

"THE HAUNTED MANSION"

a ghost story by

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WALT DISNEY PICTURES

FIRST REVISED DRAFT
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THE WALT DISNEY CASTLE

logo appears. Slowly it changes -- light blue turning to grey. Day turning to night. The WALLS CREAKING. The WIND MOANING. The castle DISSOLVING INTO:

A MANSION ON A HILL

Pristine. New. Behind the mansion, a pale harvest moon hovers low, shining through the cloak of a deep rolling fog. Dead leaves flutter across the lawn. As. . .

Horse drawn carriages line up in front of the mansion -- Elegantly MASQUERADED GUESTS stepping out, being helped by their VALETS. As we slowly DISSOLVE. . .

INSIDE THE GRAND MANSION

Its decoration grand and ornate. Statues, paintings, relics fill every corner. Obviously no expense was spared as--

The masked guests casually mill through the mansion corridors and into a GRAND MARDI GRAS BALLROOM as we DISSOLVE INTO:

A WOMAN'S BEDROOM

a HAUNTING MELODY, almost a lullaby, echoes from a handcarved MUSIC BOX as -- a COSTUMED WOMAN is writing a letter by flickering candlelight. The WIND MOANS fierce outside her window as--

THE GRAND BALLROOM

the guests are lined up still on the marble floor waiting for the music to begin. A beat. The ORCHESTRA begins to play a WALTZ. The guests begin their dance as. . .

AN ELEGANT GRANDFATHER CLOCK

softly TICKS back and forth. The woman passes the clock, carefully making her way down a LONG DARK CORRIDOR filled with paintings, statues, shadows. MUSIC from the ball seeps into the halls as. . .

THE MANSION STUDY

A PORCELAIN MASKED MAN, cloaked in black, stands by a crackling fireplace reading a letter. He shakes with pain, grabbing the mantel for support, hands clenched into the wood. He drops the letter, rushing out of the room--

THE GRAND BALLROOM

The guests continue their elegant WALTZ as. . .

THE BACK OF A CLOAKED FIGURE

closes a trunk, locking it from the outside, placing a SKELETON KEY in his breast pocket.

AN OIL PORTRAIT OF A NOBLEMAN

hangs watching as the woman enters through the long shadows. Oil portraits from the eighteenth century hang on all corners of the octagonal room. Aristocrats, blue bloods, the privileged. . . The curtains flap open from the wind, blowing back her hair.

THE GRANDFATHER CLOCK begins to DEEPLY CHIME!

The WIND BLOWS fierce through the open window -- The guests continuing their dance -- As a SILHOUETTED MAN rushes down the hallway --

The WALTZ CRESCENDOS -- The woman lay still on the portrait gallery floor. THE GRANDFATHER CLOCK chiming LOUDER. . . LOUDER. . . LOUDER -- The man falls to his knees, grabbing the still woman in his arms-- He SCREAMS as--

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - LATE DAY - PRESENT DAY

Silence. Nothing but a SLOW BREEZE as grey storm skies hover over a quiet tree lined street. Fall leaves blow across suburban house lawns -- As a fourteen year old BOY pedals on his bike sticking orange flyers from post box to post box.

He pedals away into the lurking sky. . .

EXT. DESOLATE TWO LANE HIGHWAY - LATE DAY

A two lane highway surrounded by bayou. The boy pedals along, coming to a slow stop -- he turns back to a suspicious CLANKING. He gets off his bike walking to. . .

A LARGE IRONWORK GATE

standing as tall as a wall. A huge "G" marks its arch. Heavy chains lock the gate shut. The boy stares at the gate with curiosity and awe, inching closer and closer. Closer. Closer and-- Suddenly a blast of wind SNAPS the GATE hard against the chains! The boy stumbles back, dropping his pouch full of flyers. Quickly getting up, he hops on his bike, pedaling away scared as. . .

The pouch lies open, flapping in the wind.

PUSH IN ON A SWAYING FLYER

a real estate flyer: "EVERS & EVERS - NEW ORLEANS REALTY". Along with the company information, it has two pictures: one of "SARA EVERS", a beautiful woman with a warm, genuine smile and next to her, a picture of "JIM EVERS", smiling far, far too wide for any possible credibility. We PUSH IN on Jim as--

INT. REAL ESTATE HOME - LATE DAY

He stands well tailored in a slick business suit, avidly presenting a slightly worn, slightly delapidated home to a well dressed YOUNG COUPLE. He points excitedly to the home's weathered interior:

JIM

--Now this is what we call the post modern civil war, pre-colonial nuevo with a twist. It's new meets old meets the past meets the future. And what it screams to me is welcome home Silvermans! Welcome home!

Jim smiles wide at Fred and Elaine Silverman who look concerned at a crumbling wall:

FRED

Um, are you a little concerned about this?

JIM

Aw Freddy, Freddy, Freddy. No, no -- in New Orleans, that's what we call character. I don't know what you call it in New York, but down here it's character. Don't you want a place with character?

FRED

Well I was hoping for a place with walls.

JIM

Come on now, Fred, why do you think God invented spackle? You get a little spackle, this place is as good as new. All these walls need is some love and some spackle.

ELAINE

Well we were maybe thinking of something in the French Quarter.

JIM

French Quarter? -- French Quarter?! You know what they got in the French Quarter?

FRED

. . . French people?

JIM

Snakes. Place is full of snakes. Big ones. They used to call it Snake Town, but they changed it to something catchier.

Jim's CELL PHONE starts to RING.

ELAINE

I thought it was supposed to be nice.

JIM

Nice for snakes! You like snakes?!

She shakes her head emphatically:

JIM

Well then you better stay outta snake town.

He finally answers his jacket cell phone:

JIM

Evers Real Estate! Jim Evers!

INTERCUT:

INT. EVERS HOME, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sara Evers, even more luminous than her photo, stands frustrated.

SARA

You're late.

JIM

Late?

Sara glances with concern at MICHAEL EVERS, her 10 year old son. Michael stares at her sadly through his oversized glasses as other TEN YEAR OLDS and wrapped birthday presents fill the living room. Sara speaks quietly upset into the phone:

SARA

Don't you even remember what today is?

JIM

What are you talking about? Of course I remember.

He cups the phone, smiling at the Silvermans:

JIM

The wife. It's grocery day. She loves her groceries.

(back into phone)

I'll be back in like twenty minutes, okay. Don't worry. Twenty minutes -- Tops.

INT. GLEN'S KARAOKE PALACE - NIGHT

Jim's tie is undone and he is on a karaoke platform SINGING:

JIM

--AT THE COPA! COPACABANA! MUSIC AND PASSION WERE ALWAYS THE FASHION AT THE COPA. . . THEY FELL IN LOOOOVE!

He points to his prospective clients who are laughing in a booth, having a great time:

JIM

Just like Fred and Elaine Silverman, ladies and gentlemen. Let's give 'em a big hand. Just moved to town from New York. They don't like snakes but they love Barry Manilow. They've got a dog named Mandy and a high six figure double income.

Jim turns to an AUDIENCE MEMBER:

JIM

Jim Evers. Evers Real Estate. Where you from?

AUDIENCE GUY

Dixon County.

JIM

Yeah?

Jim hands him his business card:

JIM

That's a terrible area. When you want to impress your date with a real house you let me know. Everybody! HIS NAME WAS RICO!!! HE WORE A DIAMOND!!!

INT. EVERS HOME, LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Silence. Pictures of the happy family sit on the mantel. Sara is cleaning up the wrapping paper. Annoyed, she glances at the TICKING GRANDFATHER CLOCK. It reads slightly after eleven. As MEGAN EVERS, 13, a beautiful younger version of her mother, comes bounding down the stairs on the phone:

MEGAN

Mom, tomorrow night right. You can drop me off?

SARA

Yes, Megan. For the last time. We can drop you off. And why exactly are you on the phone at eleven o'clock at night?

MEGAN

(into phone)

Okay I gotta go. See you tomorrow. Yeah.

Megan clicks off the phone.

MEGAN

It's gonna be so great, Mom. Everyone's gonna be there.

Sara smiles playfully at her daughter:

SARA

Even Shawn?

MEGAN

(blushing)

Especially Shawn. Oh, Mom, he's so hot! And smart and sensitive and sweet and he's so cool.

SARA

Yeah. I wish I could find a man like--

Jim comes in LAUGHING LOUD into his cell phone.

JIM

Oh I bet you would! You a crazy man! I thought that was Michael Jackson up on stage. I thought Billy Jean was at my door. That's what I'm saying. You crazy! Crazy Fred Silverman!

(he laughs loud)

Great. I'll see you tomorrow. I'll bring the contracts.

He clicks off his cell. Sara stares at him unamused.

JIM

What?

She doesn't say anything, staring at him upset.

JIM

I got the soap. Palmolive right. You wanted the. . .

Jim trails off, looking at Sara holding the wrapping paper. He glances up at the "HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MICHAEL!" banner.

JIM

. . . antibacterial--

He smiles at the unhappy Sara:

JIM

Okay I know what you're thinking but this is not a problem. I will make it up to him. I will absolutely make it up to him. Really. It was an emergency. I had to deal with some clients.

MEGAN

You always have to deal with some clients.

JIM

Yes I do. It's my job, Megan. Somebody's got to pay for your fancy designer clothes.

MEGAN

I've got a job, Dad.

JIM

Oh okay. Well then we'll let Starbucks pay for your fancy snappy jeans.

SARA

Megan can you go to bed? I have to talk to your father.

Megan walks up the stairs:

MEGAN:

(sing-songy)

You in trouble.

JIM

(calling after her)

I'm not in trouble. You're in trouble!
Isn't it past your bed time? Why are you up?

MEGAN (O.S.)

Like you care!

JIM

Oh I care! I care!

Jim looks back smiling to an obviously upset Sara. Quickly he gets out his checkbook, leaning on a table:

JIM

Honey, listen, I am going to write Michael a big fat check right now so he can go out and get any present he wants. It's gonna be the best birthday ever. Ever!

SARA

Jim, he was depending on you to be there.

JIM

Honey, I'm sorry, it just-- I was closing a deal and--

SARA

And the deal's more important than your own son?!

JIM

It was a big deal! These people are rich. They're looking at buying a lot of property. This could be huge! Huge! I mean do you remember when Louis Armstrong landed on the moon?

SARA

No. Because Neil Armstrong landed on the moon.

JIM

Hey what am I? An astrologer? The point is -- it was big. I mean what am I doing this for? I'm doing this for you guys. You're the one that wanted to get a bigger place, remember?

Sara shakes her head, closing her eyes:

SARA

Jim, I really think we need to talk--

JIM

I'm busting my butt for you guys. I don't think you realize that, Sara.

JIM
 (writing on the check memo)
 For ninth birthday.

SARA
 Tenth birthday.

JIM
 Right. Tenth. That's what I meant.

He snaps off the check and starts walking up the stairs.

SARA
 Jim, I really think we need to talk.

JIM
 Oh geez, look I don't want to talk about the beemer again okay. It was totally worth it okay. Nobody wants to buy a house from a guy driving a ratty beat up Honda. You got to look good to sell good, Sara. How many times do I have to tell you?

Jim is walking up the stairs:

SARA
 Jim we need to talk about us!

A PHONE begins to RING. . .

JIM (O.S.)
 Nobody wants to buy a house from a beat up Honda driving fool. Now a guy in a beemer! That just screams class!

Hurt, she stares at him unhappily, walking up the stairs.

SARA
 It screams something alright.

Frustrated, she answers the phone:

SARA
 Hello.

MAN (V.O.)
 Sara Evers?

SARA
 Yes, this is Sara.

INT. EVERS HOME, SECOND FLOOR HALL - LATE NIGHT

Jim reaches the top of the stairs as Michael comes SCREAMING out of his room! Jim jumps out of the way, panicking:

JIM

What?! What is it?!

Michael, fear locked in his eyes, tries to catch his breath:

MICHAEL

There's a . . . there's a . . .

JIM

There's a what?! What?!

MICHAEL

(swallowing hard)

There's a spider.

JIM

A spider?

MICHAEL

On the window.

JIM

So? Kill it.

MICHAEL

It's a big spider.

JIM

Is it bigger than you?

MICHAEL

No.

Jim shakes his head, grabbing Michael by the hand, walking into--

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Strewn with books, papers, horror movie posters. Jim walks Michael over to a window. A small house spider slowly crawls on the window pane:

JIM

Michael, you're officially ten now -- I really think it's time you start killing your own spiders. If you were nine it would be another story completely, but you're not, so--

(handing him a magazine)

Whack it.

MICHAEL

I don't wanna whack it.

JIM

What do you want to do? Take him on a hike?
No go on and do it! Come on.

(pointing to the spider)

Whack it. He's tiny! He's like a spider
Herve Villecheze! Listen, Michael, do you
trust me?

Michael looks away, obviously he doesn't. Jim notices:

JIM

Michael, hey--

Megan walks in, grabbing the papers from Jim's hand and
splatting the spider. She hands the papers back to Jim:

MEGAN

Happy?

JIM

No. That's an important contract! And now
it's got dead spider all over it!

MEGAN

Oh stop it. It's not that bad.

JIM

Not that bad?! Can you read over dead
spider?!

INT. EVERS HOME, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Still on the phone, Sara is writing an address down on
paper, stares upstairs at the ARGUING listening to:

INT. MANSION, HALLWAY - NIGHT

The back of a black suited BUTLER. He holds the Evers real
estate flyer and speaks in a refined, courteous manner:

BUTLER

It is an old home, Ms. Evers, and my employer
is anxious to move on. He would very much
like to meet you in hopes of the resolving
the matter. Would it be at all possible for
you to come, alone, for a meeting tomorrow
evening?

SARA

. . . Alone?

BUTLER

This is an extremely sensitive matter, Ms. Evers. The Master usually does not take visitors. However -- from your photograph he thought you to have a trusting face. A kind face. Your partner, he felt. . . differently.

Sara glances down at the same photo of the smiling Jim:

SARA

Oh. . . you got our flyer?

BUTLER

Yes. If it is a problem, of course we will completely understand.

Sara thinks for a moment.

SARA

No. No. It's not a problem.

BUTLER

Very good, Madame. I will inform my employer. He will be most pleased.

SARA

I'll see you tomorrow then.

Sara hangs up the phone. Turning back, Jim is right behind her trying to wipe the spider off his contract:

JIM

What's tomorrow?

She jumps startled. Quickly she collects herself:

SARA

Nothing. I just have to. . . go somewhere?

JIM

Yeah. Where?

Sara thinks for a moment, then lets it out:

SARA

To look at repping a house.

JIM

Repping a house?! What are you talking about? You don't rep houses. I rep the houses. I'm the house repper.

SARA

Well someone called and asked for me to come out tomorrow and look at their house.

JIM

And did you tell them that's not what you do? Did you tell them you just do the contracts. Did you tell them I get the contracts. And you do the contracts. I get, you do. You do, I get.

SARA

Jim, don't you think I can take care of this myself? I handled houses all the time before I met you.

JIM

Right! And then, luckily, you met me!

Sara walks away annoyed:

SARA

Well I told him I would be there. He was very clear.

JIM

Yeah, because he wants to rip you off on the commission that's why. You don't know these people, Sara. They're animals!

SARA

I think I do. And I think I can handle it myself!

JIM

Fine, you think you can handle it yourself?! Then go! See if I care! Handle it yourself!

- A GREY BMW 5 SERIES

WHOOSHES down the forest lined road through THICK DENSE FOG and DARK SKIES--

INT. BMW - LATE AFTERNOON

Jim drives. Sara, obviously upset, stares out the window. The kids sit in the back, Megan in a party dress, Michael with his school backpack. THUNDER RUMBLES in the distance. . .

JIM

So what did he say again?

SARA

I told you. He said he it was an old house, he said he wanted to meet me alone. He said it was sensitive.

JIM

Sure. Sensitive so you could get bamboozled.

Disgusted, she stares out the window.

