

Regrettably, the Ghost that was Previously Haunting our Mansion has Died

Nadja is continuing to work in this document. This is a good document to reference as you do your actor work.

Things that are bolded are new/ updated lines.

Pre show: The opening notes of "All I want for Christmas" by MC.

HELLO FAMILY

*Cass starts the zoom meeting. She's at the dining table in the family house.
Benji enters the zoom.*

CASS: Hi

BENJI: Hiiiiii

CASS (*distracted*): How is it

BENJI: How's...how's what

CASS: Just (*gestures vaguely*) being alive, I'm inviting everyone else.

BENJI: Oh. It's okay. Everyone else has already left for break, the school is so quiet it's a little creepy.

Cass doesn't respond because she's busy.

BENJI: Where is everyone?

CASS: They're around, they're in the house. Getting devices. I wish you could have told me sooner, about the snow. I really don't know if this is going to work virtually.

BENJI: Sorry

CASS (*darkly*): It's fine. Thank god for zoom right.

BENJI: But wait Cass, Cass, he's *really* gone? Like, are you sure?

CASS: I'm sure

BENJI: Because sometimes he's just quiet for a while, you know? Like are you sure he's not just...around?

CASS: I know it's hard to believe but the second you walk in the house you'll feel it, Benji. It's like. A hole.

BENJI: So we're really doing this, right now? We can't like-

CASS: Benji, we're 5 minutes to ghost.
(*Calling over her shoulder*) Lyle? LYLE

LYLE (*From off*): WHAT?

CASS: CAN YOU COME DOWN BENJI'S ON

LYLE: I'M NOT COMING DOWN

CASS (*sudden*): Benji!

BENJI: What!

CASS: Have you met Diana's partner?

BENJI: No!! Will I??

CASS: Yeah, she said she was bringing 'them.'

BENJI: Ooooo

CASS: But I met someone, a lover of hers I guess, a couple months ago, and it was a woman, but then she said "he" the other day, and then she said "they" were coming, Benji, *what is going on*

BENJI: It sounds like her partner is non-binary

CASS: No it was definitely a woman

BENJI: That's not how it works!

CASS: I know that, I know how it works, I'm just saying-

BENJI: Why don't you ask her?

CASS: Because then she'll know I don't remember what she told me. I'm not asking her.

BENJI: Don't be weird and old.

CASS: Don't say that- I'm turning thirty.

BENJI: Well, you have the soul of a 48 year old divorce attorney and skin like a six year old, so.

CASS: You think I have six year old skin?

BENJI: Absolutely.

Cass really focuses on Benji for the first time. She smiles, softens.

CASS: I'm sorry you're snowed in. I wish you were here. Is it really weird and lonely on campus?

BENJI: It's okay. It's like in middle school when mom would forget to pick me up and I'd just walk around the empty halls under the fluorescent lights with my shoes squeaking pretending I was in Buffy hunting vampires.

CASS: You are such a Buffy.

DIANA: Benjiiiiii

CASS: Okay Benji, Diana's here, I'm ordering takeout. Here's your-

Diana takes some stapled paper

DIANA: Okay- no mushrooms for me

CASS: Yep

DIANA comes into the dining room with her own device, she comes on the zoom as well.

BENJI: Di di!!

DIANA: Hi baby how are you

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Pause. *SOUND: the doorbell rings.*

DIANA: Oh they're here

BENJI: Your partner?

DIANA: Mm-hmm

Diana leaves the screen. We hear this, but we don't see it. Our focus is on Benji, who is waiting impatiently to see the lover, and Lyle, who is making faces at Benji. It's okay if we don't catch every word of this I think.

IRENA: Helloooo!

DIANA: Hi yay welcome

CASS: Hi I'm Cass

HAL: Hi Cass, nice to meet you, hiya sweets,

CASS: I can take your coat-

DIANA: Hiya back

DIANA: Come in come in I have devices for you

IRENA: Oh! Okay

DIANA: Benji's snowed in so we're doing sort of a hybrid-zoom-thing,

Diana's back at her seat. Irena's zoom box comes up.

DIANA: Everyone, this is my girlfriend Irena

BENJI: Oh hiiii, okay *stunning*

Hal's zoom box comes up

CASS: Hi Irena! I think we've met before

DIANA: And this is my boyfriend Hal!

BENJI: OKAY!!

HAL: Hello Family, look at your beautiful family.

DIANA: This is Cass, and Lyle, he's upstairs-

IRENA: Amazing. Already obsessed with all of you, heard so much, etc

BENJI: OKAY! YES! Hello!

HAL: Hi Benji!

CASS: And so you guys are all...you all..date each other, yes! You all date each other.

LYLE: Very smooth Cass.

CASS: Was your trip okay with the snow? Was it okay to park? I can move my car.

IRENA: Oh that's okay! We didn't drive.

CASS: Oh. Okay. Well just to, go through it, me and Lyle and Kara got negative tests back two days ago, and I know that Diana got tested in the city before she came up-

IRENA: -That's so sweet, that's really thoughtful.

HAL: ~~Not that we don't take it seriously.~~ We got negative tests yesterday.

IRENA: We're definitely not worried about it.

CASS: Okay! Here are your itineraries

IRENA: Oh! Thanks

HAL: Wow it is so nice to meet you all. It really is so cool that you've opened your home to us on this spooky familial evening.

There's a loud sound, like someone has punched a wall. Everyone who's in room looks up at the ceiling and freezes.

BENJI: Was that him?

We hear Kara curse from another room and then Kara enters the zoom (room?). She's holding her hand. Maybe her knuckles are bloodied.

KARA: Hi

CASS: You're late

KARA: I punched a hole in the wall, I'm sorry

LYLE: You show em tiger

BENJI: Kara what!!

