, but Jim coaxes her back down.

JIM

Not now, Mom. I'm okay.

VIOLET

Oh, okay.. You just missed Rosie,
she was here a little while ago.

JIM

Ma, um... Rosie isn't here anymore,
you know that.

VIOLET
I'm not blind, Jimmy. She was here.
She was sitting right over there.

Jimmy looks to where Violet is pointing. A lump in his throat. He tries hard to see something, anything. But it's just an empty chair.

JIM
Does she talk to you, Ma?

VIOLET
Of course, never stops, you know her.

JIM
What does she say?

VIOLET
Oh, everything. Such a chatterbox.

Jim struggles, is this real or in his Mom's head? He grabs Violet's hand, dipping his head. She turns to him quickly.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
You really going back there?

JIM
What?

VIOLET
I wouldn't if I were you.

JIM
Mom, what are you talking about?

Her gaze goes blank, Jim lets go of her hand.

JIM (CONT'D)
Mom...

Violet snaps out of it, she smiles warmly at him.

VIOLET
Jimmy! I'm so glad to see you,
honey. Are you hungry?

JIM
No, Mom. I'm okay.

Off Jim reeling from this emotional rollercoaster...

INT. KINGS PARK HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - DAY

Jim steps out into the hall, emotionally worse for wear when Violet's nurse NINA approaches.

JIM
How is she doing really?

NINA
Some days are better than others.

JIM
Does my Dad come by a lot?

NINA
Here and there. He got remarried,
but I'm sure you already knew that.

JIM
Uh... yeah, right.

NINA
She always likes when you visit.

Jim looks back at his Mom one last time.

INT. CLIFF'S CLAM BAR & GRILLE - DAY

Fishermen nets hang from the ceiling. Large, plastic fish hang on the walls. Tommy goes to make a call, Jim sits down at the wooden counter. A sassy waitress, GLORIA (50s) approaches.

GLORIA
What can I get ya, hon?

JIM
What do you recommend?

GLORIA
Stuffed clams. Best on the island.

JIM
Sounds great.

Gloria turns to the kitchen.

GLORIA
(yells)
One order of stuffed clams.

She walks over to a sink filled with ice, starts shucking clams.

Jim picks up a copy of the HOLLYMONT HARBOR TIMES on the counter. Sees a headline: **WHITLOCK HOUSE MURDER STILL UNSOLVED** written by Diane Cassidy.

GLORIA (CONT'D)
So, you a reporter?

JIM
No, ma'am.

GLORIA
Could've fooled me in that city suit.

JIM
Been getting a lot of reporters, huh?

GLORIA
From all over. Everyone wanting a piece of the story about that poor boy's murder. Like vultures.

Gloria motions to the newspaper.

GLORIA (CONT'D)
Truly horrible, what happened.
Tearing this town apart.

JIM
How do you mean?

GLORIA
Well, we weren't much on the map before. Went about our business, everybody was friendly, nobody bothered anybody. Now, we're afraid we might have a killer on our hands... either that or we got a haunted house. Lotta people angry at Samuel for that. If he thought that place was haunted or had ghosts, or whatever people said, he never should've let anyone stay there.

JIM
Do you think the Whitlock house is haunted?

GLORIA
My grandmother used to tell me the stories, but I never liked being scared.

(MORE)

GLORIA (CONT'D)

I know some horrible things happened in the house, and I don't think people should mess with any of that.

JIM

You believe in ghosts?

GLORIA

I believe somethin' evil happened in that house. That much I know.

Tommy joins Jim at the bar.

TOMMY

Should be here any minute.

Tommy looks at his watch as the front door opens. In walks Samuel Whitlock, a little more worn down than we last saw him. Tommy nudges Jim, he's the one they're there to meet.

INT. CLIFF'S CLAM BAR & GRILLE - LATER

The men now sit at a table, sharing a plate of stuffed clams.

JIM

Thank you for meeting with us, Mr. Whitlock. I know we didn't get off to a great start, which I apologize for.

A few CUSTOMERS pass, looking at Samuel with disgust. Sam attempts to ignore it, flashing a pained smile.