JIM

Sara, come on, you know I'm the sensitive one here. I'm like Captain Sensitive. I'm just good with people. I've got sensitivity coming out of my--

Jim glances in the mirror spotting Michael about to munch on a candy bar:

JIM

Michael you better put down that candy! How many times I got to tell you? No snacking on the expensive German leather! The Germans hate crumbs!

Dejected, Michael puts away the snack, Sara stares at Jim, shaking her head:

SARA

Michael, you can eat when we get to the place alright?

Michael nods his head, staring sad distantly out the window. Jim looks at him the rear view, trying to get upbeat:

JIM

Besides, isn't this a great chance to do something as a family? You're the one who said the family needed to spend more time together. Well here we are, it's like a big fun field trip. It's like going to the zoo. Isn't this nice? Everybody together on a nice little zoo adventure.

SARA

Nice? Jim, I'm supposed to be doing this myself, Michael has to finish his homework and Megan doesn't want to be here in the first place.

MEGAN

She's right, Dad. Can you just drop me off first?

JIM

No. We're doing this together. Michael's always wanted to see the old man in action and now's his chance. Right, Michael?

Michael sits quietly in the back seat.

JIM

Right, Michael?

MICHAEL

. . . I guess.

JIM

Ya see. The kid can barely control himself. Michael, it's gonna be like watching Superman save a planet. Like watching Michael Jordan dunking on Bird. James Bond saving the world!

SARA

Yeah it's something like that alright.

JIM

Well it is. It's very exciting.

MEGAN

Great, Dad, but can I skip the whole Superman excitement and get dropped off first?

JIM

No -- because we're going here first. We can't do two things first.

MEGAN

Superman could do it.

JIM

Yeah well -- Superman's not driving. Don't worry okay. It'll be like twenty minutes -- tops.

The BMW ZOOMS PAST -- A HIGHWAY SIGN -- the wind WHOOSHES away the fog: "WELCOME TO LIBERTY". . . We PUSH TOWARDS the sign DISSOLVING INTO:

DENSER FOG

The THUNDER has grown CLOSER. . . LOUDER. As the beemer's headlights can be seen down the road. Megan sits frustrated staring at her watch:

MEGAN

Dad, are we there yet? It's been like twenty minutes already?!

They pass dense bayou forest and heavily wooded grounds, traveling along the secluded two lane highway:

JIM

I don't know. Are we there yet? It's been like twenty minutes already.

Sara glances down at a piece of paper:

SARA

We should be coming up on it any time now. He said it was somewhere--

JIM

In the middle of bayou nowhere. How am I gonna sell a place in the middle of a swamp? People hate swamps? I mean--

He trails off as the LARGE IRON GATE starts coming into view. . .

JIM

What in the. . .

THE BMW

slowly pulls up to the gate, the wheels CRUNCHING WET on the muddy road. The gate sways and SQUEALS with RUST -- CLANKING heavy against the large granite estate wall. The family sits in silence, staring at the gate.

JIM

Now that's what I call a whole lotta gate. They must have like a possum problem around here or something.

MEGAN

Really big possum.

Jim HONKS the HORN. Leaning his head out of the window:

JIM

Hello! We're here. Hello!!!!

Jim leans HEAVILY on his HORN!!! Nothing.

JIM

Man, now I have to get out into the dirt?

Jim throws the car into park, hopping out:

JIM

This isn't very professional. I'll tell ya that much right now, Sara.

Jim tip toes towards the gate, caring not to get dirty, muttering to himself:

JIM

Gate closed. I gotta nick up my new shoes.

Jim moves through the thick brush grown along the granite, looking for an intercom. He presses the thicket like an intercom:

JIM

Hello! Hello! Evers Real Estate!

Nothing. He wanders, pressing everything. Sara shakes her head, getting out of the car.

SARA

Let's help your father. Or we really might be here all day.

MEGAN

Good point. Michael, come on.

Megan gets out of the car. Michael, alone, reluctantly, follows his sister to the gate as. . .

JIM

I mean is it really so hard to leave the gate open? Is that really too much to ask for?

Sara walks along the granite, looking at the old wall, when she stops, stepping forward -- stunned.

JIM (O.S.)

They know we're coming, right? Maybe there's like a lock box or something.

He turns back to Sara, staring off into the distance.

JIM

What? No lock box?

Jim follows her gaze. . .

THROUGH THE MOVING FOG

Over the granite wall -- a house appears. Sitting high, high on a hill -- a seemingly dark mirage. A nightmare cloaked by the mist. The family stares -- stunned. A long beat.

JIM

(excited beyond compare)
Wow!!! Now that's a house!!!

MEGAN

You have got to be kidding. You're gonna sell that?! To who? A vampire?

JIM

Oh come on, Megan, things always look a bit gloomy in the fog. That's the very nature of fog. I bet the inside is fantastic.

SARA

Lock.

Sara points back to the gate. It is now chained open.

JIM

Oh good. I musta pressed something.

SARA

But it was chained shut.

JIM

So? It got unchained. Come on!

Jim races back to the car, jumping inside:

JIM

I bet the inside is fantastic! This is getting exciting! Isn't this getting exciting?!

Megan, shaking her head, looks to Sara as--

THE CAR

drives up the winding, muddy hill. Michael stares out the window scared -- Eerie fog slithers through the dead trees that cover the grounds. As suddenly -- the BAYING of a HOUND! Michael quickly cowers behind his backpack.

At the top of the hill, a mangy, malnourished hound BAYS! The car headlights shine on an elderly CARETAKER, a shovel in his hand, a shock of white hair underneath a fishing cap.

Jim pulls the car next to him, rolling down the window:

JIM

Excuse me, are you the valet?

Sara rolls her eyes, embarrassed. The caretaker turns back to the car, he looks like the living dead.

JIM

(laughing good naturedly)
I'm kidding. I'm just playing with you.
We're the Evers. We're here to see a Mister
Gracey.

Jim sits with a frozen smile. The caretaker stands there --
not saying a word.

JIM

Okay. Is this the right place? The Gracey
place?

Nothing. The caretaker glares.

JIM

Yo habla ingles--

The hound BAYS at the car, startling everyone. Jim stares
at the dog.

JIM

Hey that's a nice dog. What is that? Like
a half-lab, half-dead mix--

OLD CARETAKER

Do not go into the house. Only death awaits
you.

A long beat. Thunder RUMBLES in the distance. They stare
at the old man in the fog.

JIM

Okay. Well. . . thanks for the heads up,
man. Now you and Lassie better go find
little Timmy -- It's getting a little nippy
out.

Shaking his head, Jim rolls up the window, pulling towards
the house:

JIM

They got to find themselves a new gardener
they wanna sell this place. That guy's a
serious downer. Death awaits you? How you
gonna sell a house talkin' like that?

Sara and the kids stare back at the old man disappearing
from view as they pull closer to the mansion.

Stopping finally in the car port, getting the first good
look at the classic antebellum. . .

FOUR HUGE EBONY COLUMNS

support a pointed molded roof leading back into the iron sculpted lattice that wraps around the ominous three story structure. A decidedly weathered Southern Gothic. Sara sits in awe:

SARA

My God. I've only read about houses like this in books. Have you ever seen a design like this in your life?

JIM

No. It looks like three stories of money! A whole retirement plan! And maybe my own yacht! Come on.

Jim excitedly jumps out of the car, standing in front of the mansion like a kid in a candy store.

JIM

I mean look at it! It's gigantic! And look at all this property! I wonder how much land they got? Michael, come on -- let's take a look.

Michael, frightened, stares at the insufferable gloom of the house.

JIM (O.S.)

Michael come on. Let's go!

Michael reluctantly steps out of the car. As Jim presses the ALARM on the BEEMER:

JIM

I don't trust that old freaky dog dude.

Jim starts walking around the house as. . .

POV SECOND STORY WINDOW

something watches them get out of the car, walking towards the mansion -- The something moving back. . .

INSIDE THE MANSION

Long shadows hang everywhere. It sits aged and still. Deathly still. THUNDER RUMBLES CLOSER as. . .

EXT. MANSION GROUNDS - LATE AFTERNOON

Jim and Michael walk around the mansion exterior. Leaves swirl as a storm is ominously close. Dead oak trees and dark skies. An owl HOOS sitting high on a branch.

JIM

Look at all this space! You get a weed wacker, clean this place up, plant a few nice flowers, this place can be good as new.

Jim notices that Michael is clinging close behind him, carrying his backpack:

JIM

Michael, there's nothing to be scared of okay. I mean did you really have to bring your survival pack? We're gonna be like twenty minutes and you're packed like we're humping through the 'Nam. Why you gotta bring that thing every-- Oh geez.

Jim has stopped scared dead in his tracks looking ahead--

JIM

Huh. Well now that's not something you see every day.

A GRAVEYARD

sits next to the house. An unnatural fog chokes the old, crooked tombstones.

MEGAN (O.S.)

Oh -- my -- God! Dead people!

Megan and Sara step next to Jim staring at the tombstones:

MEGAN

They've got dead people in their backyard!

JIM

Okay. So? Some houses got pools. Some houses got private cemeteries. It happens.

Sara, intrigued, stares at the headstones:

SARA

Family cemeteries were actually quite common in New Orleans before the war.

JIM

Wow. Musta been one big family-- But just look at all this land! We could sub-divide it. Put up some condos.

MEGAN

Next to a cemetery?!

JIM

Oh, Megan, does everything have to be perfect with you?

LIGHTNING CRACKS as the sky finally opens. Rain beginning to fall heavy and hard.

JIM

Oh no! My suit! This is my good Armani!

Jim quickly scats around the corner. Megan stares at Sara.

MEGAN

And you married him why?

SARA

. . . good question.

Sara shakes her head, staring after Jim, scurrying away--

THE WOODEN PORCH

Rotting with warped wood. Leaves blow frantically to and fro as the rest of the family rushes onto the porch. Jim is already looking inside the dusty windows, KNOCKING:

JIM

Hello. Hello. Anybody? Evers Real Estate!

No answer. The porch CREAKS and BENDS as they walk towards two huge wooden doors marked by horrific carved LION HEADS covered by venomous snakes.

JIM

Hey snakes. Isn't that cute? They got little snakes coming out the lions mouth. Look at that.

Sara shakes her head amazed, curious:

SARA

I've never seen anything like it.

JIM

Yeah and I bet the inside is even better! Remember guys -- smiles. Everyone smiles. We're just one big happy family.

MEGAN

And then we can leave?

JIM

And then we can leave. And remember -- this is key -- just let me do the talking.

Megan gives a big, fake smile as Jim KNOCKS on the door. It's a HUGE HOLLOW KNOCK that seems to get sucked into an endless void.

JIM

Hello! Hello! Real estate man!

Jim KNOCKS again. A beat. Cautiously, Jim presses against the door. It CREAKS OPEN. He steps inside, Sara follows. Megan puts her arm around Michael and follows--

INT. MANSION, GRAND ENTRY HALL - EARLY EVENING

A vast entry hall, two levels high. Dimly lit gas lights line the room. Casting pale illumination over the deep, rich mahogany walls, the velvet drapery, the large aged Aubusson rugs. . . Deeply carved doors and archways lead off in every direction. As every piece of woodwork or plaster is carved, filigreed or painted in ornate fashion.

The family stands, taking the dark vision in.

JIM

You see! Even better!

Jim walks further in, followed by his family:

JIM

I mean talk about cheery. It's practically Disneyland in here. Hello! Anybody home?!

His words ECHO around the room as Sara is inspecting the deep recesses of the hall. She is absolutely taken with the lavish design of the room. Michael sheepishly stares at an ivory bust as a spider skitters past across a cobweb. He snaps away, scared:

MICHAEL

Mom -- this place has bugs.

Sara is consumed, inspecting a stone statue:

SARA

Yes, Michael. I'm sure this place has lots of things. This statue alone must date back to--

The ever so slight BEATING of a HEART. Sara stops, confused. Listening. She turns, but just as quickly it disappears--

Jim, obviously having heard nothing, stares at a GARGOYLE CARVED BANISTER:

JIM

Isn't this place great? They've got everything! They've even got these special weird little dogs on the stairs. I'm telling ya, we get some Mr. Clean going on in here -- put a parking lot outside we could open up like a mini-mall. The possibilities are endless! Endless!

A HINGE loudly CREAKS -- A DOOR SLAM! Quickly they turn back to -- the heavy sound of FOOTSTEPS as. . . a MAN emerges from the DEEP SHADOWS -- It is a man in formal butler attire -- his complexion is pallid and hauntingly, hauntingly gaunt.

BUTLER

Sara Evers?

But before Sara can open her mouth, Jim has stepped in front of her smiling, extending his hand:

JIM

Yes. That's us. Jim Evers, Evers Real Estate at your service.

The butler glances at the rest of the family:

BUTLER

We were not expecting. . . others.

SARA

Yes I'm so sorry--

JIM

But she just don't go anywhere without us. Isn't that right, sweetie?

Jim smiles at Sara.

JIM

We like to be very thorough at Evers and Evers. So you rich guys get the most bang for your all important proverbial dollar.

Sara shakes her head. The butler is not amused.

The butler stares at Jim -- Jim is smiling at him wide. A beat. Jim glances around, the smile still plastered to his face.

BUTLER

Very good, sir. My name is Ramsley. We shall have to place other settings.

JIM

Great!

(to Sara)

They're gonna place some other settings.

(confused to Ramsley)

Other settings for what?

RAMSLEY

Dinner, sir.

MEGAN

Dinner?! What are you talking about? We're not staying for din--

Jim quickly clamps his hand over Megan's mouth. Jim smiles:

JIM

She just had lunch.

RAMSLEY

Master Gracey had wished to discuss his affairs over dinner.

Megan tries to say something but can't, muffled by Jim's hand.

JIM

Oh really? Great. I'm starving!

A HUGE SET OF DOUBLE DOORS swing open to. . .

INT. MANSION, DINING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Ramsley leads the family inside where a large dining room table is laid out with immaculate white silk cloth. Two large candelabras sit at opposite sides of the table. Place settings are laid out.

RAMSLEY

The master shall be with you shortly.

Ramsley bows, leaving them.

JIM

Great. Thanks, Mr. Butler.

Jim takes his hand from Megan's mouth.

MEGAN

Dad what are you doing?! I was supposed to be at Amy's already! And now we're staying for dinner?!

SARA

Yes, Jim, what are you doing?

JIM

Well we couldn't be impolite could we?! This is a guy with class. He's got candles out and everything.

MEGAN

So what if he's got candles?! I was supposed to be there ten minutes ago! The party probably already started!

JIM

Megan, would you just relax. Being late is very fashionable. We'll just stay for a little, have a little soup, and then we'll go. Alright?

MEGAN

Yeah, right. Sure we will.

Megan plops down at the table, crossing her arms frustrated. Lightning flashes the outside, flickering the lights. Michael looks up scared as Sara shakes her head at Jim, spotting something behind him. She walks to it, captivated.

A BEAUTIFUL MARBLE CARVED FIREPLACE

of angels caught in fire. Sara walks to it, tracing her hand over the elaborate carving:

SARA

My God, look at these designs. Where did this stone come from? It looks like it must be, at least from the seventeenth century.

MAN (O.S.)

The sixteenth -- actually.

Startled she turns to -- a MAN standing in the deep shadows of the room. Slowly he steps into the dining room. . . well dressed in a well tailored suit, he steps nervously, hesitantly through the shadows:

MAN

It was crafted by an Italian artist, Cicero, in 1585. He was commissioned by the court of Ferdinand to create heaven around fire. My grandfather saw it during one of his travels and had it brought over when he built this mansion.

Appearing into the soft light for the first time-- he is in his early thirties, darkly handsome. But there is something distinctly agitated in his demeanor. Tormented, brooding.

Sara stares at him for a beat, not knowing what to say as Jim rushes over:

JIM

Well grandpa had some really good taste there. And you done a bang up job with the rest of the place. You're a regular Martha Stewart with the whole Roman thing going on. Jim Evers. Evers Real Estate.