Kara appears on the zoom

KARA: Oh hi Benji, hi angel

CASS: Which wall

DIANA: Oh no Kara let me see-

KARA: I'm cool I'm cool I just think I should let everyone know now I am in serious nicotine withdrawal, **I quit juuling 72 hours ago, I smashed my juul with a hammer, my juul was my best friend, she was my best friend and I killed her**, additionally I'm conflicted about whether I actually want to do this, whether I think it's okay, what we're doing here, whether I want to be close to any of you any more, I'm sorry if this is a lot to hear from me, does anyone have a juul, I feel like my skin is on fire, seriously does anyone have a Juul or a cigarette I am going to lose my shit.

CASS: We are two minutes to ghost.

LYLE: This night is going to rule

KARA: Oh hey, hi Irena, hey Hal how are you guys, woah I'm actually really glad you're here, it feels really right that you guys are here, I just felt like a wall of good vibes when I came down, do you guys have drugs? Of course you do, do you have any drugs that just address like, rage, like a deep, abiding rage? Listen, whatever I tell you, you can't give me a cigarette, okay? You just can't do it.

HAL: No treats for Kara.

KARA: No. Sad. Treats for Kara. Some treats for Kara.

IRENA: Some treats for Kara.

LYLE: You guys have drugs?

HAL: We do.

IRENA: Would you like some?

LYLE: Uh, yes

CASS: What?

IRENA: Unless that's not kosher in which case forget all about it

CASS (*being cool*): No, it's fine

HAL: Obviously no pressure. We love sober people.

IRENA: Love them. Just want you to have the option.

LYLE: Yes, yes, yes, me, I am coming down the stairs now, currently, here I come

IRENA: Absolutely no pressure whatsoever I just want you to know you *do* have the option of getting just a *little* altered for this evening, that's all, I'm just offering!

CASS: We are one minute to ghost Lyle!

KARA: Wait I'm sorry I thought we were going to talk first, talk about whether we even like-

CASS: We were and then everyone was late, obviously, and now the first one is herem in the waiting room, and if we start this one late then we'll be late for this next one, this is all on your itinerary, I just-

KARA: -Alright, okay, don't like- okay okay okay I'm sorry

DIANA: Yep, we're doing it, we're starting.

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GHOST: There's nothing to see.

I'm a cough in the middle of the night. I'm footsteps in the hall always coming closer never here I'm marbles on the roof and children laughing I'm behind you in the bathroom and when you turn off the light I say "wait" I'm an animal scratching in the walls not a squirrel I'm too big to be squirrel or a mouse too big to fit in the wall I'm a dripping sound that you can't place I'm you wetting the bed you stupid little baby

LYLE: Do you know any fun songs?

GHOST: Only songs of pain.

LYLE: Hmm. okay.

KARA: And what would you need from us?

GHOST: To feel your fear. And for you to feel mine.

CASS: Thanks for coming. We'll be in touch.

The ghost leaves the zoom. Pause.

DIANA: Oh dear

CASS: I just feel like I've seen it before

LYLE: Maybe this shit really does not translate well to zoom

BENJI: That was kind of scary

CASS: Okay, yes, it was a little scary, but did it...*haunt* me?

BENJI: It kinda haunted me.

DIANA: Yeah it wasn't really, like, *fun* spooky.

HAL: So what is it exactly you guys are looking for in a ghost?

KARA: What I want out of a ghost, is Chuck.

CASS: Well, we don't have Chuck. That's- that's the deal, that's why we're all here.

IRENA: Chuck is...

DIANA: Chuck was our ghost.

IRENA: Ohhhh, okay

HAL: Did he come with the house? House seems kinda new for a ghost?

DIANA: No-

KARA (*hurt*): You haven't told them about Chuck?

DIANA: Not in detail, I mean I mentioned we had a ghost

KARA: Chuck died in the house.

HAL: Ohhh so he was trapped here from death.

KARA: **Well no, he wanted to stay**, it's way less bad than it sounds, it's not like, horrible or anything.

LYLE: Well...

KARA: I mean he wasn't murdered or anything-

BENJI: -Chuck was a plumber, he was installing a speciality tub and he slipped and fell and died in our bathroom.

HAL: Oh...god

LYLE: Technically it was a bidet, that he was installing

BENJI: It wasn't a bidet, he was in the tub

LYLE: You were little, I'm telling you, it was a bidet *in* the tub

BENJI: I'm telling you, actually, shut up

CASS: He died in our bathroom. He became our ghost. He was a very good ghost. He haunted us for fifteen wonderful years. And now, unfortunately, he has died.

IRENA: Wait sorry you're saying he died, again? He re-died?

CASS: That's, what we assume, yes

HAL: Because...

CASS: Because he's not here.

KARA: Yes, and that is what we should be focusing on tonight. That Chuck is gone. That he was *important* to us.

CASS: But that doesn't mean we shouldn't get a new ghost. If our dishwasher broke we wouldn't just be like okay, oh well, no more dishwasher, we would just get a new dishwasher.

KARA: I can't believe you just compared Chuck to a dishwasher.

BENJI: Chuck was fun. And he was nice. I think if we get a ghost, we should get a ghost who is fun and nice. Sorry to be basic.

IRENA: That's not basic. That's very human.

DIANA: Maybe a ghost who could help take care of grandpa?

CASS: That's actually a very good idea

HAL: I think I'd want a ghost that knew a lot of stories, who could really reGAIL me

DIANA: Yes. *Yes.*

HAL: Who had seen empires rise and fall, you know?

CASS: Okay, fine, a nice ghost with eldercare experience who has seen empires rise and fall, that's all fine with me.

