

THIS HOUSE IS THE WORST

written by

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EXT. ASCHER MANOR - DAY

A local news report. We see establishing shots of Ascher Manor - a large mansion that screams 'haunted house'. At the bottom of the screen is a news banner that reads: **MURDER MANSION FINDS NEW OWNERS.**

LINDSAY PETERS (V.O.)

This is Ascher Manor, one of the oldest houses in Springbrook. Despite its prime location and impressive square footage, it has remained on the market for nearly twelve years. And the locals are more than happy to tell you why.

CUE MONTAGE:

Cut to RANDOM WOMAN 1 on street:

RANDOM WOMAN 1

That place is haunted. I mean *really* haunted.

Cut to RANDOM MAN on street:

RANDOM MAN

Oh that house is haunted as hell. It's like a haunted... hell-house.

Cut to RANDOM WOMAN:

RANDOM WOMAN

It's so creepy. I don't even like looking at that place.

Cut to TEENAGERS:

TEEN GUY

We call it Murder Mansion. I don't know why exactly.

TEEN GIRL

Probably because of all the murders.

TEEN GUY

You're so smart, babe.

They start making out.

Cut to RANDOM COUPLE:

WIFE

Last year my husband and I found out that the social studies teacher had assigned a paper on the house's history, and we sued the school board.

HUSBAND

(incredulous)

And we won! Like, a lot! And we don't even have a kid! So yeah, that place *sucks*. I mean not for us obviously, because we have a pool now.

Cut to POLICE OFFICER.

POLICE OFFICER

Oh Murder Mansion is haunted, 100%. That place is a black hole of demonic energy. Of course we can't say that - bad PR - so there's an official statement we always give about - well, you're about to hear it I guess. Just let me know when you're rolling.

Cut to an OLDER GUY in a warehouse.

OLDER GUY

The whole 'Murder Mansion' thing is ridiculous, and people need to stop saying it. It's Murder *Manor*. Geez Louise this neighborhood has changed. Why? You're not telling me another dumbass actually bought that death trap, are you?

LINDSAY PETERS (V.O.)

In fact, another dumbass just did. I sat down with the new owner, Walter Galloway, and his family to find out why.

INT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Reporter LINDSAY PETERS is sitting across from WALTER GALLOWAY (mid 50s, buffoonish but good natured), AMANDA GALLOWAY (mid 40s, savvy) and KATIE GALLOWAY (15, sweet but a little naive.)

WALTER

...and then she said 'sign here'
and I said 'pencil okay?' and she
said 'no' so I signed with a pen
and that's how I bought the house!

LINDSAY PETERS

Right... I think it's pretty clear
how you bought the house, the
question I was getting at is *why*
you bought the house.

WALTER

Are you kidding? It's beautiful!
And so cheap!

The news banner changes to read: **NEW OWNER SAYS MURDER HOUSE
WAS 'BEAUTIFUL', 'CHEAP.'**

LINDSAY PETERS

Uh huh, and you knew about the
place's history?

WALTER

Yup, the realtor filled me in. She
said she legally had to.

LINDSAY PETERS

And yet you took it anyway.

WALTER

Yes.

LINDSAY PETERS

To live it.

WALTER

Correct.

LINDSAY PETERS

With your family.

WALTER

It's in a *great* school district.

Amanda leans in.

AMANDA

What my husband means is, we're not
going to be scared off by some
superstition.

News banner: **NEW OWNER OF MURDER MANSION: 'I AIN'T SCARED OF
NO GHOSTS.'**

LINDSAY PETERS
And what do you think, Katie?

KATIE
I think that our society has an
appalling distrust of the
paranormal. I'm not afraid to
engage with those who have crossed
over.

**News Banner: DAUGHTER SEEKS ENGAGEMENT TO GHOST, SOCIETY
APPALLED**

LINDSAY PETERS
Well thank you all for your time,
and I hope you-

WALTER
Sorry, could I just plug my new
business quickly? While I'm on the
air?

LINDSAY PETERS
Sure.

WALTER
(proudly)
I work at an accounting firm!

A long, awkward pause.

LINDSAY PETERS
(awkwardly)
From KWC local news, I'm Lindsay
Peters.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

The Galloways enter, each of them carrying large grocery
bags. They set them on the counter. They all look exhausted.