Gracey looks at him nervously.

GRACEY

Edward. . . Edward Gracey.

Gracey bows slightly, then locks his gaze on Sara:

JIM

Yeah. And that's my wife. Sara. I know it was supposed to be just be her, but she insisted we come.

GRACEY

Of course.

Sara smiles at him as Ramsley pulls out a dining room chair for her.

SARA

Oh thank you.

Obviously nervous, Gracey rounds the long table, taking a seat at its head. Ramsley pushes in Sara's chair:

RAMSLEY

The master was so very pleased when he heard you could come on such short notice.

JIM

Oh it's not a problem. We were gonna be in the neighborhood anyway.

Megan lets out an AUDIBLE MOAN of disgust.

JIM

Indigestion. She had a late lunch.

RAMSLEY

Yes. I'm sorry. I wouldn't have called you here so abruptly but the master felt he had no other choice.

JIM

Oh why's that? You got termites or something?

Gracey stares up at Jim, pained:

GRACEY

Lately there have been more. . . disturbances.

JIM

What? Like late night parties?

Gracey stares at Jim, unnerved. Ramsley, looking at his master, fills the silence.

RAMSLEY

I am afraid the house has a bit of -- a bit of a history to it.

JIM

Oh well it's old. Old things got lots of history.

Gracey turns back to the smiling Jim:

GRACEY

Yes. Yes they do. What do you think of the house -- Sara?

Sara smiles warmly at Gracey.

SARA

I think it's remarkable.

JIM

Exactly. Remarkable! That's just what I was about to--

GRACEY

How -- how do you find it so?

Sara's eyes slowly work their way around the room:

SARA

The early Victorian woodwork, the hand carving -- so many craftsman must have labored on this house. The hand woven Aubusson rugs, the detailed filigree, the attention to the molding, the love. . .

SARA (cont'd)

the detail, the extraordinary detail is something I don't think I've ever seen before. And the artwork, my god, it's truly-- It's, it's simply -- breath taking.

Gracey smiles, duly impressed. Jim looks over to her incredibly annoyed:

JIM

Exactly. That's exactly what I was thinking too--

GRACEY

Yes, Sara, it was built at a time when care and craft were put into a home. When a home meant something to a family. When family meant something.

JIM

Well family means everything to me! I don't go anywhere without them. Right, guys?

Silence. They stare at Jim stonefaced. A beat.

JIM

Hey well you know what I was thinking, Ed. Can I call you Ed? If we can just skip to the chase, I'm just gonna throw something out to you -- Condos. A whole buncha condos. You got so much land here. We throw up some condos--

The candlelights flicker again. A CHILL WIND breezes through the room, Michael shivers, glancing around nervously.

JIM

Get some better electricity and a little thermal insulation--

Gracey looks down uncomfortably, getting up from the table, walking over to the window, staring outside at the raging storm.

JIM

Okay. Hey you don't like the condo idea. That's cool.

GRACEY

This house. This house. . .
(tensing)
It haunts me.

Michael gives Sara a quick nervous glance as--

EXT. MANSION - EVENING

Lightning CRACKS! Black has invaded the night as the storm has grown torrential. Fierce WINDS HOWL. The RAIN LASHES down on the mansion. Gnarled trees SHAKE and RATTLE as. . .

INT. MANSION, DINING ROOM - EVENING

Ramsley is removing the plates from the table. Gracey is staring into the fire:

GRACEY

. . . The house was my inheritance. My birthright. But recently it has become too much to bear. The episodes. . . the episodes have become worse.

JIM

Yeah getting a multi-million dollar property can really weigh on a guy.

Michael watches as a candle slowly moves by itself across the table as Sara shoots Jim a dagger look.

JIM

What? It can!

GRACEY

They usually come at night. Only at night.

MICHAEL

(very nervously)

What?. . . What comes at night?

Gracey looks up pained, turning, staring at Jim intensely:

GRACEY

Tell me, Mr. Evers -- do you believe in ghosts?

Michael's eyes go wide. A beat. Jim gives Sara a quick "this guy's a loon" glance.

JIM

Ghosts? Sure, yeah, I believe in ghosts. Although we probably shouldn't put that on the house listing. We should probably just talk about how many bathrooms you have. People love lots of bathrooms! So we should just play up the toilet angle. Stay off the whole ghost thing. At least, you know, for now.

THUNDER CRASHES outside the mansion window, as Gracey turns to the window staring off into the raging storm--

RAMSLEY'S POV

through the window, we see that the bottom of the hill has been completely flooded over.

RAMSLEY

The storm has swollen the river.

JIM

What's that, Rameses?

RAMSLEY

The storm has flooded the roads. I'm afraid they'll be no leaving the mansion tonight.

MEGAN

What?!

GRACEY

Of course you are more than welcome to spend the night.

MEGAN

Spend the night?!

GRACEY

I am afraid there is no other way. Ramsley will show you to your rooms.

Gracey walks out of the double doors, greatly troubled.

JIM

Aw that's alright. Don't sweat it. Maybe we can get together a little later to talk a little business!

Gracey walks away disappearing into the dark recesses of the hall as Ramsley steps into the archway:

RAMSLEY

If you'll kindly follow me.

INT. MANSION, SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

Dimly lit gas lights line the hallway corridor. Ramsley leads the family down the hallway holding a candlelabra. The sound of the STORM ECHOES outside the windows. Michael clings close behind Megan as they pass a WALL SIZED PAINTING depicting a horrific battle between heaven and hell.

JIM

Oooh, look at the nice picture. What is that?

RAMSLEY

Armageddon, sir. The day of judgement. Where everyone is judged. Judged by the fires of hell. It has always watched over this house, sir.

JIM

Huh.

(staring at the painting)

You ever see that painting Dogs Playing Poker? That's a good one. They're dogs and yet they're playing poker. It's very clever.

RAMSLEY (O.S.)

Yes. Of course.

It seems as though the eyes of the painting are following Michael. Quickly he skitters behind Sara as they turn the hall--

ANOTHER DARK HALLWAY

Jim stares at the macabre Victorian designs:

JIM

Yeah I tell ya, Rameses, the decorated decor up here is simply splendid. Really just splendid. With this--

(feeling the walls)

Now this is that special European mix of-- What is that called?

SARA

Wallpaper, Jim. It's called wallpaper.

JIM

Right but the special European kind--

Sara glances at Jim annoyed as Ramsley stops in front of a door taking a key out of his breast pocket:

RAMSLEY

I believe -- the children will be comfortable in this room.

Ramsley opens the door to a large, dark bedroom decorated in the Victorian style. Megan looks into the shadow filled room:

MEGAN

Yeah great. Looks really comfy. Come on, Michael.

SARA

Goodnight, guys.

MEGAN/MICHAEL

Goodnight, Mom.

Megan walks in, followed closely by Michael.

JIM

Hey I'll be in to check on you guys later, okay. Tuck you in, read you your bedtime story.

MEGAN

Ucch, would you just drop it already!

Megan SLAMS the door. A beat. Jim, smiling, looks back to Ramsley.

JIM

Huh. They usually love to be tucked.

RAMSLEY

Of course, sir.

Ramsley walks to a bedroom across the hall, opening the door:

RAMSLEY

I hope you and the Madame will find this room to your liking.

The door CREAKS OPEN to a grand bedroom, furnished in the same Victorian style.

JIM

Oh, this is perfect. Look how snug and cozy.

RAMSLEY

Will there be anything else you require, sir?

JIM

What about the chocolates?

RAMSLEY

. . . Pardon, sir?

JIM

Aren't you gonna leave like some little tiny chocolates on our pillow?

Jim LAUGHS, smiling at Ramsley.

JIM

Chocolates on the--on the pillow. Cause--

Ramsley just stares, grim.

JIM

No. I think we're good.

RAMSLEY

Very good, sir. Good evening.

Ramsley shuts the door.

INT. KIDS BEDROOM - NIGHT

Michael sits in the bed, under the covers. Megan stomps around the room, picking up various antiques:

MEGAN

Can you believe him? I'm supposed to be at Amy's right now and instead I'm here.

(looking around in disgust)

Here! Can you believe it? Look at this place. It's like I'm in a mausoleum.

Megan shakes her head, looking up at Michael, who is staring at something.

MEGAN

What?

Michael looks sadly at the door. A beat.

MICHAEL

They're arguing again.

- Megan turns -- the SOUNDS of an ARGUMENT FILTER into their ROOM as. . .

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jim and Sara are certainly going at it:

JIM

Me?! It's you! You're the one that's completely embarrassing yourself! He sees right through you, Sara! Robittusson rugs. What's a Robittusson rug? He's testing you and you're making a fool out of yourself.

SARA

Jim, the only person that's a fool here is you! Do you think a man like that is going to buy your ridiculous sales pitch?

JIM

A man like what?! What? You think he's better than me or something?! Because he lives in some fancy rich house?

SARA

No I don't think that. But obviously, Jim, you do. That's why he didn't want you here in the first place.

JIM

He didn't what?

Sara has to step away from him, shaking her head.

SARA

Nothing.

JIM

No what do you mean he didn't want me here?

SARA

He didn't want you here because he didn't think he could trust you! Okay. And obviously -- he was right.

JIM

Couldn't trust me?! Couldn't trust me?! Who can you trust more than me? I'm like Mr. Trustworthy.

SARA

Right. And you just made him feel so at ease.

JIM

Hey, well at least I'm not sitting at the table making googly eyes at him the whole time.

SARA

What?

JIM

Oh I saw you. Yeah I saw you. Oh, Mr. Gracey, I love your fireplace. Oh, Mr. Gracey, I love your statues. Who do you think you're kidding? Why don't you just throw yourself at him, Sara?

SARA

What?

JIM

If you like him so much, why don't you just go and run off with him?

SARA

Well ya know what? At least he cares, Jim. At least he's sweet enough and sensitive enough to listen to what I have to say!

JIM

Fine! So run off with him! I don't care!

SARA

Yeah, Jim -- I know.

Pained, Sara storms into a bathroom, SLAMMING the door on him.

JIM

Yeah. I hope you two have a nice life together!

Jim storms out of the room, into the hallway. He stops, his expression, softening, showing remorse. He turns back to the room:

JIM

Sara. Hey, Sar--

Ramsley stands directly behind him. Jim jumps!!!

JIM

Oh jumpin' geez!!!!

RAMSLEY

Pardon the intrusion, sir. But the master was wondering if he could have a word with you in the gallery.

Jim quickly collects himself.

JIM

Oh. A word? Oh good.

(straightening his tie)

Well, I'd like to have a word with him too.

RAMSLEY

Very good, sir. If you'll follow me.

Ramsley turns down the hall. Jim closes the door, starting to follow him:

JIM

Hey, Rameses, I know this guy in the city with this really great tanning salon. I think you might really like it. . .

Jim turns down the corridor as we stay on the silent hall; DISSOLVING into the recesses of the mansion; pushing in on a grandfather clock -- as the second hand reaches the midnight hour. A dark shadow passes over the clock as it CHIMES through the mansion. Through its still halls; empty hall after hall; empty room after room; and finally CHIMING into--

INT. KIDS BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Megan, finger in ear, is on her cell phone CHIMES its FINAL TOLL.

MEGAN

Still no reception. Unbelievable. It must be the stupid storm or something. Michael? Michael?

Michael, a lump in the bed, has pulled the bedsheets completely over himself.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

What?

MEGAN

Comfortable?

MICHAEL (O.S.)

Very.

Megan shakes her head, walking into the bathroom, trying her cell as. . . .

The drapes are delicately pushed open by a slow breeze. A brilliant sparkle of white light appears -- spinning into a small ball of pulsating white light.

SLOW HEARTBEATS sound as the WHITE BALL OF LIGHT blows by the curtain, floating into the room. . . .

Underneath the covers, Michael begins to hear the soft HEARTBEATS. He creases his brows -- what's that? He begins to see a soft glow through the covers, curious, he gently lowers the covers. . . .

The ball of floating light sits right in front of his face. He begins to helplessly quiver, eyes wide, speechless -- Trying to SCREAM:

MICHAEL

Mmm--Mmm--Mmm. . .

He can't muster anything. The ball hovers. As finally he lets it out:

MICHAEL

MEGANNNN!!!

Scared, the ball quickly shoots away as Megan comes out of the bathroom, annoyed:

MEGAN

What?! What is it now?!

Shaking, Michael points behind the curtain -- The ball slowly, carefully, re-appears. Megan drops her cell. As the ball floats into the room right in front of them. Megan stares at it, consumed. She walks closer to it, awed.

MEGAN

What is it?

Megan stares at the ball captivated as it slowly floats by them, disappearing through the door -- a moment later it re-appears into the room. Megan stares at it:

MEGAN

I think it wants us to follow it or something.

MICHAEL

What?!

The ball floats through the door again.

MEGAN

Come on!

Michael shakes his head emphatically, his large round glasses quickly toggling back and forth.

MEGAN

Fine. Stay here. . . Alone.

Megan makes her way into the hallway. Michael glances around the room -- ominous shadows sway as . . .

THE HALLWAY

Megan slowly follows the light as Michael comes flying out after her, smacking into her, clinging close.

MEGAN

Ow! Watch it! Watch it!

They follow the light down the hall as. . .

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sara sits at the dressing table, looking at wallet pictures of Jim and the kids. Jim, his arm around the family. She looks up, staring at herself in the mirror. Tears have run down her face.

She hears the MUFFLED SOUNDS of MEGAN in the hallway. Sara wipes away her tears, walking to the door--

INT. MANSION, HALLWAY CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Sara opens her door to see Michael and Megan down the hall.

SARA

Megan!

Michael and Megan practically jump out of their skin. The white light quickly jolts around the bend in the corridor, hiding from Sara.

SARA

Megan, what are you two doing?

Michael points to the white light next to them:

MICHAEL

Mom, there's a ghost ball--

Megan elbows him hard, cutting him off:

MEGAN

We couldn't sleep, so we figured we'd take a walk.

SARA

Take a walk? Well, I don't think that's a very good idea, Megan. This isn't your house you know. Now go back to your rooms and I'll see you in the morning.

MEGAN

Okay, mom.

MICHAEL

But what about the--

Megan quickly covers Michael's mouth, skittering him back to the room.

MEGAN

Night, Mom.

SARA

Goodnight.

She watches them curiously as Megan SLAMS the DOOR. Sara is about to go back into her room, when she starts to hear some HINGES CREAK down the hall. She looks suspiciously:

SARA

Jim? . . . Jim?

Slowly, she starts walking as--

INT. THE PORTRAIT GALLERY - NIGHT

The heavy sound of RAIN and WIND outside fills the room. Oil portraits hang in the octagonal study. Ramsley escorts Jim into the room:

RAMSLEY

Would you care for a drink while you wait, sir?

Ramsley moves to the bar. Jim moves to a portrait:

JIM

Thanks, Rameses. Don't mind if I do. Hey, you know what I was thinking? I was thinking I really got to get me one of these portraits. I think it would look really nice hanging in my house. Just a big picture of me. You know, add a touch of class. A little elegance.

Ramsley mixes a drink into a tumbler.

RAMSLEY

Yes, of course, sir. Here you are.

Ramsley hands Jim the drink. The drink casts an eerie glow.

JIM

Oooh, good, the fancy stuff. What is this? Like a margarita?

RAMSLEY

It is the specialty of the house.

JIM

Oooh top shelf, it's all class with you people. Well, Lechaim.

Jim slugs back his drink. Ramsley stares at Jim slugging it down. As Jim finishes, Ramsley draws the large hanging drapes:

RAMSLEY

The master was so pleased when he heard that you were on your way. I can not tell you.

JIM

Ah no. You can tell me. We're buddies, Rameses. We go way back.

Ramsley stares at him grimly:

RAMSLEY

Of course. Tell me, Mr. Evers, do you like the house?

JIM

Aw what are you kidding me?! It's a--it's a real--

RAMSLEY

Yes, Mr. Evers.

Jim is getting woozy, the room is starting to swim out of focus--

JIM

It's a great -- it's a great house, I mean. . .