LYLE: **Yeah, I hear all of that.** Has anyone considered the possibility that we could get a hot ghost

BENJI: No one respond to that. No one respond to him.

DIANA: Well let's hear him out

LYLE: Yes! Deedee. Yes. An alliance at last.

DIANA: Hot to *who* though

LYLE: **Hot to everyone.** A big titty ghost

BENJI: I am calling the police-

KARA: -Jesus christ Lyle-

BENJI: -I'm having you arrested

LYLE: C'mon Irena, Hal, back me up here, you guys seem...european

CASS: What?

IRENA: It's worth considering.

CASS: We're not choosing a ghost based on cup size, that's disgusting

IRENA: Well I mean, the moniker "big titty" is really more a state of mind-

LYLE: BIG TITTY IS A STATE OF MIND

KARA: I'm going to get legally emancipated from this family

BENJI: Girl you're twenty years old you can just go

LYLE: (*sung*): Big Titty is a state of Miiiiind

DIANA: OH NO

BENJI: What!

DIANA: GRANDPA

HELLO GRANDPA

CASS: Oh shit shit I forgot about grandpa

LYLE (*leaving*): Oh fuck, sorry, sorry, hold on let me find him

DIANA: *Find* him?

BENJI: No oh my god not again

CASS: Wear your mask!

DIANA: Guys this is so FUCKED where is he?

BENJI: He's in the house though right?

LYLE: Hold on hold on I'm checking, oh I got him! I got him.

Pause as people run around. Then a new zoom box pops up.

DIANA: Oh he's in bed. Okay.

KARA: Hi Grandpa

LYLE: Yeah he was just napping. But now you have the ipad! Right grandpa!

GRANDPA: I got it I got it

BENJI: Hi Grandpa!

GRANDPA: Hello?

CASS: Hi Grandpa.

BENJI: Hi Grandpa!

GRANDPA: Look at all these dancing boxes! Hollywood Squares! Who the hell *are* you people!

DIANA: He's kidding. That's just...a thing he does

HAL: Hi, I'm Hal, I'm a friend of Diana's.

GRANDPA: Friend of who?

DIANA: Don't worry about it. We're all here, Grandpa, the whole family is here.

GRANDPA: Oh, good. So you're gonna get a ghost, huh

DIANA: Yes we are!

GRANDPA: Thank god. 15 years of sharing a bathroom with a Sicilian. The horror comes to an end.

DIANA (*explaining for Hal & Irena*): Chuck was Italian

GRANDPA: Chuck was an asshole!

LYLE: Grandpa, do *you* have any thoughts about what kind of ghost we should get?

GRANDPA: Get a french one.

DIANA: Okay

GRANDPA: A nice french girl.

BENJI (*giggling*): Oh my god

GRANDPA: A Mademoiselle girl.

CASS: Alright Grandpa, got it.

GRANDPA: A little je ne sais quois girl

CASS: Yep

GRANDPA: A FRENCH GIRL

CASS: Note taken

GRANDPA: What's dinner!

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KARA: Yeah, we could, or we could SHOW A LITTLE RESPECT AND NOT GET A NEW GHOST YET

CASS: Jesus Kara you don't have to shout.

KARA: Sorry for being a normal emotional human being, I just think it's psychotic that we haven't even talked about Chuck yet. That ghost basically raised us.

CASS: Okay, let's not be dramatic. *I* basically raised us.

BENJI: Yeah no honestly she's right Cass I'm sorry but this feels *so weird* can we just *talk* about what *happened*?

CASS: Benji we've talked about this. He's just not here.

BENJI: *(to Cass)* Why are you being so cagey about this?
Lyle do you know what happened?

LYLE: I dunno Benji, one day he was gone . She's right. You just feel it. Like when it's cold out and you walk into a room with an open window.

BENJI: So wait *no one* knows what happened to Chuck?

Pause.

BENJI: That's weird

Benji takes a gulp of water and it spills right out of his mouth

KARA *(laughing)*: Benji what the hell

CASS: I'm gonna let in the next ghost.

DIANA: Ooo can I do this one?

GHOST 3: GEORGE G GHOST

George G. Ghost enters the zoom. They can see him clearly. He looks like the most regular guy in the world.

GEORGE: Hey there!

DIANA H-hi, George?

GEORGE: Yes, **George G. Ghost**, that's me, yeah. Thanks for having me!

DIANA: Thanks for being here.

GEORGE: It's my pleasure!

DIANA: What do you, uh, what are you going to show us tonight?

CASS: Sorry- are you- I don't mean to be rude but-

LYLE: Why are you so normal looking?

GEORGE: Ah. Yes. Let's get right into it. So, legally, I am not a ghost.

...

GEORGE: Hey! My name is George, I'm 26, I currently live in DC, and I am a professional haunter.

KARA: Sorry, hold on, you're not a ghost...

GEORGE: No

KARA: You're just a guy

GEORGE: Yes

KARA: And you want to come live in our house and scare us

GEORGE: Yes

...

CASS: Oh for fucks sake

Cass pours herself a large glass of wine (PROP)

DIANA: What kind of, um, what kind of experience do you have haunting?

GEORGE: This would be my first haunting, but I can assure you I know what I'm doing.

Cass snorts with laughter. George starts getting nervous.

GEORGE: ~~Ghost movies? I've seen 'em all.~~ I have an encyclopedic knowledge of all things ghost related. Ghost movies? Yeah, got it covered. That's amateur. I'm talking ghost books, ghost tomes, ghost runes, rules, rituals, and renewals.

Um. I'm good with morse code, so if I were flickering a light I could, you know, spell some things out

LYLE: We don't know morse code

GEORGE: Well I could teach you, that could be fun

LYLE: Are we hiring a dad? We could hire a dad.