KATIE
Nap. Now. Please?

AMANDA
Already?

VOICE (O.C.)
Well ya can't beat a good late-
morning nap.

KATIE
Exac- AAAAGH!

The Galloways <YELL> and jump back. EZRA (late 20s) is sitting at the kitchen table reading the paper.

Ezra jumps up as well, startled by the Galloways reaction.

AMANDA
Who the hell are you??

Amanda grabs an apple from the bag and throws it at at Ezra.
Katie throws a ketchup bottle.

EZRA
I'm the- I'm- hey, stop!

Walter starts plucking grapes and throwing them at Ezra.

WALTER
Get... out... you stupid... ghost.

EZRA
One at a time? Really?

Walter picks up a pineapple. Ezra puts his hands up in surrender.

EZRA (CONT'D)
Whoa okay, hold your fire! I'm
Ezra, I'm-

WALTER
You're the caretaker! We were told
we'd be meeting you today.

Walter puts the pineapple down. Amanda and Katie look relieved as well.

EZRA
(indignant)
Really? Then why'd you try to make
a fruit smoothie with my face?

AMANDA
Well we didn't think it was you.
You're so young!

EZRA
Yes well... thank you.

KATIE
We're really sorry.

EZRA
It's fine.

WALTER
Water under the bridge, as they
say.

A brief awkward pause.

AMANDA
So Ezra, thank you for coming by -
do you live far?

EZRA
Not too far. First bedroom on the
right.

KATIE
Wait - you live here?

EZRA
(confused)
Where else would I live?

Galloways look to each other, processing.

AMANDA
We uh, just didn't realize that you
were, uh, staying on...

EZRA
Trust me, with this house you're
going to need all the help you can
get.

WALTER
Ooh, I've always wanted to have a
maid!

KATIE
Dad!

WALTER
(worried)
What, is that an offensive term? I
didn't mean it that way.
(to Ezra)
Water under the bridge.

EZRA
That sure is a phrase.

KATIE
He's not a *maid* dad, he's a, um-

WALTER
Assistant?

EZRA
Eh, too office-y

AMANDA
Housekeeper?

EZRA
This isn't a hotel.

WALTER
Manservant?

EZRA
Jesus you were closer with maid.

KATIE
Butler.

WALTER
Ooh, yeah - butler!

EZRA
(thoughtfully)
Butler, huh? Yeah, I can work with that. Now, just a few rules. Number one: don't fight the house. If you fight the house, the house fights back.

WALTER
(nodding)
Makes sense.

AMANDA
What?

EZRA
Number two: avoid the west wing.

WALTER
Which seasons?

EZRA
I meant the west wing of the house. But for the record, seasons 1-8, you're fine. The last season... oof.

EZRA (CONT'D)
Now you probably saw on the floor plan-

Ezra sees Walter's blank expression, and turns to talk to Amanda.

EZRA (CONT'D)

You probably saw on the floor plan,
you can't get to the west wing
anyway.

AMANDA

Yeah it's all walled off - we're
gonna knock those down though.

EZRA

No you're not, because that would
be violating rule one.

KATIE

So we can basically ignore rule two
then.

EZRA

No, rule two is very important.

KATIE

But we'd have to break rule one to
break rule two.

EZRA

And you can't break rule one.

KATIE

So we can't break rule two.

EZRA

Perfect! So we're on the same page
then.

AMANDA

No we're not. You're telling us we
just bought half a house?

EZRA

That's right. Congratulations! Make
yourselves right at half-home. All
right, hands in- Halloways on
three.

Ezra puts his hand in. Only Walter joins.

EZRA (CONT'D)

One, two three-

EZRA/WALTER (CONT'D)

Halloways!

KATIE
It's *Galloways*.

EZRA
It sure is.

Ezra exits.

A beat.

WALTER
(cheerfully)
I like that guy!

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Amanda is cooking a fancy breakfast. She puts a sauce on the stove, and consults her cook book.

AMANDA
(reading)
Let simmer for one minute, or until
the sauce starts to slightly
bubble.

She sets a cooking timer, and puts her cookbook away, and in doing so accidentally knocks another book off the shelf.