SAMUEL

Well, I'll admit I was a little hesitant to meet you, but once I talked to Tommy here, I figured it couldn't hurt. I wanna know what happened in that house just as much as anyone else.

JIM

Well that's what we hope to find out. Why don't you start by telling us a little bit about the house.

SAMUEL

Sure. I know it may seem macabre, based on my family's lineage, to keep the house, but I didn't want to be the generation that sold it.

JIM

May I ask why you don't live there?

SAMUEL

My wife is a beach girl, she wanted a house closer to the water... if I'm being honest though, she probably didn't love the idea of living somewhere that could be haunted. At least, based on all the rumors, you know?

JIM

Have you experienced anything yourself in the house, Mr. Whitlock?

SAMUEL

Please call me Samuel... And, I can't say I have, no. But, when I decided to rent it out, people started coming out wanting to see a ghost or have that creepy feeling, so I embraced it. I put a few tricks around the house to give them somethin'. I gotta tape recorder in the wall, plays spooky things. I also rigged up something in the attic to sound like feet running. You know, just for fun.

Samuel gets serious, leaning in.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

If there's something going on in my house that's hurtin' people, I had no idea. I never woulda put anyone in danger like that. But, like I said, if that's what it is, I'd like to know.

JIM

Well, Samuel... if it would be alright with you, we'd like to go back over there and look around.

Off Samuel, unaware of what he's gotten himself into.

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Jim walks around slowly, taking pictures. Tommy and Samuel meander behind him.

JIM
Where did they find the body?

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Samuel leads Jim and Tommy to the storage closet. Tommy struggles to keep his composure.

JIM
He was murdered in the closet?

SAMUEL
Apparently this is where they found him, but when I left that night, this door was locked. According to his girlfriend, they slept in this bedroom.

Samuel and Tommy go into the bedroom. Jim takes a photo of the hallway. Just then: **FLASH: Mark is DRAGGED by the neck. His fingers claw at the invisible force pulling him to his death.**

Another FLASH: A pair of DECAYING FEET falls from above. The creak of a rope as the feet sway, hanging.

An overwhelming echoes off the walls. **YOU KNEW. YOU KNEW.**

INT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Tommy and Samuel are looking around, oblivious to what he just experienced. Jim appears in the doorway, a shade whiter.

TOMMY
What happened?

JIM
Did you hear that?

TOMMY
Hear what?

JIM
(to Samuel)
Has anyone ever hung themselves in this house?

SAMUEL
What?... No, not that I know of.

Suddenly a green jello-like orb floats in the air. Their eyes are fixed, but then --

Tommy is THROWN against the wall and PINNED by his neck. His feet dangle off the floor. He struggles to breathe, fighting for his life. A horrified Samuel tries to pull him back down.

Jim quickly SNAPS a picture. Tommy's face turns blue, his kicking slows. His body becomes limp when, inexplicably, whatever is holding onto him lets go as he CRASHES to the floor, not moving. Samuel feels for a pulse. He looks back up at Jim, who is now flooded with regret.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
He's not breathing.

He shakes Tommy, hoping for a sign of life when... Tommy SITS UP with a loud GASP. Jim and Samuel both let out a sigh of relief. Tommy coughs as he gets his breath back.

JIM
You alright?

Tommy nods. Jim looks back at Samuel, an undeniable truth.

JIM (CONT'D)
Samuel, I believe there's certainly
a presence in your house.

INT. MARGARET'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

A phone rings in the dark. A sleepy Margaret answers.

MARGARET
Yes, hello?

INT. WSU - PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - DARK ROOM - INTERCUT

Jim is on the phone as he's developing photos.

JIM
I'm sorry to call you so late.

MARGARET
Oh that's alright, not everyone
needs their beauty sleep.

JIM
I'm in the dark room, developing
our photos from the Whitlock House.
They are... extraordinary.

The photos of each room, filled with vibrant colors.

JIM (CONT'D)

We also saw what appears to be a
corpuscular mass.

MARGARET

What? Were you able to get a photo?

Jim takes the photo of the mass, Tommy being attacked. He
thinks for a beat, before shoving it in his bag. He lies.

JIM

No... but, the owner said we can go
back, maybe even stay a few nights
in the house to get to the bottom
of what happened.