GEORGE: I can play the mandolin, I don't know if that's useful but it's fun. I have a driver's license.

LYLE: Do you do laundry?

KARA: That's so rude, Lyle. I can't believe you just said that.

CASS: Okay, to be honest, George? To be honest that doesn't really sound at all like what we're looking for. If I wanted some guy to move in, eat our food and make us uncomfortable, I would have asked my husband to be our ghost, you know?

LYLE: Boom.

GEORGE: Oh, sure, absolutely-

DIANA: Well hold on let's hear him out

GEORGE: First let me clarify, yes, I would be in your house, but not in your eyes. I'm a bit of an originalist when it comes to haunting, I think that for the most part, ghosts should be heard, felt, sensed, smellt, and feared well before they are seen.

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GEORGE: Yes.

KARA: No way

LYLE: Nuh uh

George holds up a dead bird (PROP)

GEORGE: Was this the bird that you saw dead on the ground?

LYLE: HOLY SHIT, HE'S A MAGICIAN, PLEASE CAN WE HIRE HIM

Cass is starting to feel the wine.

CASS: Sure. Why not.

LYLE: THIS IS BIG TITTY ENERGY!!! THIS IS WHAT I AM TALKING ABOUT

DIANA: Um, okay, George, thank you so much. We'll uh-

LYLE: Woah woah woah HOLD on we are NOT done here, George, I LOVE YOU

GEORGE: Hey thanks man, that's awesome.

Well, I'll leave you to your deliberations but, sorry, can I ask, why are you guys getting a ghost?

CASS: Our ghost died. Disappeared. I don't know. We're not sure.

GEORGE: Huh. Okay. Because there's definitely, there's definitely a ghost on this zoom tonight. Or in the house somewhere. And it's not me, ha. So. You know. You might want to have that looked at.

DIANA: I'm pretty sure there's no ghost. Oh- Benji's at boating boarding school, and there are a lot of ghosts there, maybe that's what you're....sensing

George holds up some kind of ghost-o-meter (PROP). It goes beep beep beep.

GEORGE: Ehhhh I dunno...

DIANA: Alright, thanks a lot, we'll take that into consideration.

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KARA:

Song of Old Chuck

Chuck has a lot of household cred

Chuck, he tucks us into bed

LYLE: Pizza!

Lyle enters with a pizza box (PROP). Kara glares at him.

LYLE: Oh god. Sorry. Can you start over? Sorry.

People unobtrusively get and start eating pizza (PROP) as Kara talks. Lyle does not eat. He is transfixed.

KARA:

Song of Old Chuck

Chuck has a lot of household cred

Chuck, he tucks us into bed

Chuck's wet and cold but his heart is warm

Chuck sits under the sink during every storm

Chuck tightens the pipes though his hands can't hold

On account of being a ghost-

Chuck does the most

How does he do it, how did chuck do it?

How does he do it, how did chuck do it?

Chuck sings when the grown ups shout

Chuck teaches us words like pussy and grout

Chuck says it's okay

Chuck says it's okay

Chuck says it's okay

I love old Chuck

CASS: That's really great, Kara.

KARA: -I love old Chuck

This is the song,

The song of old Chuck

DIANA: *Really*, really good

HAL: Wow. Yeah. That's the stuff.

IRENA: Yes.

DIANA:Are you crying?

LYLE: No I just thought, just thought it was really good.

KARA: Are you making fun of me?

LYLE: No!!!!

KARA: Fuck you Lyle!

LYLE: WHAT

DIANA: Kara he's not making fun of you he's just on drugs so he thought your poem was good

BENJI: Oh boy

KARA: WOW, OKAY

CASS: Kara, just,

KARA: FUCK YOU TOO!!

CASS: You know what Kara, you've done your little song, you've paid tribute to Chuck, it's time to be an adult. Our ghost disappeared. Deal with it.

KARA: Why are you *saying* that phrase like it makes sense? You're telling me for 15 years Chuck haunted our house, 24/7, never left, never even went in the yard, and then one day, out of nowhere, without saying a word, he just *disappears*?

CASS: Yes!

KARA: Did you have a fight, did something happen?

CASS: Nothing happened!

KARA: Yeah see I just have a hard time believing that, ghosts don't just disappear, right?

BENJI: Why do ghosts *stay* in the first place?

HAL: You guys had a ghost for 15 years and you don't know why he stayed?

DIANA: We're not ghost experts a plumber just slipped in our shower!!

HAL: Right but...did you ever...ask him?

Beat as family realizes they never asked Chuck why he stayed.

CASS: No

LYLE: Yeah, no

IRENA: Don't ghosts like, move on if they complete their unfinished business? If they get like, closure?

HAL: Right.

IRENA: Maybe the question is, what was haunting *Chuck*?

Lyle makes a gesture like his brain is exploding.

CASS: Nothing was haunting Chuck, he was just an old school italian plumber, he was always basically in a good mood

BENJI: Remember how he would be like, today's the day I'm going to fix the bidet!

DIANA: Every single day. For fifteen years.

LYLE (*singing like Chuck*): Today's the Day! For the BiDEEET

LYLE/ BENJI: Today I'm gonna fix that cursed Bidet!!!!

ALL: I'll fix that biiiiideeetttt

LYLE I'm going to-

CASS: I finished the bidet.

DIANA: What

CASS: I finished installing the bidet, I just thought, wouldn't it be nice to get that done... Maybe I gave chuck closure. Maybe I finished his unfinished business.

BENJI: And that's when he disappeared?

CASS: He was gone the next morning.

LYLE: ooooo

CASS: And he didn't say anything! He just watched me do it! Oh my god it's all my fault. He spent all this time with us and then I just...cut his chord, cut his balloon string and he floated away-

DIANA: Oh Cass...sweet Cass...