She examines it. The book is large and bound with black leather. There are no words on the cover, only the image of a goblin's red face. She opens the book in curiosity.

There is a <WHOOSH> of wind and the pages of the book start flipping rapidly. Amanda drops the book in shock. The pages continue to flip on their own, and a shadowy figure rises from the book. The pages stop flipping, and we see GRUMPUS THE GOBLIN (4 feet tall, wizened - very 'goblin.')

GOBLIN
Greetings, woman!

AMANDA
(a little indignant)
'Woman?'

GOBLIN
How fortunate you are to have
stumbled across my ancient tome.
You see, my name is Grumpus-

Amanda lets out a <SNORT OF LAUGHTER>

AMANDA

Sorry, what was that again?

Grumpus rolls his eyes.

GRUMPUS

Grumpus. Look I've got a whole thing I have to do, so - a little respect? Please?

AMANDA

I'm sorry. Go ahead.

GRUMPUS

My name is Grumpus. My tome is my home, my name is my fame, and this is my dance when I...

(off Amanda, clearly
struggling to keep a
straight face)

You know what I'm just going to skip to the end. You and I are going to make a deal.

AMANDA

A deal?

GRUMPUS

That's right. A deal. A bargain. An agreement, if you will. I could give you... well anything your heart desires!

Grumpus cackles maniacally.

AMANDA

Ahh, okay. I'm good.

GRUMPUS

You're 'good?' Surely there must be something you want.

AMANDA

Oh there are plenty of things I want. But you're acting super suspicious.

GRUMPUS

Suspicious? I just want to grant you whatever it is you desire! Like a new sports car! - Just sign a deal with me, and you'll have a *Jaguar waiting for you in the garage.*

In a puff of smoke, a floating contract appears.

AMANDA

Even if that's what I wanted, I
would never phrase it like that.

Amanda puts breakfast on the table. Grumpus tries again.

GRUMPUS

Ah, so you enjoy cooking? Have I
got a deal for you!

A puff of smoke, the contract disappears and is replaced with
a new one.

Amanda takes it and reads it over.

AMANDA

Every dish I make will be 'to die
for.' Very tempting...

Grumpus doesn't catch the sarcasm.

GRUMPUS

Great! So we have a deal, the?

Amanda ignores him.

AMANDA

Wow this thing really goes off the
rails. What the hell is the "Sword
of Saint Sirus?"

GRUMPUS

That's all boilerplate.

AMANDA

Uh-huh... yeah I'm definitely out,
sorry.

GRUMPUS

But we have to make a deal!

AMANDA

I'm not signing a deal with you. So
you might as well get back into
your little book.

She tries to open the book. It's sealed shut.

GRUMPUS

First of all, it's a *tome*. My *tome*
is my home. And it's sealed shut
until we make a deal.

(MORE)

GRUMPUS (CONT'D)

This was all in my intro, there's a whole 'sign the deal, break the seal' thing.

Amanda sighs.

AMANDA

All right, fine. Maybe we can work something out. But only if we rework some of these contract terms.

GRUMPUS

What did you have in mind?

AMANDA

Why don't we talk about it at my office.

GRUMPUS

Your office?

EXT. OFFICE - DAY

Amanda and Grumpus are outside a building. Grumpus looks up and sees the sign:

Galloway and Leeds - Contract Law

GRUMPUS

Crap.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ezra is playing the piano. Katie enters, dragging her feet.

KATIE

I'm borreeeeeeeeed.

EZRA

Bored? There's a million things you can do. We could write a song!

KATIE

We could, or... oh, here's a random idea: you could introduce me to some, you know...

Katie tries wavering her arms in a spooky manner.

EZRA

Surfers?

KATIE
Spirits.

EZRA
Ahh. No.

KATIE
But-

EZRA
Nope.

KATIE
Pleeeeeease?

EZRA
No chance, Jos-ance. Okay, why
don't we start with the chorus.

KATIE
(angrily)
You're the worst butler in the
world!

EZRA
Yeah that has a nice ring to it.

Ezra starts improvising a melody.

EZRA (CONT'D)
(singing)
*You're the worst butler in the
woooooorld*

Katie <MASHES PIANO KEYS> and storms out.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Katie reaches the top of the stairs and heads towards her
room, but stops - Ezra's door is slightly open.