(staggering, woozy)

But those drapes are horrible. Purple drapes. Who has purple drapes?

Jim drops his GLASS SHATTERING to the floor. It ECHOES SLOWLY around the room. As Jims' vision swirls and fades as he falls into BLACK -- COMPLETE BLACK until. . .

INT. MANSION, LIBRARY - NIGHT

The room is dimly lit by gas lights. Leather bound books fill the walls. The room has a dark smolder to it. A dark romance.

Sara's eyes sweep over the room as she walks across the CREAKING FLOOR to the wall of books. Making her way to the shelves, she traces her hand over an old, oak reading table.

Lightly, almost religiously, she feels her hand across the antique, leather bound volumes. Books on every subject imaginable. But curiously, a high concentration on the dark arts -- voodoo, spells, witchcraft.

BEHIND SARA

something is watching her. She stops, sensing it. A slow chill invades her. A candlelight flickers. . . She turns -- someone is in the shadows-- She knocks over the books, as Gracey steps out of the shadows.

GRACEY

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to frighten you.

SARA

Oh. . .

(she smiles)

Mr. Gracey, I didn't know anyone was here.

He smiles at her:

GRACEY

Here, let me get that.

He moves to help her pick up the books, close to each other they gather them. The candlelight sways softly next to them.

GRACEY

Mr. Ramsley is very insistant about things being in order.

He stares at her, looking at her hair -- She catches his glance, he quickly looks down.

GRACEY

Were you. . . were you looking for anything in particular?

SARA

No I just heard some noises and I thought Jim was in here.

Gracey stops picking up the books for a moment:

GRACEY

Your husband?

SARA

Yes.

Sara looks at Gracey by the candlelight. He stares intently into her eyes. She gets up uncomfortable:

SARA

Mr. Gracey, you seemed so troubled earlier at dinner. There was something -- I felt there was something you wanted to tell me.

Gracey stares at her.

SARA

Was I wrong?

GRACEY

No. No, I wanted to tell you. . . I wanted to tell you about this house.

SARA

About why you wanted to sell it?

GRACEY

. . . Yes. Of course. But for you to understand -- I must show you.

Sara stands, slightly ambivalent.

GRACEY

It's alright. There's nothing to be afraid of.

He smiles at her. Somehow there is comfort in his smile. She moves past his extended arm. As she passes, his smile drops to a troubled stare. He follows her as. . .

INT. MANSION, HALLWAY CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Megan peeks out into the hall, checking to see if the coast is clear. No Mom. She walks out into the hallway, holding Michael's hand, dragging him back out:

MICHAEL

I don't want to go. Mom said to stay in our room. We should stay in our room!

MEGAN

Sssh. There's nothing interesting in our room.

MICHAEL

Well, I like it.

MEGAN

Michael nothing's going to happen, okay. Now we just have to find that--

The glowing ball re-appears around the corridor. Megan stops in her tracks.

MEGAN

Wow.

She steps forward -- the ball moves forward. She stops, the ball stops. It is definitely leading them somewhere.

MEGAN

Oh, this is so cool. Come on.

Megan follows the light down the hall. Michael reluctantly follows. . .

INT. PORTRAIT GALLERY - NIGHT

CLOSE ON BLINKING EYES

Jim lies woozy below. His vision swimming back into focus. Only the distant SOUND of the STORM.

Jim turns to look at the shattered glass next to him:

JIM

What the-- What the-- That dude slipped me a mickey.

Jim staggers to his feet. Walking, shaking his head towards the door.

JIM

That freaky albino dude slipped me a mickey.
No house is worth this.

(yelling up)

Alright, man, that's it! The deal is off!
I'm officially not selling your house now.
How you like that?! I'm taking back my
contract, all my years of sales experience
and I'm walking! I never liked your stupid
house anyway!

Jim walks to where the door used to be. There is no door.

JIM

Where'd the-- where'd the door go? What kind
of a--

(yelling back up)

And the architecture in here stinks! You
hear me?! Stinks!

Jim walks around the room confused, trying to get out.
There are no windows and no doors.

JIM
 And the window-- where did the?
 (yelling)
 Alright, if you don't let me out of here on
 the count of three I am seriously not gonna
 sell your house! I was just kidding before!
 But now I'm serious! One--

The room SLOWLY BEGINS TO STRETCH!

JIM
 (completely unaware)
 Two!

Behind Jim, the paintings in the portraits are stretching,
 coming to life, glowering down at him--

JIM
 Two and a half!

Arms from the portraits start to reach out for him--

JIM
 Two and three quarters--

Jim turns -- Hearing the portraits STRETCHING, their gold
 frames CRACKING.

JIM
 What the--

Jim looks down to see the room stretching, the floor sinking.

JIM
 Oh I get it! This is one of those crazy
 hallucinations! You think you can scare me?!
 I know a hallucination when I see one! This
 isn't even that convincing!

In the quick of a second -- the room goes black! A crack of
 THUNDER! Lightning! A WOMAN'S BLOOD CURDLING SCREAM! As
 suddenly the floor drops out! Jim instinctively lunges for
 a gold frame of a painting -- clinging for dear life.

JIM
 Okay, maybe it is a little convincing.

The portrait -- a grim looking man in a bowler -- looks down
 from his still pose, sneering down at Jim as the frame
 starts to CREAK APART. Jim's hands slide from grasp as the
 frame POPS further, leaving him dangling, feet kicking
 against the wall as. . .

The portrait HINGE starts to dislodge -- CRACKING from the wall. Jim looks up to see the entire painting about to fall. The smirking portrait getting closer, closer, closer. . .

Jim's feet are SCRAPING DESPERATELY against the wall, kicking books off a shelf -- as he does, one book triggers a sliding panel -- Jim stares at it as. . .

The painting drops! Jim leaps for the panel, grabbing its edge, as the painting falls past into the abyss -- The portrait no longer smirking as he twirls, disappearing into endless black. . .

Jim swallows, PANTING, pulling himself into the panel -- Staring out wide-eyed at the stretching room. WHAT IN THE WORLD JUST HAPPENED?! Nervously he straightens his tie, getting indignant:

JIM

Okay, now I'm mad--

The metal panel suddenly drops! Falling he SCREAMS! THUDDING DOWN into COMPLETE BLACK. Through the darkness we can hear him BREATHING HARD. A beat.

JIM (O.S.)

Lawsuit! I am so filing a lawsuit! I got serious emotional damage! With intent to damage my person! Floors dropping out, paintings trying to kill me! I got two words for you, Mr. Fancy Rich Guy -- Johnny Cochrane! Johnny gonna--

A soft light from behind Jim as a candleabra floats past him down the dark hallway by itself. The sound of TAMBOURINES and RINGING BELLS ECHO from down the hall.

JIM

Johnny gonna-- What is that? Oh sure, the old floating candle trick. Like I haven't seen that one before.

Jim, petrified, follows the noise. The Roman busts lining the hall watch him as he cautiously walks past.

JIM

You know I'm still not scared! You're just making me mad! I'm getting really mad now.

A dark blue, ethereal light emanates from behind the only open door. Jim carefully steps over to the door, peeking inside the dark chamber--

INT. SEANCE ROOM

A single candle sits on a small table some twenty feet away. A crystal ball next to it, propped in carved black iron hands. The room is darkly macabre -- layered with skulls, cauldrons, mist. A raven sits CAWING on a chair. Jim steps inside petrified:

JIM

You're the one that should be scared!

The entrance way WHIPS SHUT! Jumping scared, he spins around to it:

JIM

Oh what the--!

As a WOMAN'S VOICE hollowly reverberates throughout the room. A voice distinctly from beyond:

WOMAN (O.S.)

Mortals of men, any that's there, come within reach -- enter my lair.

JIM

Yeah okay. I think I'll just wait here, thanks.

A crimson-cushioned chair walks out of the black, stopping in front of the table.

JIM

Oh look, now they got the walking chairs. Hey, look, I don't know what kind of weird voodoo you're trying to pull here. But I don't think you know who you're dealing with! I'm Jim Evers! Uh huh! And you people are in serious, serious trouble!

WOMAN (O.S.)

Welcome, Mr. Evers, to the land of the dead, where nothing is unspoken and yet nothing is said.

JIM

Okay thanks, Dr. Seuss, I'll make a note of that.

Another chair steps in front of him.

JIM

What? You think some walking chairs are gonna scare me? I've seen plenty of cheap tricks before. I sell real estate, okay!

JIM (cont'd)

I've been to the Cirque Du Soleil, man--

Another chair swoops behind him, scooping him up and in, strapping his arms and legs -- Rocketing him directly in front of the table! Snapping him to a quick, dead halt.

JIM

Oh geez! Okay now ya done it! I guess the gloves are really coming off now! I guess we're playing hardball--

The SOUND of a GREAT STORMY WIND! The candlelight flickers as. . .

THE CRYSTAL BALLS

center sparks a small, brilliant green light. Slowly, the light spirals into a green mist, consuming the ball.

The light shines Jim's fascinated, horrified face as the mist is slowly taking shape, forming into. . .

THE GHOSTLY HEAD of an old Gypsy Woman. Off green and decidedly dead, she snaps her eyes open:

WOMAN

Hello, Mr. Evers. I am Madame Leota.

JIM

Great. And I'm Peter Pan. Look, man, when is this hallucination gonna be over? Do I have to click my heels or something? There's no place like home. There's no place like home. There's--

LEOTA

SILENCE!!!

- Leota's seance table starts to slowly rise, shaking and quivering in the air.

LEOTA

Mr. Evers, heed this warning as you arrive, or you and your family will never leave this mansion alive.

Jim looks at the crystal ball. A beat.

JIM

What's that?

The words loudly ECHO around the room, engulfing it! Jim squints listening to her in deafening agony.

As a VIOLENT WIND blows all around Jim as-- His chair starts levitating with the seance table.

JIM

Ah geez, no, I'd rather stay stay on the ground. Can I stay on the ground, please? I don't like to float--

LEOTA

Serpents and spiders -- tail of a rat, call in the spirits wherever they're at.

Slowly, wisps of swirling white ghosts start materializing from the dark corners, WAILING and MOANING in front of Jim, flying throughout the room. Jim sits quivering:

JIM

There's no place like home. There's no place like home. There's--

LEOTA

Rap on a table -- it's time to respond. Send us a message from somewhere beyond.

A SUDDEN EXPLOSION of wind and light, spinning Jim, hanging him upside down in his chair. He SCREAMS!!!

JIM

Oh I just don't wanna be here any more!

Greenish wind swirls around Leota -- she closes her eyes seeing the prophecy:

LEOTA

You must travel dead horse and aboard a hearse, you, Mr. Evers, must break the curse. Find the key that unlocks the past, or this very night, will be your last.

The raven starts CAWING wildly. Leota's eyes pop open as she begins talking rapidly:

LEOTA

There is great evil in this house, Mr. Evers. He seeks to destroy you!

JIM

Who seeks to destroy me?!

LEOTA

He lies. He lies to you. You must leave this place!

JIM

I wanna leave this place! I wanna leave this place!

LEOTA

Find the key, Mr. Evers, and be away! Be away or be dead!

JIM

What key?!

The straps around his arms and legs change into snakes, crawling all over him.

JIM

Ah geez, here come the snakes. Here come the snakes!

LEOTA

Go, Mr. Evers, release her. Release us all!

Jim falls into the black, SCREAMING--

INT. MANSION CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Silence. The white glowing ball makes its way around the corner and into a maze of corridors, each stretching in an opposite direction.

MEGAN

This is sure one big, freaky house.

MICHAEL

How are we supposed to get back to our room? We didn't leave bread crumbs or anything.

MEGAN

Michael, we're not going back to our room. We're going somewhere.

MICHAEL

Well I think the ball is lost too.

MEGAN

No, it's leading us somewhere. It's definitely. . .

The ball disappears through a large portrait -- a tormented, haunted portrait of "EDWARD GRACEY".

MEGAN

Where'd it go? It just went right through here.

Michael and Megan stare up at the haunted portrait, glaring down at them. Michael backs away scared:

MICHAEL

Ya see. It tricked us. Mom always said we should never follow strange balls of light.

MEGAN

When did she say that?

MICHAEL

Well she didn't say that exactly.

MEGAN

Michael, just relax. Everything's going to be fine. Everything's gonna be just--

Michael backs into a portrait. The wall starts to TRIGGER OPEN. Michael glances back at the portrait -- the man seems to be shaking his head as if to say, "Mistake".

MEGAN

Fine?

As, quick as a heartbeat, the floor drops out from beneath them! Sending them flying down--

A METAL SHUTE

Megan's hair flying straight up, they SCREAM! Jetting down through endless black and into-- THWAP!!!

A BIN OF OLD CLOTHES

dust rises all around them. She turns to Michael lying beside her -- petrified, shivering speechless.

MEGAN

Michael! Michael! Are you okay?!

He glances to her wide-eyed, petrified:

MICHAEL

I told you we shouldn't have left the room.

MEGAN

Well. . . we did. And now we're here.

Megan peeks out of the bin, total darkness:

MEGAN

But where is here?

She reaches back down into Michael's backpack:

MEGAN

Do you have matches in that thing?

Michael reaches into his backpack and rifles through to a first aid kit, holding matches, scissors, gauze, bandages.

MEGAN

Great.

Megan quickly takes the matches and reaches overhead, lighting a lantern. She takes the creaky lantern off its latch and swings it over the bin throwing a dim burnt orange over--

A VAST DUSTY CELLAR

Full of crates, bins, statues, antique storage. Wine racks stretch far off into darkness.

MICHAEL

Oh wow. We are so far beyond breadcrumbs.

Megan hops out of the bin:

MEGAN

Come on.

MICHAEL

Where?

MEGAN

I don't know. But do you wanna just sit in that bin?

MICHAEL

Yes. Yes I just wanna sit in the bin.

Megan starts to walk into the cavernous cellar. The light fading from Michael, reluctantly he follows.

MEGAN

Wow. Would you look at all this stuff?

Megan shines the light past the bins and dusty antiques. She puts down the lantern and begins to sift through a box, picking up a large dusty book. Engraved on the leather cover is a "G". She CREAKS the book open, turning the aging, yellow pages--

Michael cautiously looks around, something catching his eye. He inches closer to a portrait, squinting through his large glasses. . .

THE PAGES OF THE DUSTY BOOK

seem to be tracing the Gracey family history -- Megan's finger follows down the tree -- "EDWARD GRACEY" is last in the long line.

Michael moves closer to the portrait, stopping dead in his tracks -- shocked:

MICHAEL

Megan.

MEGAN

(consumed with the book)

What?

MICHAEL

Megan!

MEGAN

What?!

She turns to Michael's scared expression.

MEGAN

What? What is it now?

Megan walks over to him shining the lantern's orange light on . . . A portrait of a woman in an 17th Century gown. . . The lantern light glows to her face -- The portrait is unmistakably one of Sara.

Michael slowly backs away, scared to death, knocking into a wine rack, tipping it over. The rack tips over and THWACK -- tips into the NEXT RACK and the NEXT and NEXT! Megan jumps back to see the last rack, CRASH heavily into a brick wall. She rushes over to Michael:

MEGAN

Michael! Michael, are you--

VOICE (O.S.)

Oh dear, that nearly killed me! I could have been crushed!

VOICE (O.S.)

Oh get off me, you idiot. How could it possibly crush you?!

The voices continue to bicker as Megan and Michael look over to the DUST RISING.

MEGAN

Um. . . hello.

MICHAEL

No -- Megan.

Megan continues to walk forward, Michael tugging on her shirt. Silence.

MEGAN

Hello.

As PHINEAS -- a plump ghost dressed in a withered old suit jacket and top hat floats right next to Michael. He tips his hat to him:

PHINEAS

(French accent)

BON JOUR!!!

Michael SCREAMS!!!

MICHAEL

G-GGG-GHH--GGHHH--

As EZRA -- a tall, thin ghost with an intelligent, skeletal face and long coat floats over to Michael:

EZRA

Ghost. It's okay, you can say it. It's not a bad word.