CASS: He *floated away!*

DIANA: You were just trying to help

CASS: Did I kill Old Chuck?

BENJI: It's okay Cass, don't beat yourself up

CASS: I killed Old Chuck!

KARA: Yeah, sorry that makes *no* sense.

CASS: What do you mean?

KARA: You think the thing keeping Chuck here was finishing the bidet? You think he just existed to fix our extra toilet hose? When he went to sleep in his little ghost bed he was like I sure wish I could go see my family or go to heaven or whatever, but I simply **MUST** finish this bidet in a mc mansion in the suburbs?

DIANA: (It's not a Mcmansion)

BENJI (*excited, new idea*) Wait maybe in some spiritual sense the bidet was his murderer! and you finally avenged his death! and now he can be at peace!! Maybe we should just be happy for him!

KARA (*Ignoring Benji*): You really *do* think he's a dishwasher, you think he just threw himself out as soon as this menial task was completed.

CASS: It wasn't that menial it was actually quite difficult

HAL: Well the bidet could have been trapping him here even if he didn't care about it, right?

KARA: He wasn't *trapped* here, this was his *home*, he was part of the family, he *belongs* with us!

LYLE: Oh my god Kara

KARA: What!

LYLE: Maybe Chuck is gone because he didn't like us that much.

Bad little pause. This is a new idea.

KARA: Take that back

DIANA: Chuck loved us

BENJI: Chuck loved us!

LYLE: Did he? I'm not saying he *hated* us I'm just saying maybe he didn't really like us. Maybe being our ghost was...boring and kind of...degrading. Like being a servant.

This sinks in.

DIANA: We don't know for sure.

KARA: Our own ghost abandoned us.

Sad pause.

BENJI: This is bleak.

Pause.

HAL: This pizza is very good

Awkward rev up, everyone is like oh yeah we're at dinner.

BENJI: *(re Irena and Hal)*: Woah I feel like we are being really bad hosts I'm so sorry

HAL: Oh, that's okay. We wanted to meet the Brood.

CASS *(darkly)*: Here's the brood.

DIANA: Here's the brood.

BENJI: So wait so how did you guys... meet? Like did you all meet at once or-

HAL: Oh gosh, Irena and I have known each other for like seventy years. We were kids together.

CASS: Oh!

IRENA: I'll never forget the moment we met.

HAL: I was in gym class. And the door opened and Irena came in.

IRENA: It was my first day.

HAL: She had just transferred.

IRENA: Previous school had burned down, etc.

HAL: And we were circuit training, doing that thing where you jump up on the box?

IRENA: Everyone was in little red gym shorts and their sneakers. But *he* was wearing a floor length black cape.

HAL: She was wearing a sheer veil.

IRENA: And in a room full of normies, we locked eyes.

HAL: And then the gym teacher said everyone, this is Irena. Irena, why don't you hop up on the block, show the class what you can do, and she looked right at him and said. Suffocant tuo stercore, causam pauperum hominum

They both chuckle. Some fam chuckle along even though they don't understand.

IRENA: Which means, roughly, "why don't you choke on your own dick, you pissboy"

HAL: And I just thought. That's the one.

IRENA (*nodding*): That's the one for me. That's my buddy for life.

HAL: It was our birthday, actually

LYLE: Your...collective birthday?

HAL: Mmm hmm! Same day same year.

LYLE: So you guys are like...twins?

IRENA: In the cosmic sense, definitely.

BENJI: That's so special. That's so cool.

LYLE: Cool and *very* normal

BENJI: Wait what are your signs?

CASS: Fourth Ghost! Fourth Ghost! KARA!

Kara comes back in.

KARA: I hope this is so scary that Lyle shits his pants

DIANA: We all hope that

Lyle gets a weird look and raises his hand.

CASS: Uh, yes? Lyle?

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IRENA: We've got it

DIANA: Really?

HAL: Yeah. We got it.

DIANA: You guys are champs. You're so pretty.

LYLE: Where are we going?

Irena, Hal and Lyle go to the bathroom.

Kara looks really messed up.

CASS: Kara.

KARA (*nonverbal??*): Mm

CASS: Are you freaking out?

KARA: [No] [Yes]

CASS: Let's go to my room.

Kara shakes her head

CASS: I have an emergency juul for you.

KARA: Really?

CASS: I brought one just in case.

KARA:.....Okay

They go.

DIANA: You okay Benji?

BENJI: I think so. I feel a little weird.

DIANA: Yeah. That was weird.

BENJI: I miss you so much

DIANA: Aww. Bb. We'll see you tomorrow, right?

BENJI: I think so. If the snow is better.

DIANA: I can't wait to have you home. We need you here.

Diana hears something (SOUND)

DIANA: Hold on, Benji, I gotta check on grandpa. Love you

BENJI: -Love you-

DIANA: -Love you

She's gone. Benji's alone. He listens to his childhood home over zoom.

BENJI: ...Chuck?

...Chuck?

He waits. Nothing happens.

BREAK INTO THREE: VAMPS IN THE TUB

Lyle, Hal, Irena in the bathroom. Maybe they're all in the bath with Lyle, maybe one of them is sitting on the toilet, one on the sink.

HAL: How ya doin in there buddy

LYLE: I straight up hated that ghost. I feel like there's a bird flying around in my head and it's flapping around and panicking because my skull is too small and it's trapped and it keeps scratching the inside of my skull with it's little toenails-

IRENA: Maybe you can move your focus down to your feet, and think about your feet as two gorgeous little fish who are happy to be underwater? Maybe your toes could wiggle a little?

LYLE: Oh hey...yeah hahah
(Suddenly devastated) I'm just a little baby
I don't want to eat my poop every day

HAL: Sure, sure definitely. And you know what? You don't have to. No one's gonna make you.