MARGARET

Jim --

JIM

I know you wanted me to spend my
time in the lab, and I will. But,
if this is what I think it is...
Imagine what you could publish.
Please, let us do this.

MARGARET

And how will I explain this to the
Dean? We could lose everything --

JIM

If they really want to solve Mark's
death, give his family real
closure, they should want the
truth, whatever it is.

MARGARET

Don't make me regret this, Jim.

JIM

You won't. I promise.

Margaret hangs up the phone and sighs.

MAN'S VOICE

Who was that?

MARGARET

Just work. Nothing to worry about.

She lays down and looks to the man laying next to her. She
reaches her arm across his chest as they fall asleep.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - DAY

Tommy sits on a bench. He's clutching a photo in his hand, of him and Mark. Arms around each other, much happier times.

SHARON (O.S.)

Tommy.

He quickly pockets the photo, smiling at Sharon as she approaches him. She joins him on the bench.

TOMMY

Hey.

SHARON

I'm glad you called. I wanted to apologize for the way I acted the other day.

TOMMY

Oh, don't worry about it. I understand.

SHARON

So, we're okay?

She puts her hand on top of Tommy's, and he shifts uncomfortably.

TOMMY

Uh... yeah, of course.

Just then, Tommy's eyes meet something behind Sharon. She turns to meet his gaze as Jim approaches them.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Sharon, this is Jim Russo, he wants to ask you some questions.

SHARON

Questions? About what?

JIM

About that night.

SHARON

I already talked to the cops.

TOMMY

He's not a cop, Sharon.

Sharon gives him a knowing look, like he's betrayed her.

SHARON

What is this, Tommy?

JIM

Sharon, I know you're hurting. But,
don't you want to know what killed
your boyfriend?

Jim touches her arm and gets a FLASH: That night at the
Whitlock House. Sharon gets up out of bed in the dark. Her
feet hit the floor. She looks towards the door.

Sharon rips her arm away from him.

SHARON

Stay away from me. Both of you.

She gets up and walks away, leaving a regretful Tommy in her
wake. Tommy looks at Jim, who attempts a comforting look.
They rise to their feet and start walking towards campus.

Just then, Jim spots Susanna playing the guitar. A
realization hits him and he's annoyed with himself. Susanna
sees Jim walking over, not particularly thrilled to see him.

JIM

(to Tommy)

Go to the lab and start packing up.
I'll be there in a minute.

Tommy leaves, Jim waits for her to stop singing, this time
Aretha Franklin's Runnin' Out of Fools.

SUSANNA

Assuming you didn't need a
translation for that one.

JIM

No. And I've been the fool here.
I'm sorry I haven't called you.

SUSANNA

I'm not usually surprised, but this
time I was. I thought you were
different, but I guess not.

JIM

No, I am. And I had a really
amazing time with you. Work has
just been... well I don't think
you'd believe me.

SUSANNA

Isn't that your job? To teach people to believe?

JIM

You're right. And when I can, I'd really like to. How about dinner next week? Like a real date this time... that I won't be late to. And I'll tell you all about it.

Susanna considers him.

SUSANNA

I'll think about it.

Jim smiles. Susanna starts a new song and Jim walks away.

INT. WSU - PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - DAY

Margaret is staring at all the photos from the house, mesmerized with each of them. Tommy enters.

TOMMY

Oh, hey, Dr. Hayes.

MARGARET

Tommy. Lot of activity for the very beginning of your internship.

TOMMY

Yes, ma'am. But, I'm learning a lot.

MARGARET

These photos certainly are extraordinary.

She looks to Tommy, now understanding.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

I wasn't aware that you were so close with Mark Hooper... or that you were with him that day. I'm sorry for your loss.

TOMMY

Thank you... uh, Jim sent me to start getting things ready, so--

MARGARET

Ah yes, of course.

Margaret gingerly hands him her camera.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
Please take care of her.

TOMMY
We will, I promise.

MARGARET
Listen, Tommy... I've known Jim for many years, he does have an incredible gift and I'm sure you will learn a lot from him... but there's just as much you don't know about him. He has his own... demons.

TOMMY
I guess we all do, don't we?