Michael SCREAMS again whipping around to be face to face with GUS, a short, stout ghost with a full white beard -- Michael stops stunned. Then continues to SCREAM -- Gus, equally as frightened, starts to SCREAM with him!

Michael rockets back behind his sister.

MEGAN

Who -- who are you?

PHINEAS

Oh well we work here.

(bowing)

I am Phineas, Master Chef.

EZRA

And I am Ezra, the Coachman.

Gus stands quivering behind a box:

GUS

And I'm Gus I--I. . . what do I do again?

EZRA

You're the groundskeeper, you idiot!

GUS

Oh yes! I'm the groundskeeper, you idiot!

MEGAN

And you're -- you're all dead?

PHINEAS

Ah, oui, my little croissant. We are, as you might say -- very much dead.

EZRA

162 years dead. But who's counting?

GUS

We're dead?!

Ezra WHACKS GUS in the head:

EZRA

Snap out of it! Of course we're dead. Did you think you were invisible and blue just because you weren't feeling well?!

PHINEAS

Enough, please -- we have guests. Tell us, my young baguettes, are you here to break the curse?!

EZRA

Oh good point! Do you know how to break the curse?!

The ghosts look on the kids with great anticipation. A beat.

MEGAN

. . . What curse?

EZRA

Oh fantastic. That's just what we need. More people who don't know anything.

Ezra walks away disappointed as Phineas floats over to them:

PHINEAS

Ah, the curse that haunts this mansion, Mademoiselle. One night, long ago delivered Elizabeth's letter to the master and then on that night she, she--

(breaking down in tears)

Oh I can not talk about it.

GUS

It was terrible.

PHINEAS

She died for love! Amor!!! And the house
fell under the blackest of spells.

EZRA

Yes, yes black spell. And now we're trapped
in this house and we don't know how to lift
it. We thought that you might know. But so
much for that dream.

MEGAN

So. . .

Michael stands quivering.

MEGAN

Who's Elizabeth?

PHINEAS

Only our most beloved friend. And a more
lovely creature you will never find. She was
the very life of this house. And now she is,
she is gone! Gone!!!

Phineas breaks into tears.

EZRA

Oh would please stop your incessant
blubbering. She's been gone for 162 years!
Get over it.

PHINEAS

But you loved her too!

EZRA

I--well I--I respected her certainly. She
was, she was an interesting
conversationalist. She had a certain wit,
yes. An unspoken charm--

Ezra tries to discreetly wipe away a tear:

EZRA

But there's no reason to get sentimental.

PHINEAS

Oh you loved her as I did, you cold fish!

GUS (O.S.)

She would help me when I would get yelled at.

They turn to Gus, standing scared in the corner.

GUS

She was so nice to me. She was just so nice!

PHINEAS

Oui, Master Edward was so devastated with her loss.

MEGAN

Wait a second -- wait a second. Edward Gracey?

Phineas floats over to the portrait of Sara:

PHINEAS

Oui. She was so very beautiful.

Michael and Megan stare in shock as we PUSH IN on THE PORTRAIT. . .

INT. MUSIC ROOM, CONSERVATORY - NIGHT

Sara is led into a large music room. Behind is an enormous glass conservatory, DEAD BLACK FLOWERS lace the glass walls. Lightning flashes from the outside as rain runs down the conservatory glass.

SARA

My god -- when was the last time anyone was here?

GRACEY

Not for a very long time.

Gracey watches Sara step into the room:

GRACEY

This is where he proposed to her.

SARA

Who?

A long beat. Gracey looks up at the rain cascading down the conservatory glass. . .

GRACEY

The story of this house, Sara. The story that haunts these walls.

RUMBLING THUNDER turns into a SCREAM as. . .

INT. MANSION, HALLWAY CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The vast WALL OF JUDGEMENT stares down as -- Jim quickly, nervously skitters down the hallway. The painting seems to be watching him.

JIM

Okay I am gonna get the kids and get Sara and we are gonna check out of this hallucination. I don't care about the rain! I like the rain!

Jim gets to another hallway -- it seems as though, he just came down that way. All the corridors seem the same.

JIM

Man, why don't they have a stupid directory in this place?!

(rushing down a hallway)

You are here! You are here with a little red X. That's all! It's not much to--

Jim comes across the same haunting portrait of "EDWARD GRACEY". Jim backs away from the portrait, a TRIGGERING SOUND is heard. . .

JIM

Oh geez.

Jim drops fast!

INT. CELLAR - LATE NIGHT

A SCREAM GROWS from behind! As Jim flies out the SHUTE, slamming hard into the bin. He pops up covered in an 17th century gown:

JIM

Okay I am getting sick and I am getting tired of the walls in this place!!!

MICHAEL

Dad!

Megan and Michael rush over to Jim as he is flipping the dress off him and trying to hop out of the bin:

JIM

Megan! Michael! Get your things! We're leaving! We're leaving now! Everything's gonna be fine. We are just gonna pack up our things and we are gonna go. I don't care about the rain. So we get a little wet. But we are getting outta here!

MEGAN

How?!

JIM

I don't know we'll probably lean on a disappearing wall or get sucked through a vent or vanish through a ceiling or--

The ghosts float next to Jim:

EZRA

Or you could try the stairs? They're right over there.

Jim glances at the three ghosts:

JIM

Great. Thanks.

EZRA

Not a problem.

Jim stops. Putting his arms around the kids, walking them quickly towards the stairs:

JIM

Come on, kids. Daddy's having more hallucinations.

MEGAN

About the ghosts?

Jim stops looking at Megan:

JIM

You mean you can see them too?!

Phineas pops in front of Jim:

PHINEAS

Of course she can, Monsieur. We are merely ectoplasmic apparitions. As in we float through the afterlife bound to wander this mansion. . .

(breaking down)

Cursed! Cursed for all eternity!

JIM

Hey! Did I ask you?! And stop haunting me! I didn't ask for you or your ectoplasm so just get out of my way!

EZRA

Please, please. Can we not quarrel? We're all obviously under a lot of strain. We would like to break the curse, you are in mortal danger. It's a draining time--

Jim pushes past them, dragging Megan and Michael.

JIM

Hey, whatever, dead man. That's not my problem!

Jim starts storming towards the stairs. Megan tries to stop him:

MEGAN

But, Dad, we have to help them!!!

JIM

Look, Megan, we are not helping anybody but ourselves. Okay. I'm sorry that your little play friends here are dead but that's their problem.

He ushers them quickly along.

MEGAN

But they're in trouble!

JIM

Megan, we're in trouble! Can we concentrate on helping us first!

MEGAN

Dad you only ever concentrate on helping yourself!

JIM

Yes!!! Because I'm the guy who has to live with me every day! And this head of a gypsy woman told me if we don't get out of here soon we're all gonna be doomed!

The three ghosts fly directly in front of Jim.

EZRA

Oh, what did she say exactly?! Did she say anything about a curse?!

PHINEAS

Was she about so high?

EZRA

Did she say anything about breaking the
curse?!

PHINEAS

Head in a ball?

GUS

Did she say anything about helping me?!

PHINEAS

Off green--

JIM

No! She didn't say anything, okay! Nothing!
She was a mute! Now let's get out of here.

Jim starts walking -- the ghosts float in front of him:

EZRA

No wait! Did she tell you how to break the
curse! We have to go back to see her!

Jim drags the kids up the stairs:

JIM

Oh no, you have to go back and see her! If
you think I'm going back there you're nuts!

MEGAN

But Dad--

JIM

Floating around a room upside down!

MEGAN

Dad!

JIM

Snakes jumping out at me! More dead people!
No thanks!!!

Jim gets to the top of the stairs, bursting into--

A PRIVATE ART STUDIO

full of canvasses -- He stops cold staring at the canvasses,
laying on the floor, up on easels, on the walls. . .
Lightning flashes them, they are all portraits of Sara in
17th century attire.

MICHAEL

Mom's in trouble.

JIM
 (stunned)
 . . . What kinda trouble?

THUNDER RUMBLES HEAVY over. . .

GRACEY (V.O.)
 She came to this house a young girl. . .

INT. MUSIC ROOM, CONSERVATORY - NIGHT

Gracey walks around the conservatory with Sara, he stares at the black flowers. . .

GRACEY
 Her father lost to the war. And it was here,
 in this house, that she thrived. . .

The dead flowers DISSOLVING TO GREEN. Beautiful, amber sunlight floods the room. . . In the SLOW MOTION distance, a little boy and girl run around the conservatory, laughing, playing.

GRACEY (V.O.)
 Where she was schooled and grew into a most beautiful, young woman.

A distant ECHO -- a woman laughs, running away in the conservatory. . .

GRACEY (V.O.)
 And it was here -- in this house, she fell in love. Deeply, madly in love.

The young woman is caught from behind and kissed by a handsome young man. . . They laugh together. . .

GRACEY (V.O.)
 But it was a love which could not be.

The rain reflects off of Sara's face, listening intently.

GRACEY
 For she fell in love with the very heir to the house of Gracey. He was of noble blood and she was -- she was but a commoner. It simply could not be. But it did not matter to him. He pleaded with her to run away with him, run away from this house, run away from their lives, that their love would always sustain them. . .

A beat. Gracey turns back to Sara. Only the rain.

GRACEY

She told him she would give her reply the next evening, the night of the grand masquerade ball. She was to send him a letter. . .

We hear DISTANT ECHOES of a WALTZ. . .

A woman is writing a letter at a desk as we DISSOLVE TO -- a man in a porcelain mask reading it, shaking, putting his hands on the fireplace mantel to steady himself:

GRACEY (V.O.)

She loved him so deeply, so dearly -- she could not, she would not, be the reason for giving away his life, his family name. But she could not live without him.

The man runs through the shadows of the hall. . .

GRACEY (V.O.)

He rushed to stop her, but it was too late.

He throws himself on her body, taking her in his arms, crying. . .

GRACEY (V.O.)

He found her lying on the gallery floor. . . He was -- devastated. Slipping deeper and deeper into the darkness. Becoming obsessed with the notion of somehow bringing her back, raising her from the very dead.

The seance room -- Leota feels her hands around her crystal ball:

GRACEY (V.O.)

Obsessed with the black arts, the ways of sorcery and dark magic -- But no matter how he would try, he could not raise her. And yet, at night, he could still hear her broken heart beat. It drove him to madness. And he cursed this mansion, cursing it until his one true love would at last return. Cursing it and all who would ever dare enter.

Sara stares at Gracey lost in the past, caressing the black flowers. Just the sound of the rain. Sara snaps out of the reverie of the tale:

SARA

That's. . . quite a story.

Gracey holds up a finger:

GRACEY

If you listen -- you can still hear her
broken heart beat.

Distant HEARTBEATS SOUND as the image becomes GLASSY. . .
PULLING OUT revealing the image of Gracey in a CRYSTAL
BALL. . .

INT. MANSION, SEANCE ROOM - NIGHT

Jim and the kids stand stunned.

JIM

Hey! Hey get away from my wife! Sara he's
dead! Dead!

Jim starts SLAPPING the CRYSTAL BALL.

JIM

Hey!!!

PHINEAS

It is amazing. She looks just like her. And
look how wonderful they look together.

JIM

What are you talking about? He's dead!

PHINEAS

Well nobody is perfect, Monsieur. I am just
saying they look cute together.

MEGAN

Well maybe Mom would be happier with him.

JIM

Excuse me?!

Leota's head fades back into the ball:

LEOTA

Silver and black, shades of grey-- the
mystery fades deep, night into day.

Angry, Jim turns back to the ghosts:

JIM

You see! You see what I've been dealing
with?!

(yelling at the ball)

Stop with the gibberish, woman! Where's
Sara?! Where is she?!

Gus nudges Jim.

GUS

Oooh, and ask her if she sees romance in my future.

EZRA

No ask her about the curse?! How do we break the curse?!

JIM

Would you shut up! We gotta get outta here before we start levitating. I'm telling--

A GREENISH WIND swirls slowly around them:

JIM

Oh no. Here we go. Green wind.

Leota closes her eyes.

JIM

Ah geez -- now she's closing her eyes. Hang onto something.

LEOTA

For your family to save, you must dig deep, deep into the grave.

Michael gulps:

MICHAEL

Grave?

LEOTA

Enter the tomb with no name under the great dead oak, and travel down deep under the ground, and there you will find the key that must be found.

JIM

Is somebody writing this down?

The ghosts pat themselves for a pen--

LEOTA

Find the black crypt that bears his name or soon your fate will be the same.

JIM

Great. Can you draw us a map or something?

LEOTA

The key must be found, Mr. Evers.

JIM

Okay so let me get this straight. We get the key and the key will get us outta here?! Right?!

LEOTA

Yes! Yes! The key is the answer to all!

THUNDER CRASHES as. . .

INT. CELLAR CORRIDOR

Jim and the kids run to the dead end of a hallway:

JIM

Man, where are the doors?! What's with this place?! Michael come here.

Michael walks over to him, Jim reaches in his backpack, grabbing Leota's crystal ball:

JIM

How do we get out of here?

LEOTA

Serpents and snakes, birds of a feather--

Jim shakes it again:

JIM

This isn't gonna work, if we don't work together! Aw man -- now you got me doing it!!! Stop with the rhyming okay! And just tell us how we get out of here?!

He shakes the ball too hard. A blue triangle floats into view, reading: "A SOLUTION WILL PRESENT ITSELF"

JIM

Solution?! What solution?!

Down the cellar, a LOUD RUMBLING can begin to be heard. It starts growing steadier in volume:

MICHAEL

Oh boy. I don't think I'm gonna like this solution.

A great LOUD WHINNY is heard in the distance as a black hearse whips into view at the far end of the cellar, SMASHING and CRASHING into crates and statues, RUMBLING towards Jim and the kids.

Ezra, sitting on the drivers bench, tries to control the reigns on the stampeding invisible ghost horse, as it kicks up dust all through the cellar.

EZRA

Whoa!!! Whoa!!! Nellie!!! Whoa!!!

Pulling back, Ezra manages to bring the horse to a SNORTING stop. The invisible horses breath blowing the hair back and forth on Megan's head. Breathing hard, Ezra tips his hat:

EZRA

Did somebody call for a coach?

PHINEAS

Well, what took you so long?

EZRA

Sorry. Forgot where I parked her? It's been a while.

Phineas and Gus pile onto the back of the hearse. Jim and the kids stare up at them.

EZRA

Well? What are you waiting for? There's not exactly a hearse that comes by every fifteen minutes you know.

JIM

Alright come on.

Megan climbs aboard, Jim gives Michael a boost. He climbs aboard:

JIM

You sure you can drive this thing?

EZRA

Oh don't be ridiculous. I am a highly experienced coachman.

(pulling down his cap)

Next stop -- graveyard.

Ezra gives the invisible horse a gentle flick on the reigns -- the horse NEIGHS and REARS BACK WILDLY -- tilting the hearse back recklessly. Michael is quickly jilted, about to fall off as Jim grabs Michael by the shirt as the horse starts to gallop through the cellar--

JIM

Michael, hang on! I got ya! I got ya!

Michael looks down, his feet dragging on the floor as the horse builds a head of steam and kicks up off the ground and flies towards the ceiling--

MICHAEL

Dad!!!

JIM

Trust me, Michael!

Michael looks up to his Dad, petrified:

JIM

I won't let you fall!

Michael closes his eyes as manages to yank Michael in--

JIM

Got ya!

Just as the horse bursts through the ceiling!

Flying high into the second story and directly towards a huge chandelier! Everybody SCREAMS!!! As the horse slows to arc and quickly jets back down towards the marble floor! The horse pulling up at the last second and galloping hard down the hallway!

The hearse banging off the walls, knocking down portraits at a quick clip!

JIM

Hey, man, I thought you said you could drive this thing?!

EZRA

Excuse me, sir, but I seem to remember something about being dead for 162 years! I'm just a little out of practice!