LYLE: I don't know anything. When I was little I thought that when a woman was pregnant and ready to have the baby the doctor just reached down her throat and pulled the baby out of her mouth, how am I ever going to have a good romantic relationship? I honestly barely know how the internet works. I know it's cables and stuff, but I think 'cables' is more a metaphor than anything else, you know what I mean.

HAL: I can tell you how the internet works

LYLE: Are we a fucked up family?

IRENA: I mean...ya

HAL: Most families are fucked up.

IRENA: God my family is so fucked up

LYLE: Really?

IRENA: Oh yeah. Every week a new catastrophe. Always conflict with the neighbors, angry mob coming to our house saying they found goat carcasses all over the property, skulls on the fenceposts, and we're like..yeah. it's December? Like, hello? It's the holidays? But of course Uncle with the Long Hands just completely loses it, pours hot oil straight down onto the villagers, absolutely scalding them to death.

LYLE: W...what?

IRENA: But it's just different communication styles. You just have to sit him down and be like Uncle that's just not how we resolve conflict anymore, you know? Times have changed! We're all bi! If you kill peasants we are going to have to cancel you!

LYLE: ...Yeah

Yeah but we are really *fucked* up, right?

I can't put into words why we are fucked up

HAL: Well. For starters. You are on a lot of acid.

LYLE: Oh yeah. Right.

IRENA: These experiences you're having as a family, Lyle, these hauntings, they don't have to curse you or fuck you up forever. Some of them can just make you strong, and give you an air of mystery.

HAL: Right. I mean I grew up in a hospital that had been abandoned since the owner was jailed for medicare fraud. I made some of the best friends of my life there.

LYLE: Oh no please do not say any more about that

HAL: You know what I've learned, Lyle? The simplest advice, the stuff that's like, 'that's so simple it's dumb,' stuff like "tell her how you feel" and "listen to your heart," *that's* the stuff that's true.

Say it simply

LYLE: I mean our ghost abandoned us. Like we weren't even worth terrorizing anymore, you know? Sometimes I just get this image in my head that we're all going to end up being as sick as our parents were, and COVID's going to last forever, and we're all going to live in this house until we die, fighting and kind of shuffling from room to room, being scared whenever the house is too quiet-

IRENA: Yeah. That could happen. But it doesn't have to.

HAL: We've been taught to think that an idea being complicated automatically makes it better, or more sophisticated. But that's delusional. Family isn't always easy. But connection is worth everything. It always is. Say what you mean. Say it simply. And then just strap in, you know? How *could* it all be easy? You've known each other since you were babies. How crazy is that?

LYLE: It's so fucking crazy

HAL: Little babies all in an egg sack together. What's that all about? Being in an egg sack with someone? Crawling around waiting to all burst out together, into this insane world, this dark, wet, hot world? That's intense. That bonds you for life, man. But it fucks with you too.

LYLE: Yeah...*yeah*.

Why are you guys so wise?

IRENA: We've done a lot of living.

HAL: A lot of learning.

LYLE: Hey yeah how old *are* you guys?

Pause

HAL: Lyle, can we ask you something?

LYLE: Uh, yeah, sure

HAL: Diana knows there's something different about us. But we haven't told her the whole story.

IRENA: And she hasn't asked

HAL: But....we're all in, man. We want to marry her, and have kids with her, and those kids...they're gonna contain multitudes, you know what I mean?

LYLE: Uhhhh

IRENA: We're 378 years old.

Pause

LYLE:....Added together or-

IRENA: We're immortal. There are some other...quirks, too, but that's the main one

LYLE: Woah

HAL: Do you think she could....handle it?

IRENA: Like do you think that would be a...familial dealbreaker?

LYLE: What? Pfft. No way. Diana once dated a guy she met at clown school. He buried a pair of her panties in our backyard. You guys are awesome. Of course she can handle it.

Hal and Irena take deep breaths.

HAL: Okay. Okay. That's awesome.

IRENA: Eeeee yay.

HAL: Lyle. Can you keep this between us?

LYLE: Yes. Absolutely I can.

Irena and Hal glance at each other. Are they speaking telepathically.

HAL: Yeah, probably just to be safe.

Irena wipes her hand over Lyle's eyes

IRENA: The last thirty seconds are in a beautiful balloon. You let go of the string. The balloon drifts skyward. Goodbye balloon.

LYLE: Wow, you guys are so wise.

SMASH CUT TO:

DIANA & GRANDPA

The basement.

DIANA: Grandpa?

Silence.

DIANA: Hello?

GRANDPA: Oh!

DIANA yelps

DIANA: Grandpa!

GRANDPA: That's what they call me.

DIANA: I brought you pizza. What are you doing down here? It's freezing.

GRANDPA: Well this house won't haunt itself!

DIANA: Yeah but you don't have to do it. We're getting a new ghost!

GRANDPA: You know I don't know what all the fuss is about a new ghost, *I* could haunt this place.

DIANA: I bet you could.

GRANDPA: I basically already *do* haunt this place. Sans compensation, I might add!

DIANA: You're right, I guess it's time you're promoted. How would you haunt if you were a ghost?

GRANDPA: Hmmmm wouldn't have to change much would I. Shuffle around the house. Turn the TV on and off. Piss on the floor a little. Every once in a while you'll hear the shower turn on, and then I'll cry out and you'll hear bones crack. What do you say to that?

Beat. She knows he is testing her.

DIANA: I don't know if ghosts can piss.

GRANDPA: HaHA that's my girl....

DIANA: So what are you doing down here?

GRANDPA: Oh, sometimes I just come down here and sit in the dark.

DIANA: Why?