MARGARET
Yes, I suppose you're right. All I ask is that you be careful, and if you ever feel like you're in danger, you come to me. Understand?

TOMMY
Yes, ma'am.

Just then Jim enters.

JIM
Alright, we ready to go?

Margaret and Jim make eye contact, a nod of respect between the two.

INT. WSU - PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB - LATER

Margaret watches out the window as Tommy and Jim put equipment and suitcases in the back of the car.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Why haven't you told him?

MARGARET
He wouldn't listen even if I did.

Margaret turns, the man that was lying in bed with her earlier stands behind her.

MAN'S VOICE
I'm worried about you, Maggie.

MARGARET

How many times have I told you,
Roger? You don't have to worry
about me.

She smiles and holds her hand out, but Roger DISAPPEARS...
like he was never really there.

INT. HOLLYMONT HARBOR PD - DAY

Diane, the Hollymont Harbor Times reporter, slinks into the
police station, clearly snooping around. A GRUMPY COP rolls
his eyes at the sight of her.

GRUMPY COP

Sniffing out your next story?

DIANE CASSIDY

Still stuck on the last one.

She looks behind him, sees Rockford putting on his jacket.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD

I'm going over to the Whitlock
house. Something's going on over
there, yet again.

Rockford walks past Diane, not acknowledging her presence.
She waits for him to leave and then follows him outside.

EXT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - DAY

Rockford pulls up, sees the front door open. He slowly heads
up the drive but then Samuel appears in the doorway.

SAMUEL

Oh, hi Bill.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD

What's going on here, Whitlock?

SAMUEL

Not a crime to be at my own house,
is it?

DET. BILL ROCKFORD

Well, you agreed you wouldn't open
it back up for business until the
case was closed.

SAMUEL

And I'm not. Those young men you caught here, they're going to stay a few nights to study the house.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD

Come on, Sam. There ain't ghosts in there.

SAMUEL

You don't know what happened yet. Might as well let someone else give it a try. Seems silly to rule it out, don't you think?

DET. BILL ROCKFORD

What's silly is letting some ghost hunter put stories in your head. Don't you see what you're doing? What if the Hoopers get wind of this? You're making a mockery of their son's murder.

SAMUEL

If I were the Hoopers, I'd want to know what happened to my son.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD

Leave that to the real detectives.

SAMUEL

Doesn't seem to be working so far... Besides, no offense to the Hoopers, but this is more than just one case. I need to know if my house is killing people.

DET. BILL ROCKFORD

You dig your own grave, Whitlock.

There's clearly bad blood and history between these too. Rockford storms back to his patrol car.

INT. TOMMY'S CAR - DAY

Tommy driving, Jim riding shotgun. They ride in silence, until Jim breaks it.

JIM

So, you could've told Dr. Hayes what happened, but you didn't. Why not?

TOMMY

I knew she wouldn't have said yes.

JIM

And you're willing to go back in that house? After everything?

TOMMY

Don't get me wrong, I'm scared as hell. But yeah, I'm more than willing. I still feel like maybe I coulda stopped it if I didn't leave... but Mark was my best friend, I gotta know what happened to him.

JIM

I understand... And I won't let anything happen to you, I promise.

Jim gives Tommy a shoulder squeeze when **FLASH: That night. Tommy driving, crying. He hits a stoplight right outside of Hollymont Harbor, then suddenly pulls a U-Turn, heading back in the direction he came from.**

Jim releases his grip, Tommy is none the wiser. Jim glances at him. *Has he put his trust in a liar?* They pull up to:

EXT. WHITLOCK HOUSE - DAY

Jim and Tommy unpack cases from the car. Diane casually approaches to get a better look, examining everything. Just then her eyes land on one of the cases Jim is pulling out of the trunk. It reads **WSU PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB.**

Jim's eye catches her, she gives a friendly nod as she walks back to her car.

INT. DIANE'S CAR - DAY

Diane closes her door, fishing for her notebook. She writes:

**WHITLOCK HOUSE REALLY HAUNTED?
DID A GHOST KILL MARK HOOPER?
WHAT IS THE WSU PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB??**

She gives the house one more look before driving away.

END OF PILOT