PHINEAS

Oh who are you kidding?! You were always miserable!

The hearse rushes clips off a statue rumbling past a hallway--

PHINEAS

And where are you going? Take a left! It's much faster if you take the main corridor.

EZRA

Excuse me, but do I tell you how to cook?

PHINEAS

No. Because I know how to cook!

EZRA

Oh and just what is that supposed to mean?!

PHINEAS

What do you think it means, you fool!

They are getting dangerously close to a wall!

JIM

Hey! Hey! Keep your eyes on the road!

Ezra swerves at the last second.

GUS

(covering his eyes)

Oh my, tell me when it's over!

EZRA

Why don't you both just keep quiet! I know exactly where I'm going!

Ezra holds out his arm signaling a left as he whips the hearse careening through the kitchen -- out the doors and into -- the trophy room -- the billiard room and into another long corridor and into a pair of French double doors -- Flying into COMPLETE BLACK! They SCREAM!!!

EZRA (O.S.)

Oh dear. I forgot they were remodeling this wing.

JIM (O.S.)

Did you idiots ever use to live here?!

The SOUND of a MATCH STRIKING. Phineas lights the hearse oil lantern. Giving them some light.

PHINEAS

There we go. That is better.

Phineas smiles until he sees an ARMY OF BATS rushing at them!

JIM

Or not.

Jim and the kids SCREAM trying to swat away the oncoming bats.

GUS

(scared)

I think I liked this room the way it was before.

Phineas looks at Gus as the hearse bangs out the second set of double doors -- The bats flying away from them as the hearse swoops over the second floor and into the entry hall--

WHOOSHING through the ARMORY -- The knights of armor tilting over from the passing wind, CRASHING to the floor as--

The hearse rumbles around to the end of the main corridor and whips around to a stop -- flinging Jim heavily off into the wall. The invisible horse breathing heavy. A beat.

JIM (O.S.)

(from the floor)

Well I would hate to see what would happen if you couldn't drive it!

PHINEAS

What are we doing here?

EZRA

I--I rightly don't--

Leota says something MUFFLED through Michael's bag. Phineas looks down at the bag:

PHINEAS

What is it, my crystal sunshine?

Michael pulls out Leota into view:

LEOTA

A full steam of speed you must head, to burst through the wall, the wall of the dead.

EZRA

She's always so chipper and full of good news. You have to love her spirit.

Jim gets back on the hearse in shock:

JIM

And that wasn't a full head of steam?!

The ghost horse kicks his invisible hoof pawing bull-like onto the corridor floor, kicking up dust.

PHINEAS

I suppose no.

Pulling down his hat, grabbing tightly onto the reins, staring down at the long end of the corridor:

EZRA

I would hold on if I were you. I think this might be a bit close.

Jim pulls Megan and Michael close to him as the horse WHINNIES and start to charge, rumbling down the corridor, building speed--

The WIND is WHIPPING by Jim and the kids--

MICHAEL

I don't want to be here any more! I don't want to be here any more!

GUS

Oh, tell me when it's over!

As the horse charges towards--

A HUGE FLOOR TO CEILING MURAL

at the end of the hall. The ghosts and ghouls in the painting float all around it, CACKLING as-- The horse builds steam. Through the wind:

EZRA

I really hope we're fast enough! I don't know if we're going fast enough!

JIM

Well we're about to find out!

But fast enough or not -- they charge directly at the painting. Everyone closing their eyes before impact as they plow right into the painting with a ghostly WHOOSH-- Their SCREAMS disappear as--

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Silence. A long beat until, the hearse re-appears through the stone wall, their SCREAMS continuing as they rocket into. . .

THE GRAVEYARD

The hearse flying down, hitting the cobbled and broken cemetery road hard, careening up and down over the broken stones-- The family bouncing, jittering to and fro, Jim holding onto Megan and Michael for dear life as--

JIM

(ferociously jiggling)

Hey busdriver -- this is our stop! We want out! Out!

The hearse dips furiously down the cobbled path, getting further and further into the cemetery -- Ezra pulling hard on the reins--

EZRA

Whoa!!! Whoa, girl!!! Whoa!!!

He gives the reins a hard yank, swerving the hearse wildly into the graveyard, THUMPING over GRAVESTONES, as Ezra pulls back on the reins hard--

EZRA

WHOA!!!

The horse comes to a ROARING, WHEEZING halt! The hearse swinging around behind it -- SLAMMING HARD into a GIANT ANGEL STATUE! The statue tips, swaying high above them-- Jim looks on as it wavers-- Quickly grabbing the reins:

JIM

Giddy!!!

The horse jets forward a couple of feet as the statue falls, just missing the hearse, SPLATTING HARD into the wet mud. The white statue dust rising all around them. A beat.

EZRA

This stop. Graveyard.

INT. MANSION, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Candlelight flickers into a dark room as Gracey leads the way, Sara follows him. Gracey steps full inside, looking at the room:

GRACEY

This was her room.

Sara stares at the beautiful, elegant, simple decor -- taking it in as Gracey walks around the room, lighting candles. Sara walks to a dusty nightstand table. She looks at the embroidered tablecloth; an old delicately painted handbrush; a HANDCARVED MUSIC BOX -- she feels the box with her fingers--

She cracks it open. . . a HAUNTING MELODY, almost a lullaby, ECHOES out of it. She listens to its soothing chords. As Gracey approaches from behind, standing close behind her:

GRACEY

He made that for her.

SARA

So beautiful.

She listens to the MUSIC letting it wash over her.

SARA

It's amazing to feel so much for someone.

GRACEY

What's wrong? There's something in your voice, Sara.

She lowers her head, closing her eyes as the music plays.

GRACEY

What? What is it?

He approaches her, standing very close to her:

GRACEY

Is it something you want to tell me? . . .
Something about Jim?

She nods, staring into his eyes. It's like he knows her.

SARA

We once felt so much for each other but -- at
this point. . . I'm pretty sure he's
forgotten all about that. It's like. . .
it's like he's some kind of memory to me.

GRACEY

Then -- if you don't mind my saying, he is
the most foolish man who ever lived.

Sara stares at Gracey for a moment.

SARA

No, I don't mind.

Silent lightning flashes from outside -- the distant SOUND
of the RAIN.

SARA

What was her name, Mr. Gracey?

Gracey stares at her intensely--

SARA

The woman from the story.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

The full harvest moon hangs low. Fog rises above a sea of tombstones. . .

As Jim, the kids and the ghosts make their way through the muddy, spooky ground. Jim looks at his expensive shoes sinking into the mud:

JIM

Man, these were my new Italian loafers.

EZRA

Well now they're your new Italian galoshes.

JIM

Uh huh, you're just lucky you're dead, dead man. So where is this place? Gypsy? Hey weird Gypsy!

Michael checks in his bag, but she's not there:

MICHAEL

I dunno. She musta fell out.

JIM

Great. Great! So where do we go now?!
(turning back to the
ghosts)
Was anybody paying attention?

EZRA

Yes, yes. I believe she said something about making a left at an oak tree. Now I wonder if she meant Spanish oak or Louisiana oak. Interesting story actually--

MEGAN

No. . . she said, she said the tomb with no name under the great dead oak.

Jim looks around -- there are dead oak trees everywhere.

JIM

Fantastic. I'm glad she was so specific. I told her to draw us a map! I told her!

PHINEAS

Okay here is the new plan. We will divide and conquer! We will go this way. You will go that way! Anybody sees anything -- holler.

Gus SCREAMS!

PHINEAS

WHAT?! WHAT?!

GUS

(meekly)

. . . I thought I saw something.

Phineas quickly FRENCH DOUBLE SLAPS Gus--

PHINEAS

Oh please! Stop behaving like a little bay-bee! You are an embarrassment to the dead people everywhere.

The ghosts float away bickering, flying right past. . .

A GIANT OMINOUS DEAD OAK

monsterous and dead, hanging over a rounded stone mausoleum. Jim walks forward, staring at it in awe.

JIM

Are you seeing what I'm seeing?

MEGAN

I think so.

Jim walks towards the mausoleum, Michael hiding behind his Dad. The hanging oak seeming to be staring at them.

Stepping closer, the two torches on both sides of the doors ignite into two eternal flames. Jim swallows for a second, taking a deep breath, he moves forward:

JIM

Alright. Well let's get this stupid key and get--

Jim opens the door as literally hundreds of obscenely LARGE SPIDERS skitter out past the feet of Jim and Megan, climbing up the mausoleum walls. Jim grits his teeth.

JIM

Huh. Seems to be a couple of bugs. How nice. Michael, come on.

Michael stands frozen above, staring at the multitude of spiders. He quickly shakes his head.

JIM

Come on, Michael. There's nothing to be afraid of.

Michael shoots him a glance as if he were insane.

JIM

Okay maybe there's a couple of things to be afraid of. But this is no time to be scared. You're a man now. You're ten remember.

MICHAEL

I just turned ten. I'm still getting used to it.

Jim stares at Michael with concern.

JIM

Are you sure you wanna stay here?

Michael nods his head emphatically:

JIM

Okay then just stay there and don't move. We'll be right back.

Jim walks into the mausoleum as. . .

HIGH ABOVE IN THE BACKGROUND

a silhouetted figure stands watching from a mansion window.

REVERSE TO REVEAL

Ramsley watching the family far below in the cemetery.

INT. MAUSOLEUM, ANTECHAMBER - NIGHT

The dark of the concrete mausoleum, lit only by the torchlight. Megan walks in further, blowing the dust off the antechamber door:

MEGAN

It's an inscription.

Jim moves in with the torch to get a better look. It is inscribed in Latin.

JIM

Great. Latin. Why are things like this always in Latin? Alright not a problem. I used to know some pig latin--
(beginning to read)
Ixnay-on-the-ebay--

MEGAN (O.S.)

"Beware all who--"

Jim turns to Megan who is slowly translating the inscription:

MEGAN

"All who. . . enter. Here lies the passage.
. . . to the dead."

Jim stares at Megan, shocked.

JIM

You speak Latin?

MEGAN

I studied it for three years, Dad. You
thought it was dumb, remember? You said it
was a dead language.

Jim looks around at the dank mausoleum. Jars of ashes
lining the concrete walls.

JIM

Yeah, well -- I guess I was wrong on that
one. Alright let's get--

Jim attempts to push down the long metal handle on the
chamber door. It's stuck.

JIM

Let's get--

With all his might Jim struggles, turning bright red.

JIM

Let's get--

He can't do it, breaking away. Stepping back, he puts his
hands on his knees, breathing hard:

JIM

Okay we're not getting anywhere. It's not
budging--it's not--

Megan steps up to it and tries the door with all her might.

JIM

Moving at all--

The door MOANS. . . and POPS! Megan's done it. The door
slowly jars open. MOANING as though it hadn't been touched
in a thousand years.

SQUEALING, the door stops and CRACKS open. Jim looks at
Megan shocked for a beat, embarrassed.

JIM

Sure. Now that I loosened it for ya.

Megan rolls her eyes, shaking her head, grabbing the torch--

INT. LOWER MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

Eternal flames simmer alive as Jim and Megan walk down the stone stairs into the vast circular crumbling tomb. Coffins are stacked one on top of each other along the walls. Other, larger crypts, lay on the floor submerged in rain water. Only the coffin tops visible.

JIM

Mmmm. Smells really refreshing down here. They must use potpourri.

MEGAN

The rain water seaped in.

JIM

Adding to the lovely scent. Alright what did the gypsy say again?

MEGAN

Find the black crypt that bears his name or soon your fate will be the same.

In the center of the mausoleum sits ONE LARGE BLACK CRYPT on a raised circular platform -- Four large stone beams surrounding it.

JIM

Okay. I think that one might be it.

MEGAN

Good hunch, Dad. Come on.

Megan takes a jump, jumping onto the top of the first submerged coffin. She slides SQUAKING on the SLICK TOP about to fall into the water-- Jim grimaces:

JIM

Watch it, watch it.

Megan quickly throws out her arms, catching her balance. Walking along the slippery coffin top. At the end of one -- she leaps to the next. She turns back to Jim who is still standing there:

MEGAN

Well? Come on.

JIM

Right. Right. Come on. Alright here we go.

Jim straightens his tie, rubbing his hands together and taking a jump and landing on the coffin -- only to slide right off and directly into the muddy, murky water with a giant SPLASH! He comes up for air, drenched:

JIM

Man!

A skull bobs up beside him. He SCREAMS! SPLASHING his way through the water, other skulls pop out of the water, he SCREAMS, running up to the stone steps to the raised platform:

JIM

Okay! Now I am officially sick of this place!

He shakes himself off:

JIM

Drenched to the bone. Skulls popping up everywhere. This is not why I got into the real estate business! You know why I got into the real estate business?!

MEGAN

Yeah. To work with mom, remember. So you two could always be together. Do you remember why you got in the real estate business?!

JIM

Yeah. So I could provide for my family, Megan!

MEGAN

Yeah, great. And ignore them in every other way.

JIM

(shocked)

What?

MEGAN

Dad, are you really so blind? We never see you! You're like some kind of phantom to us. It's like we don't even have a Dad. Just some guy who we get a glimpse of every now and again. And Mom -- Mom, she loves you so much, does everything for you, but you completely take her for granted in every way and every situation.

MEGAN (cont'd)

And when you let her down, or me down or Michael down. Which is basically all the time. She just sits in her room and cries.

Jim takes this in, hurting. A beat.

JIM

She cries?

MEGAN

Yeah, Dad. She doesn't want anyone to know, but she does. If you paid a little attention to her, maybe you'd notice those things.

JIM

(softer, hurt)

I pay attention.

MEGAN

Dad you don't pay attention to anything but yourself! If you didn't we wouldn't be here right--

Jim glances at Megan staring at something:

JIM

What?

Megan points to the name on the tomb -- It reads, "JAMES RAMSLEY, 1796 - 1850". . .

MEGAN

Great.

INT. PORTRAIT GALLERY - NIGHT

Ramsley opens the double doors as Sara and Gracey enter the gallery, dimly lit by flickering candlelight. The portraits, minus one, hang on the wall staring down at them. The room is otherwise back to normal.

Ramsley smiles at Gracey, closing the double doors. Sara stares at a portrait of Gracey hanging on the wall.

GRACEY (O.S.)

And this, this is where the story ends.

SARA

Here? Why here?

Gracey stares uncomfortably at her, obviously pained.

GRACEY

Do you not remember? Do you not remember at all?

Sara smiles at him, confused:

SARA

Remember what?

Gracey lowers his head. A beat.

GRACEY

I thought certain bringing you here -- of all places, would help you remember.

Sara is looking around, getting clearly uncomfortable:

SARA

What are you talking about?

GRACEY

This is where it happened?

Sara doesn't even know if she wants to ask:

SARA

Where -- what happened?

Gracey turns, staring at her with intensity:

GRACEY

Where you died -- my love.

INT. INNER MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

The CRYPT slowly CREAKS open. Jim looks at Megan as they inch forward. Jim swallows, slowly putting his hand on the crypt lid, expecting the worse. Taking a deep breath, he lifts the stone lid, revealing. . .

A SKELETON lying peacefully in a dusty suit. Megan shines the flame closer, revealing a skeleton key, clamped in his bony hand.

MEGAN

Look. The key.

JIM

A skeleton key. Sure. Why would it possibly be anything else? Okay, stand back.

MEGAN

Why?

Jim thinks for a second.

JIM

I don't know. But just -- get ready.

Jim's shaking hand reaches into the crypt, his eyes half open as he carefully slides the key from the skeleton's hand. Megan holding her breath. As Jim pulls the key out of the crypt.

He breaths heavy, smiling. Holding the key.

JIM

Well, that wasn't so hard, was it?

A DOOR is heard SLAMMING SHUT from above.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

The outer mausoleum door locks shut from outside. Michael looks at the door confused as. . .

INT. LOWER MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

Jim looks up the stairs:

JIM

Michael?

A BONY HAND JETS UP grabbing Jim by the throat!