GRANDPA: Well, I'm just waiting.

DIANA: ...Waiting for what?

GRANDPA: Sometimes I look around and I think... who's house is this? Who's pots and pans are these? I've never seen this before. I stand in the yard, and look at the darkened windows, and say "I wonder if I'm in there." But when I come inside, there's no one there.

Down here you can't see shit, you can't hear shit. It's a lot like being dead, probably. So sometimes I just come down and practice. Try to live in the in between. Say okay Howard you're dead. What was all the fuss about?

DIANA: Grandpa...why are you practicing being dead?

GRANDPA: Well there comes a point. When you lose the point. Of it all.

DIANA: I see

GRANDPA: Oh you *do* oh how nice

DIANA: Depression is common in older adults.

GRANDPA: Oh it *is* well that's good to know, clears everything right up for me

DIANA: I just mean, there are lots of things we can do to address this. There's medications, there's therapy, some regular exercise would be good-

GRANDPA: You're being like Cass

DIANA: No I'm not

GRANDPA: Little Miss Fix It All. Sounds like a lot of work.

DIANA: We could have fun, as a family, we could play board games

GRANDPA: Oh give me a break

DIANA: We all love you. We all want you to be happy. There's got to be something that would make you happy, Grandpa. What is it. Tell me what you want to do. Anything you want, and I'll try to make it happen.

....

GRANDPA: I want to have sex
With an interesting woman

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CASS: Let's never talk about it ever again

KARA: Okay

Pause

CASS: That ghost was fucking horrible. I feel like there's a bird flying around in my head, scratching the inside of my skull with its talons-

KARA: -That's so weird, that's exactly how it feels to me too, I can't believe you just said that. What the fuck-

CASS: -Really?

KARA: Yeah

CASS:.....

...

Yeah, let's never talk about it again.

Pause. Kara hits the juul (PROP)

KARA: So wait I told you I was quitting juuling and the first thing you did was buy me a juul?

CASS: No I just had it in case you lost it. I have an emergency bag. There's stuff in there for everyone.

KARA: Seriously?? Like what?

CASS: Plan B...Xanax...fruit snacks...a compression vest if the dog gets anxious

KARA: Damn. Who are the fruit snacks for.

CASS: Me.

KARA: That's cool.

...Is this a trap? Are you gonna get judgy later about me juuling?

CASS: Do you remember great Uncle Fred? Mom's uncle? When he was 40 he stopped smoking and within two weeks he had a complete psychotic break, he thought Herbert Hoover was working with his family to track him down and sell him into white slavery.

KARA: Oh *god*

CASS: Yeah. Really bad. The doctor said the nicotine was basically the thing keeping him tethered to reality. Maybe you should keep juuling.

KARA: Did they try leeching him, too

CASS: What?

KARA: That sounds like old timey doctor shit

CASS: Yeah, I guess it does. I don't know. Maybe you should keep juuling.

KARA: Do you have- do you feel, tethered?

CASS: What?

KARA: I mean like do you have stuff that makes you feel...how's Phil? How are you and Phil?

CASS: Oh, fine, fine. We're getting a divorce, we're fine, he's fine

KARA: Cass...what?

CASS: I mean it's fine, it is, we've just decided to not be married anymore

KARA: And you didn't think to like, mention that-

CASS: Well this is family time

KARA: ...Yeah...family is where you like.. share thoughts and feelings and major life events

CASS: Family time is handling things and making sure everyone gets places on time

KARA: Damn.
Are you...sad?

CASS: I honestly, don't even know. I just keep doing things that are useful.

KARA: I guess you can't float away if you have a to do list.

CASS: Can I hit that?

KARA: Yeah

Cass hits the juul (PROP)

CASS: Wow that's really good

KARA: Yeah

CASS: Yeah no you shouldn't quit juuling. That is great.

KARA: Yeah, I know.

Hey does Benji seem weird to you?

CASS: Ummmm. Maybe a little?

KARA: Did you see how he took a sip of water and it just ran out of his mouth

CASS: Yeah that was..very weird. You think he's on drugs?

KARA (*mulls it over*): I don't think so.

Kara hands Cass her phone.

CASS: What's this, what am I looking at

KARA: That's the weather forecast where Benji is

CASS: And...

KARA: Notice anything about it?

CASS: It's not snowing.

KARA: Right

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Diana enters.

DIANA: Hey guys

Cass enters.

CASS: Hey. Alright who are we missing...

DIANA: Grandpa's in the basement being depressed and horny

LYLE: My guy

CASS: If that's where he is, I guess it's where he wants to be.

DIANA: *Wow* that's sad

CASS: Maybe he should try a tab of acid

LYLE: It worked for me.

GLOWING, SNOWING, GOING

Irena and Hal enter. Irena is drying her hair with a towel (PROP)

IRENA: Cass for what it's worth, that bidet is amazing, and I'm glad you installed it.

*Hal does something like *chefs kiss**

CASS: Wow. Honestly, thank you. You guys are glowing, you look really, refreshed.

HAL: Uhh *Benji* is glowing.

BENJI: Aww thank you!

HAL: You are *really* glowing

LYLE: Woah BJ you look weird

DIANA: Are you feeling okay?

BENJI: Yeah I feel fine.

KARA: Okay, Benji, enough. What's going on?

BENJI: What?

KARA: Just like, are you okay? One minute you were about to get on the train, the next minute you were snowed in and coming tomorrow, *maybe*?

BENJI: I told you, I'm snowed in

KARA: Yeah it's snowing *here* but it's not snowing at your school. I looked it up on my phone

BENJI: Well that's incorrect because there is snow from the ground to the sky, okay?

KARA: There's what?

BENJI: Guys oh my god, I don't know how to be clearer about this. I was ready to go, I had my coat on and my shoes on and I had my bag, I wasn't late, I wasn't hungover, I walked out of my building and to the edge of campus, and I was about to walk through the gate, but past the gate- is nothing. It's just snow. It's snow from the ground all the way to the sky. Snow, solid.

CASS: It was snowing

IRENA: He said "it's snow"

BENJI: Why are you all being so weird, it's snow, snow like on the tv.

HAL: Snow like on the TV?

DIANA: Like in a movie?

BENJI: Nnn..like on the TV, like kks shhhhhhhh... kssshhh

HAL: Static

BENJI: Yes! Static! That's the word THANK you! It's static from the ground up to the sky, in a dome around the campus, and then I walked towards it to leave, and I hit the static, and my body bounced like a crash test dummy and everything went black and then I opened my eyes and I'm

back in my room with my suitcase with my shoes on, sitting on my bed, ready to go, ready to catch the train...so...I can't leave. How am I supposed to leave?

LYLE: Benji are you messing with us cause if so it's awesome but stop okay? Benji? Please stop, seriously please stop it

The next lines are quiet, fast, deadly serious

HAL (*quietly*): Okay something is really wrong

DIANA (*quietly*): Yeah

HAL: I think he's concussed

DIANA: Or he's having a break.

KARA: Break like mom

CASS: Oh god please no, let's just hope he's concussed

BENJI: Why are you all talking so quiet, you're scaring me

IRENA: Benji, sweetie, don't worry about it, everything's totally fine. How was your day, um, before all this? Did you have a good day?

BENJI: Eh. It was okay. I was kind of down. I went bonk, it was so dumb, such a dumb accident, but I took a bath and felt way way better so-

CASS: Benji you need to call 911

BENJI: No. I can't.

CASS: Why not?

BENJI:....Because my phone is in the bathroom

DIANA: So go get it!

BENJI: I left it in there. I was taking a bath.

DIANA: Bb you need to call 911 right now, okay? You need to go get your phone.

BENJI: I can't.

I can't go in the bathroom.

KARA: Why?

BENJI (*quietly, checking over his shoulder*): Because there's someone in there

....

DIANA: Who's in your bathroom?

BENJI (*whispered*): I don't know

DIANA: Is it a friend of yours?

KARA: Is it Chuck?

BENJI (*on the verge of scared tears, a kid*): I don't know...I don't know them

CASS: Could it be your roommate? Could it be Henry?

BENJI: Maybe....

CASS: Henry can help you, Benji, Henry's your friend. Go in, go in and see, it's okay

DIANA: We'll come with you, Benji, just bring the computer with you

BENJI: You'll come with me?

DIANA: Yes.

BENJI: You won't leave

DIANA: We won't leave

Benji goes into the bathroom.

We see Benji's body in the bathtub.

We see Benji see his body in the bathtub. PROP? TECH SWITCHEROO?

BENJI (half screaming): UMM, UHHH, UMM, I-

LYLE: What the fuck, what the FUCK

CASS: Get out of there Benji, go back to your room, go back to your roo-

Benji drops his device. He's disconnected from the zoom.

DIANA (*real quiet*): Think I'm gonna pass out

HAL: Wiggle your toes

LYLE: This isn't really happening, right? This is drugs, right?

IRENA: I think this might be really happening.

CASS (*on her phone*): I'm calling him

They wait.

CASS: Can someone call 911?

DIANA: Yeah, yeah-

LYLE: So that was his body.

IRENA: Yeah.

LYLE: But he's alive

IRENA: I don't...think so

KARA: I don't think so

IRENA: I'm so sorry

CASS (*not there*): That's okay

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GEORGE Yeah, well, dissociating is an easy way to slip into caricature, it happens to the best of us, you can't just suddenly realize oh I'm dead but also immortal because I'm a ghost at the same moment, the shock would make you crazy. This is all, you're on the right track

CASS: Track to what

GEORGE: To Benji being an immortal ghost.

KARA: Okay. That's good news. Okay.

GEORGE: Yes! It is! Okay! And now! Not good news
The thing about dying in a boarding school...is...the school owns your soul

CASS: What??

GEORGE: I know right??

LYLE: They *own* you?

GEORGE: Yeah, if you die on campus, your immortal soul is their intellectual property. It's in the housing agreement.

CASS: I'm going to sue the shit out of this school.

HAL: That's why Benji pops back when he gets to the edge of the school.

LYLE: It's like an anti theft mechanism?

CASS: I will kill everyone who works at this school

DIANA: There has to be a way around that.

GEORGE: Well, until the body and soul are full separated, where the body goes, the soul follows.

IRENA: -Ohh shit

She runs and gets her coat.

LYLE: What

HAL: Ohhhhhhh

Hal gets up to get his coat

DIANA: We gotta go get his body

GEORGE: Immediately.

Everyone springs into action, grabbing pizza box, keys, shoes.

DIANA: How long is the drive

CASS: two hours forty minutes

HAL: We have a faster way

CASS: You have a faster way than me driving 20 miles over the speed limit?

HAL:....Yes

LYLE: Hey, can you stay here and talk to our grandpa if he comes on the zoom?

GEORGE: What? Ahh. I mean...

KARA: **BYE GRANDPA WE LOVE YOU WE'RE GOING TO GET BENJI'S BODY
BEFORE HIS SOUL SEPARATES FROM HIS CORPSE AND THE SCHOOL OWNS HIM**

GRANDPA *(from off)*: **OKAY! HAVE FUN!**

LYLE: Please please please you can move in with us if you still want to.

GEORGE: Really

LYLE: Right Cass?

CASS: George if this works and we get Benji back I'll bear you a kid I don't care

GEORGE: Yeah, alright, okay.

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