Megan SCREAMS! As the skeleton climbs out of his casket, WHACKING the key out of Jim's hand with his other hand.

The key skitters across the stone floor, disappearing into the murky rain water. The skeleton throws Jim to the ground, strangling him!

MEGAN

Dad!

JIM

(muffled through
strangling)

Get the key! Get the key!

Megan turns, quickly jumps into the dirty water, feeling down for the key -- Bones start floating up all around her as--

INT. PORTRAIT GALLERY - NIGHT

Sara staggers back away from Gracey as he speaks to her, his heart breaking, tears coming down his face:

GRACEY

You died for me, my love, so many years ago.
And now -- you have finally returned. You
have returned to me--

She runs away from him, trying to get out--

GRACEY

Why do you not remember?! You were my world!
My life! And I have loved you in death as I
have in life!

Sara tries to escape the room but the DOORS SLAM SHUT!

GRACEY

The sun has died a thousand times but I have
never stopped loving you! And now, after an
eternity -- we can be together. We will
finally be together!

Sara shakes in fear, backing away:

SARA

I'm not her! I don't know what you're
talking about?!

He painfully SWIPES THE BOOKS from the table--

GRACEY

No! You are her returned! You must be!

Sara is trying to escape but there is no way out. She turns
back to Gracey scared as he steps towards, she backs away:

GRACEY

Can you not sense it?! Search your heart!
Search your heart! I am your one true love!
And now -- we will be together. There is
nothing stopping us now.

Sara spins to the portrait of Gracey -- it has morphed into
a skeleton. She SCREAMS as. . .

INT. MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

Jim is struggling with his own skeleton -- the skeleton
WAILS an UNHOLY MOAN. Jim cringes in disgust, managing to
shove the skeleton off of him, grabbing him by the suit,
throwing him into a column and hurling him back in his
coffin! He slams the lid!

The skeleton tries to push his way out -- Jim holds down the lid with all his might. He turns back to Megan:

JIM

Did you get the key?!

MEGAN

I'm looking! I'm looking!

SMASH! Something MOANS! They look to the crypts on the floor -- The lids are trying to be pushed off from the skeletons inside.

JIM

Well look faster!

MEGAN

Do you want to get down here and help?!

JIM

Yeah, I'm just a little busy up here!

Megan digs ferociously in the water. She shakes her head, clenching her teeth:

MEGAN

Oh I don't want to do this--

But she holds her breath, going--

UNDER THE RAIN WATER

Underwater silence. . . as Megan looks through a myriad of bones covering the mausoleum floor. Under the water, skeletons start swimming towards her as she scours the floor as quick as she can. A few feet away, the key rests peacefully on the ground, she kicks over to it, grabbing it.

She pops up from underneath the water, PANTING:

MEGAN

Got it!

An UNHOLY MOAN! A skeleton leaps on her from behind! Jim looks on in horror:

JIM

Noo!!!

Jim lets go of the lid as his skeleton escapes, tackling Jim to the ground. The other crypt lids, continue to be jolted from the inside. Megan SCREAMS as--

Jim turns over, angered, watching Megan struggling. He clenches his teeth and with a YELL, throws the skeleton hard into the stone column

As Megan's skeleton grabs the key from her hand -- WAILING in VICTORY!

JIM (O.S.)

Hey! Ugly!

The skeleton turns to Jim -- as, using a torch as a bat, Jim swats his skeleton's skull clean off.

JIM

Don't touch my daughter.

Jim rushes over to Megan, ripping the arm holding the key right out of skeleton's socket. He grabs Megan with the other hand and races, SPLASHING through the WATER as--

The crypts on the floor start opening, grabbing for them as they pass. Megan SCREAMS as--

Jim closes a coffin being opened as the jump for the stairs running up to outer mausoleum and to the locked door. Jim tries the lock but nothing.

JIM

It's locked from the outside. Not good.

Skeletal MOANS behind them.

JIM

Not good.

MEGAN

You know I gotta hand it to ya, Dad. You were right.

JIM

Yeah. About what?

MEGAN

This is some serious quality time with the family.

Quickly he turns to Megan, handing her the skeletal arm:

JIM

Absolutely. Hold this.

Running back down the stairs -- he reaches some CRUMBLING STONES at the base of the stairs. He pushes against them with all his might. BANGING!

The coffins on the sides of the walls, start to be pried open. Jim shakes his head:

JIM

Oh. Really not good.

Pushing harder, the stones start to give way, tumbling down, creating a barrier. Jim runs back up the stairs as Megan is calling for Michael, BANGING on the DOOR!

MEGAN

Michael! Can you hear me?! Michael! Listen
I need you to open the door! Michael!

EXT. MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

Michael hears his sister, looking grimly at door, it is crawling with spiders.

INT. MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

Jim rushes back up the stairs.

JIM

Any luck?

MEGAN

Michael's our only chance.

JIM

Michael?! Michael?! Can you hear me?! This
is your father!

MICHAEL

(scared stiff)

I can hear you.

JIM

Michael, listen to me, this is very
important. You have to open this door. It's
locked from the outside!

MICHAEL

I can't.

The skeleton WAIL from behind, CLAWING at the STONES. Jim looks back at them and quickly to the door:

JIM

Yes you can! Trust me! You can. Just relax
and focus.

Shaking, Michael walks to the door. The spiders are everywhere.

MICHAEL

I can't! There's spiders everywhere!

JIM

Michael, listen to me, you're ten now.
You're a man now. I know you can do this,
Michael. I believe in you. I believe in
you. You're my son.

Michael stares at the door determined. Clenching his teeth, holding his breath and closing eyes, Michael steps forward into the spiders. They begin crawling all over him-- As he sticks his quivering hand into the mass. They crawl right up his arm--

He feels for the lock, shaking--

THE MAUSOLEUM

The skeletons have broken down the STONE with a CRASH!

MEGAN

Dad! They're coming!!!

Jim turns quickly back to the mausoleum door:

JIM

Michael listen to me! Just relax and focus!
You can do this! I know you can do this!

MICHAEL

I can't!

JIM

Trust me, Michael. You can. . . Trust me.

Michael is feeling for it as--

The skeletons climb over one another, coming up the mausoleum stairs.

Michael CLICKS THE LOCK! The door pops open. And Jim and Megan come running out, SLAMMING the DOOR SHUT! Jim picks up Michael and quickly carries him away.

Putting him down and flicking the spiders off of him. He hugs his shaking son hard:

JIM

Oh, my brave little man. My tough little man.

They hug hard as a family. A long beat. Jim finally stands:

JIM

Alright now lets get out of here.

Megan stares at him -- Jim stares at her, renewed:

JIM

All of us.

The three ghosts float over to them:

PHINEAS

We can't find the tomb anywhere. We think we might be in the wrong cemetery.

Jim just stares at him as Gus holds up Leota's ball:

GUS

But we found the gypsy!

EZRA

She was in a divot!

Jim and the kids rush up to her:

JIM

Hey, fortune lady, alright we got the key -- now where's the door to get Sara out?!

LEOTA

Good! Now you must open the trunk!

Jim stares at her shocked.

JIM

Trunk?! -- Trunk?! What are you talking about?! You never said anything about any trunk!!!

LEOTA

But hurry! You must open the trunk before the thirteenth hour!

JIM

Thirteenth hour?! Man, you said get the key! I get the key and now you're telling me trunk before the thirteenth hour?! The key is the answer to all, remember?!

LEOTA

Open it! Reveal the truth, Mr. Evers! Reveal the truth before it is too late!

INT. MANSION, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gracey stands, looking into the CRACKLING FIREPLACE, deep in thought.

GRACEY

She does not remember. What if it is truly not her?

Ramsley stands beside him, watching:

RAMSLEY

It is her, sir. The gypsy woman predicted her return. And now the time has come.

Ramsley looks on Gracey with fatherly concern, straightening Gracey's tie:

RAMSLEY

You had better get ready. The hour approaches.

Gracey looks at Ramsley with reluctance:

GRACEY

But she does not remember.

RAMSLEY

In time, she will, sir. I assure you. She will.

Ramsley smiles at him with re-assurance as--

INT. MANSION, MAIN CORRIDOR - NIGHT

With a sudden BLUIISH EXPLOSION the ghost horse and hearse comes ripping back through the wall of the dead, NEIGHING and SNORTING down the hallway. Jim holds the reigns tight. . .

JIM

Hold on! We're going up!

Jim flicks the reigns:

JIM

Haaa!!!

The horse WHINNIES kicking off the ground, through the second floor and quickly rising and rising. . .

INT. MANSION, ATTIC - NIGHT

The quiet of the attic, until -- the hearse BURSTS THROUGH the CELLAR FLOOR! Shattering wood everywhere!

The horse lands, SNORTING and WHINNYING! The dust everywhere as Jim hops off the hearse, waving through the dust:

JIM

Alright now all we gotta do is. . .

As the dust clears Jim sees that the attic is filled with trunks.

JIM (O.S.)

Find that trunk.

Jim shakes his head:

JIM

Is anything ever easy in this place?!

Jim shakes his head, racing from trunk to trunk. Trying the key in trunk after trunk! No luck!

Megan glances at a clock on the wall -- it reads 12:55--

MEGAN

Hurry, Dad! It's almost time!

JIM

I'm hurrying! I'm hurrying!

Trunk after trunk--

GUS

Oh, the suspense is killing me!

Finally Jim gets to a trunk where the key is a perfect fit. he stops, quickly blinking his eyes. He swallows. Kneeling in front of it, licking his lips, he places the in the lock -- He turns it and it CLICKS OPEN.

Slowly the trunk CREAKS open. Gus holds tight to Phineas' sleeve! As--

The TRUNK CRACKS all the way open -- Jim peers inside--

JIM'S POV

A masquerade mask and cloak sit inside. On top of which rests a LETTER in a RED ENVELOPE. Jim carefully pulls it out:

JIM

It's a letter.

PHINEAS

Oh, Oh -- that is Elizabeth's letter!

Turning it over -- it is addressed in fountain ink to: "MY LOVE"

Jim opens it as we PUSH IN on the letter -- carefully written in fountain ink. A WOMAN'S VOICE seems to come out of the past, an ECHO from the grave:

WOMAN (V.O.)

Yes. My dear heart -- I will be with you.
I will love you for eternity. And tonight,
at last, we will be together. I do!

A candlelight flickers, Michael spots it out of the corner of his eye as. . .

Jim stares at the letter in shock:

JIM

She didn't kill herself. She wanted to be with him.

(thinking)

He was given the wrong letter.

RAMSLEY (O.S.)

Yes. Well done, Mr. Evers.

They turn to Ramsley standing in the archway. He steps into the attic wearing a black formal long coat. The ghosts shivering quickly disappear. Michael and Megan step closer to Jim.

RAMSLEY

I must say I am impressed. You're more persistent than I would have ever imagined.

JIM

Oh my God. . . The butler did it. You have got to be kidding me.

Ramsley picks up some things stacking them neatly.

RAMSLEY

Yes you see the master would not listen to reason. He had wealth, he had privilege, he had everything and yet he was willing to throw it all away for nothing. I am afraid his heart clouded his judgement. I had to make the right decision for him.

JIM

But he loved her!

RAMSLEY

That was of little consequence. You see I raised the boy, and I could not simply stand by and let him throw away his life! And Ms. Elizabeth should have known better. I thought that she would be more apt to listen. But no matter how I implored her. No matter how I reasoned with her. She loved him. I did tell her it would end badly.

JIM

So you killed her.

RAMSLEY

Accidents happen, Mr. Evers. Accidents happen all the time in a big house. But now the past shall be redeemed.

JIM

Well I think your master would really wanna to know about that.

RAMSLEY

Oh no. That won't happen. That can never happen. I'm afraid the truth is dead, Mr. Evers. And now the truth is the master will marry and his torment will end. And we will all move on. You see, I run this house, sir. And I run it as I see fit.

JIM

Well you're doing a really bang up job.

RAMSLEY

The masters pain will end, Mr. Evers. It will end tonight. And to do that I am afraid certain sacrifices must be made. This house will once again be clean.

Jim stares at him angry.

JIM

Where is she? Where's my wife?

RAMSLEY

Your wife? Oh why she's getting ready for her wedding of course.

JIM

What?!

RAMSLEY

Yes the hour fast approaches. And soon your wife will be the masters bride. And he will finally be reunited with his one true love.

JIM

But that's not her!

RAMSLEY

That is of minor importance. The truth is what I decide. Once the master believes it to be her this curse will be lifted. And we can all finally rest. I'm sorry, but I can no longer bear another eternity within these walls.

Jim clenches his teeth, angered:

JIM

Where is she? Where's my wife?

RAMSLEY

I told you. She's getting ready for her wedding.

Jim rushes at Ramsley:

JIM

Listen, don't you lay one finger on her, one finger -- or I'll--

Jim rushes right through Ramsley, passing through his ghostly frame -- Ramsley LAUGHS with sinister glee -- circling the room.

RAMSLEY

How wonderful. You're going to kill me? You're going to kill a ghost.

JIM

Listen to me! You are going to get Sara and you are going to let us out of here! Do you hear me?! You're going to let us out!!!

RAMSLEY

You want out? Fine.

Suddenly a window re-appears. The wind whipping through the curtain. And a

RAMSLEY

Get out.

With a flick of his hand, Ramsley levitates Jim a good ten feet off the ground, SMASHING him through the WINDOW and out of the mansion.

MEGAN/MICHAEL

DAD!!!

EXT. MANSION, CEMETERY - DEEP NIGHT

Jim holds onto the rain gutter high above the house -- Lightning flashes behind him illuminating a STONE ROOF GARGOYLE next to him as. . .

Elizabeth's letter falls, blowing away into the night as Jim's fingers slowly begin SLIPPING from the METAL GUTTER. . .

INT. MANSION, PORTRAIT GALLERY - DEEP NIGHT

Ramsley walks towards Megan and Michael. The WIND HOWLING through the broken window, the curtain flapping wildly. Ramsley consumes the room with ominous back shadow.

RAMSLEY

Come, children. We don't want to be late for the wedding.

The kids SCREAM as. . .

EXT. MANSION - DEEP NIGHT

Jim's last finger slips from the gutter -- sending him free-falling helpless from the mansion until -- THWACK!!! He lands hard into the next GUTTER VANE, sending him sliding down the rain filled chute like a waterslide -- Tossing him viciously over and over, and hurling him from the mansion --

And into the mud below. Catching his breath, Jim rises angry. Rushing back to the front porch of the house.

Jim BANGS FEROCIOUSLY on the MANSION WALL! Trying desperately to get back in, but there are no windows and no doors. Seeing a wooden porch chair, he grabs it, SLAMMING it into the WALL -- But it's no use, it SHATTERS into PIECES. . .

INT. MANSION, BEDROOM - DEEP NIGHT

The picture of the Evers family. Sara stares at it, crying, until a SHADOW covers the picture -- She turns quickly to Ramsley standing behind her. He looks at the wedding dress lying on the bed:

RAMSLEY

Why you haven't put on your dress yet, my dear?

SARA

You don't actually think I'm actually going to go through with this madness do you?

RAMSLEY

Oh yes. I very much do. You see--

Ramsley raises his eyes to look behind her. Sara turns--

SARA'S POV

Megan and Michael appear in the night table mirror. They are being held by two knights in armor, holding axes dangerously over their heads.

RAMSLEY (O.S.)

We wouldn't want anything to happen to the children now would we?

Sara looks at the kids helplessly. Getting up, calling into the mirror:

SARA

Michael!!! Megan!!!

Turning angry back to Ramsley:

SARA

You wouldn't! You monster!

RAMSLEY

(reassuring)

Of course not, my sweet. But that is entirely up to you. You see, the master needs to know that you are his one true Elizabeth. And if he needs to know that -- that is indeed what he shall know. Or. . . I really do fear for the children.

Sara stares back in the mirror crying. As Ramsley reaches down, caressing her hair:

RAMSLEY

Oh you will make a lovely bride.

EXT. MANSION - DEEP NIGHT

Another CHAIR SMASHES useless into the wall. Jim out of breath, staggers away from the mansion, looking up at the exterior.

He spins falling to the mud, exhausted, beaten. He looks back up at the mansion. A beat.

JIM

I let them down. I let them all down.
 (shaking his head, pained)
 They were right. They were all right. This
 is my fault. This is all my fault. And
 now. . .

His head sinks.

JIM

It's too late.

A long painful beat.

LECTA (O.S.)

It is never too late, Mr. Evers.

Jim looks up -- Leota's ball, sitting off lost in the mud.

LEOTA

Your family waits for you. Your family needs
 you now -- more than ever. Only in death is
 it too late, Mr. Evers. Life is about second
 chances. This is your second chance -- Your
 last chance.

A distant clock begins to CHIME!

INT. MANSION, GRAND ENTRY HALL - DEEP NIGHT

The clocks' midnight 12 slowly is dissolving to 13 as it
 CHIMES and CHIMES!

EXT. MANSION, GRAVEYARD - THE 13TH HOUR

As GHOSTS start to rise from the graveyard. Rising from
 their graves and flying towards the mansion.

The clock continues to CHIME!

As a virtual SEA OF GHOSTS float over the graveyard, over
 Jim and into the mansion. Jim stares at them in shock.

JIM

What's going on?! What's happening?!

Jim turns down to Leota. A beat.

LEOTA

It has begun.

INT. MANSION, GRAND BALLROOM - THE 13TH HOUR

The GREEN CAPED PHANTOM on the pipe organ begins to play a hideously macabre WEDDING MARCH! Ghostly skulls popping out of the dusty pipes with every note.

Gracey waits expectantly -- blinded by love -- at the end of the aisle. Ramsley stands next to him, smiling.

As the GHOST GUESTS file into the ballroom, forming two sides along the ballroom. . .

A GHOSTLY PRIEST walks out to stand behind Gracey as. . .

The phantom stops playing the organ and--

THE DOUBLE DOORS SWING OPEN

Sara stands behind in a wedding dress. She begins walking down the aisle, crying -- as the ORGANIST begins to play, "HERE COMES THE BRIDE". She moves down the aisle, the ghosts watching her pass.

Sara cries walking down the aisle, slowly approaching Gracey. Gracey looks back at Ramsley concerned. Ramsley smiles:

RAMSLEY

Tears of joy.

Finally Sara reaches him at the altar. Gracey stares deep into her eyes:

GRACEY

. . . Elizabeth?

Sara glances back at Ramsley -- Behind him, in a large painting, the knights hold axes over Michael and Megan. The kids SCREAM but can not be heard.

Ramsley nods sternly. Sara looks back at Gracey tearfully:

SARA

Yes -- my love.

Ramsley smiles wickedly as. . .

EXT. MANSION - THE 13TH HOUR

Jim sits in his prized BMW with angry focus, REVVING the engine HOT. He turns to the passenger seat:

JIM

Hang on.

Leota's ball sits buckled in the passenger seat, as Jim PUNCHES the gas, the BMW SCREECHING forward as--

INT. MANSION, CONSERVATORY - THE 13TH HOUR

Jim's car rockets forward, SHATTERING through the glass wall! Smashing directly into the grand piano! The piano plows across the room. . .

Glass and dead flowers fall onto Jim's totalled beemer. As Jim shoulders the wrecked door open, stepping over the falling debris.

JIM

(to Leota)

Stay there. I'll be right back.

Behind an airbag:

LEOTA

Okay. I'll wait here.

Jim SLAMS the car door. Storming towards the ballroom. . . Through hallway after hallway following the sound of the ORGAN MUSIC-- He turns into the. . .

INT. MANSION, GRAND ENTRYWAY - THE 13TH HOUR

Stopping dead in his tracks. Ramsley appears on the other side of the armory:

RAMSLEY

You just don't know when to die, do you?

Jim continues his charge--

RAMSLEY

You'll soon learn. Gentlemen.

Jim stops his charge as HEAVY RUST METAL starts to CREAK. Two Knights of armor step down off their pedestals and wield battle axes -- stepping defiantly in front of the hallway and Ramsley.

RAMSLEY

Goodbye, Mr. Evers.

Ramsley disappears as the knights begin to CLANK towards Jim. Jim quickly looks around, looking for any sort of protection.

He eyes a heavy sword mounted on the wall. Quickly, he tries to grab it, but it's stuck. He pulls and pulls, but no use. He turns to the knights getting closer and closer. . .

Jim pulls with all his might, but to no avail -- One of the knights rears back and takes a huge swing at him. Jim ducks, hitting the floor. The axe SMASHES into the WALL! The blow dislodges the sword. It drops, CLANKING to the floor next to Jim -- Quickly he grabs it as another axe comes SMASHING down right next to his hand--

Rolling over, he gets up as the knights charge him. Jim puts up the sword, deflecting the axe--

Jim quickly jumps to the left -- The knights axe SMASHING through the OTHER KNIGHT, shattering him to pieces--

Jim tumbles over the pieces -- The other knight quickly raising his axe high over Jim!

INT. MANSION, GRAND BALLROOM - THE 13TH HOUR

The priest continues the ceremony--

PRIEST

. . . And do you, Elizabeth Henshaw, take this man to be your lawful husband -- to have and to hold, till death do you part?

Sara glances at Ramsley.

SARA

. . . I do.

PRIEST

The ring.

Ramsley approaches Gracey, smiling like a proud father -- he hands Gracey a GLOWING RING. Gracey smiles, taking it from him, turning to Sara:

GRACEY

With this ring, I thee wed -- And promise to
love you and cherish you -- forever.

He slips the ring over Sara's finger -- a white spiraling
mist, floats all over her body.

PRIEST

If anyone has any objections let them--

A KNIGHT comes CLANKING in. They all stare back at it as it
stops -- the visor is lifted, revealing Jim standing in the
suit of armor.

JIM

Yeah I got a few objections!

SARA

JIM!!!

Ramsley turns to the priest angered:

RAMSLEY

Go on with the ceremony!

JIM

No! Don't go on with the ceremony! Ramsley
gave you the wrong letter, man! That's not
Elizabeth!

GRACEY

What?

RAMSLEY

Of course it is, sir.
(to priest)
Go on with the ceremony!

Jim walks CLANKING down the aisle:

JIM

No, Ramsley there didn't like your
girlfriend. He didn't think she was good
enough for you so he killed her. She wanted
to marry you, man! It's all right here in
her letter! The real letter!

RAMSLEY

ENOUGH!!!

In a ghostly instant, Ramsley disappears -- re-appearing in
front of Jim, levitating him hard by the throat -- SLAMMING
HIM into the WALL!

RAMSLEY

Go on with the ceremony!

The letter drifts helplessly to the ground.

FROM THE KNIGHT PAINTING

Megan sees the letter and with all her might, backtrips the knight off of her, the knight falls as. . . Grabbing Michael's hand, Megan pulls him out of the painting--

They SCREAM falling to the ground. The painting's axe swinging behind them, just missing them!

GHOST GUEST

That must be the flower girl.

Jim struggles but there's nothing he can do. The priest continues with the ceremony. Ramsley squeezes Jim's neck! He smiles as Megan rushes to the letter -- Jim head motions towards Gracey.

Megan nods, rushing up the aisle to Gracey, handing him the letter.

MEGAN

Read it.

Gracey stares at Megan, taking the letter.

Ramsley stares back at Gracey. . . Gracey is trembling, holding the letter. He turns tearing, wild-eyed to Ramsley.

GRACEY

This letter -- this was her letter.

Ramsley turns back to Gracey, walking back towards him, Jim still pinned to the wall.

RAMSLEY

There must be some mistake, sir.

GRACEY

There's no mistake. It has her mark on it.

THE THREE GHOSTS

float in down the aisle:

PHINEAS

Oui, Monsieur. We gave Ramsley that letter to give to you so many years ago!

EZRA

He must have switched them!

GUS

(to Ramsley)

Shame on you!

GRACEY

She -- she wanted to marry me. So many years ago.

Gracey, trembling, turns back to Ramsley:

GRACEY

What letter did you give me?

Ramsley stares at him for a moment.

RAMSLEY

I gave you the right letter, sir.

Gracey stares pained back down at the letter -- "I WILL LOVE YOU FOR ETERNITY. AND TONIGHT, AT LAST, WE WILL BE TOGETHER. I DO!" He trembles. . .

GRACEY

You -- you did this. . . why?

Ramsley stands firm. A beat. Dignified:

RAMSLEY

Because there was no other way. I did it for you, sir. It was for your own good. It would have been a mistake.

Gracey SCREAMS in PAIN! Throwing Ramsley hard against the fireplace, SLAMMING him into the granite!

GRACEY

A mistake? -- A mistake?!!! I loved her!
Was my love a mistake?!!!

RAMSLEY

Yes.

Gracey grabs Ramsley SLAMMING HIM REPEATEDLY TO THE FIREPLACE. Hitting him hard! Angry tears flow down his face:

GRACEY

(weeping)

Who are you to judge?! WHO?! WHO?!. . .
Damn you!!! -- Damn you to hell!!!

AN UNHOLY EARTH SHATTERING MOAN from above. . . Everyone looks up to--

THE WALL OF JUDGEMENT

slowly coming to life. The DEMONIC FIGURES starting to swirl in the painting. The MOANS building and building. The floor beginning to quake.

The portraits bust down off their portraits as the ballroom begins to be consumed with RED TORNADO of WIND AND FIRE! Gracey srumbles away from ramsley--

RAMSLEY

No. No. I was only doing what was best!

Behind Ramsley -- The great fireplace starts to rise in flames as the room is consumed with whipping fire and wind -- the demonic ghouls rushing at him--

RAMSLEY

I was only doing what was best for the house--

The ghouls streak towards Ramsley with HIDEOUS MOANS! Grabbing him, sucking him back into the fireplace. Its fires blazing high!

On impact, Jim is released from the wall, smashing to the ground, the armor falling away from him.

JIM

(over the wind)

Hey, we cleaned your house for ya!!!

And with a MIGHTY WHOOSH he is gone! The fire back to normal. All is silent as. . .

Jim turns seeing Sara lying on the floor, a mirror image of Elizabeth so many years ago.

JIM

No!!!

Jim rushes over to Sara lying on the floor, picking her up in his arms--

JIM

No. No. Sara -- Sara don't do this!
Please. Please -- I love you. Oh God. . .
oh God, I love you so much! Don't. . . don't
leave us.

The kids look down in shock. A long beat until -- a HEARTBEAT is heard from behind. . .

Jim looks up, turning to the ball of white light floating into the room.

They all stare at it -- as the ball begins to break apart, RAYS of WHITE LIGHT emanating from the ball as it grows, spreading all over the room -- the ball floating down the aisle towards Gracey, standing at the altar --

The soft light invades Sara -- glowing into her body. The wedding ring floating off her hand and towards the light.

Sara slowly blinks her eyes, looking up at Jim holding her tight.

SARA

Jim? . . . Jim?

JIM

Oh, Sara. I thought I lost you. I thought I lost you!

He hugs Sara, kissing her passionately. Looking into her eyes.

SARA

And I thought I lost you.

He stares at her intensely:

JIM

No. I'm back, Sara. I'm back.

They hug, kissing passionately. Michael and Megan rush over to them. They all embrace as . . .

An ELEGANT WHITE GHOSTLY HAND extends out of the light, the ring floating onto its wedding finger and raising to stroke Gracey's face.

PRIEST (V.O.)

And now, correction. . .

The priest still stands at the altar:

PRIEST

Do you -- Elizabeth Henshaw, take this man to be your lawful husband -- to have and hold until all eternity do you part?

ELIZABETH

I do.

The priest smiles. . .

PRIEST

Then by the powers vested in me. I now
pronounce you man and wife. You may kiss the
bride.

A GLOWING GRACEY

steps up to Elizabeth, kissing her gently on the lips.

A slow, sweet, wonderful kiss -- the soft, white light
engulfing them both. Hold.

GRACEY

My beloved.

Gracey looks behind to Jim and his family.

GRACEY

Can you ever forgive me?

SARA

You did it for love.

Gracey stares happily at his bride.

GRACEY

Yes. Thank you. Thank you for lifting the
curse.

JIM

Oh not a problem. Any time. So where you
crazy kids going on your honeymoon?

A BLAST OF A DIXIELAND CLARINET

A ghostly WEDDING BAND stands around the organist --
launching into authentic NEW ORLEANS JAZZ as Gracey and
Elizabeth smile, float down the aisle, holding each other
tight!

The GHOSTLY GUESTS following them down the spectral
processional.

EXT. MANSION - DEEP NIGHT

The hearse awaits them, Gus and Phineas sitting shotgun,
Ezra behide the reigns weeping:

EZRA

Oh -- I just love a happy ending.

Phineas pats him on the back:

PHINEAS

There, there -- it is okay. It is okay. Let it all out. Yes.

As the bride and groom float into the carriage. Ezra gives the ghost horse a flick as they float off into the heavens.

Followed by the GHOST ORCHESTRA playing a DIXIELAND MARCH.

The Evers family steps out of the mansion watching them disappear off into the night as we DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MANSION - DAY

Rays of beautiful sunlight shine down upon the mansion. Distant BIRDS CHIRP as. . .

INT. MANSION - DAY

The house actually feels warm and lived in. As KIDS run through the house, playing. They run past a banner that reads, "HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MICHAEL".

Jim, wearing a Chefs hat and a shirt reading: "KISS ME, I'M THE COOK", is carrying in some presents.

JIM

Hey, hey -- watch it. You don't want to bang into the gargoyle staircase.

Jim passes Megan kissing a 14 year OLD BOY in the hallway:

JIM

Hey, Shawn -- Shawn you better get your lips off my daughter. I can handle a lot. But I can not handle that.

Megan playfully hits Jim:

MEGAN

Dad.

Jim LAUGHS walking into. . . .

THE STUDY

Michael, now without his glasses, is opening presents. He rips the paper off of a present revealing -- a Ouiga board.

MICHAEL

Oh. A ouiga board, great.

JIM

Huh. Now that might come in handy. But what would really come in handy is Yahtze! Did anybody bring Yahtze?! I love the Yahtze!!!

Sara walks up behind Jim, wrapping her arms around him.

JIM

Oh, Mrs. Johnson, I told you. I'm married.

Sara playfully spins him around:

SARA

Mrs. Johnson?!

JIM

Oh wait a second. You're not Mrs. Johnson.

Jim LAUGHS as Sara pulls him close:

SARA

I'll show you Mrs. Johnson.

They kiss. Full of love.

SARA

Wow. Now I have kissed the cook.

JIM

Exciting isn't it?

Sara smiles, LAUGHING.

JIM

Okay well the cook better go check on the cake.

SARA

Okay, cook. Go check on the cake.

She smiles watching him go, walking back to help Michael as Jim enters. . .

THE KITCHEN

He checks on a pot, turning to:

JIM

Okay, how's the cake coming?

LEOTA

sits on the counter, a little chef hat on her ball:

LEOTA

Sugar and dough, eggs and jam -- you put way too much flour at the bottom of the pan.

JIM

Hey did I ask you?! It's fine okay! Don't you think I know how to bake a cake?!

LEOTA

I foresee too much frosting!

JIM

Too much frosting?! Man if you had arms you could bake it! But you don't so just keep quiet okay!

LEOTA

Cool it off in the pan, so it doesn't get stuck -- and put twelve candles on the cake, thirteen for good luck.

JIM

Man, why couldn't I get Betty Crocker in a ball?! Where's Betty Crocker?!!!

LEOTA

Then get out the jello--

JIM

Jello?! I hate jello!

They continue to argue as slowly PULL BACK and SLOWLY DISSOLVE. . .

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

The mansion looks peaceful, happy. Parked cars line the car port, as we continue to pull back to. . .

An Evers Real Estate "NOT FOR SALE" sign sitting on the front lawn. As slowly we. . .

FADE TO BLACK