She looks around her, then quietly creeps inside.

INT. EZRA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ezra's bedroom looks pretty typical for a guy in his 20s.
There's a guitar on the wall, a hamper in the corner, a desk
and a bookcase.

Katie carefully scans the bookcase. Nothing interesting.

She turns her attention to the desk. There's a framed photo of a six year old Ezra with his parents. She smiles. It's a sweet picture. She checks the drawers. The top one is empty. The bottom is not.

It's a book. Old. Incredibly old - the pages are yellowing. The cover is ornately decorated, and bears the title: *A Master's Guide to the Occult*.

KATIE
(whispering)
Jackpot.

She takes the book and creeps out.

INT. AMANDA'S OFFICE - DAY

Documents are strewn all over the conference table. It's an odd combination of office stationary and ancient scrolls.

Amanda and Grumpus are examining different documents, crossing things out and making edits.

GRUMPUS
You want a *two year opt-out window*?

AMANDA
I can go down to 18 months.

Amanda's assistant LEAH enters.

LEAH
Ms. Galloway, want anything from Starb-

She sees Grumpus and falters.

LEAH (CONT'D)
From, uh - from Starbucks?

AMANDA
I'll take a latte, thanks.
(to Grumpus)
Want anything?

GRUMPUS
Bring me the seeds of a faraway land, roasted in fire, crushed into powder, steeped in a boiling-

AMANDA
Two lattes, Leah.

GRUMPUS
Make mine a Frappuccino actually.

Leah backs out slowly. Amanda and Grumpus resume making edits.

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Ezra is dozing on the couch. He opens his eyes and sits up. He looks outside and does a double-take - Walter is hula-hooping in the backyard.

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Ezra joins Walter.

EZRA
Training for Mardi Gras?

WALTER
Ezra! Grab a hoop!

Walt gestures to a nearby pile of hula hoops.

EZRA
You know what? I think I will.

WALTER
Good man!

Ezra grabs a hula hoop and joins in with Walter.

WALTER (CONT'D)
You know Ezra, I love my family. I really do. But this is what I've missed, right here.
(points to himself and Ezra)
Guy time. Couple bros just hanging and hooping.

Ezra smiles.

EZRA
I like you Walt. You're a weird guy, but I like you.

WALTER
Thank you! I was getting the stuff for Katie's diorama when I saw these, and I thought-

EZRA

Wait, Katie's *diorama*? They still do those in high school?

WALTER

I guess! She needed me to get her candles, string, sesame oil, and uh...

As Walter lists these materials, Ezra slowly realizes something.

WALTER (CONT'D)

(still wracking his brains)

Uh... what was that last thing?

EZRA

Juniper berries?

WALTER

(snapping his fingers)

That was it!

A <CLATTER> as Ezra lets his hoop fall.

Walter turns to Ezra, who is already running back inside.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Don't worry, you'll get the hang of it.

(calling after him)

All in the hips!

(to himself)

All in the hips.

INT. KATIE'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Katie has laid out the string in a large circle, and is mixing the sesame oil and berries into a purple paste. She scoops some up with her fingers, and starts drawing a pentagram in the center of the circle.

KATIE

Please don't stain, please don't
don't stain, please don't stain...

Katie picks up the ancient book from her desk. She puts her finger on the instruction she just followed.

CLOSE UP on book - We see in very old font:

Incanteth thrice: 'Please Don't Stain.'

KATIE (CONT'D)
Check. And finally...

She puts the book down. She grabs the candle and puts it in the center of the pentagram, then lights it.

The pentagram glows bright purple.

There's a <WHOOSH> and MYRON appears in a puff of black smoke. He has a 'Criss Angel' vibe, complete with eye shadow and an open black vest.

Katie <GASPS!> Myron, still dusting himself off, doesn't notice.

MYRON
Listen Ez, if this is about the mess in the den, I'm already on it.

Myron looks up at Katie.

MYRON (CONT'D)
You're not Ezra.

KATIE
(nervous but excited)
N-no I-I'm Katie.

MYRON
I'm Myron, and I didn't trash your den. But if someone did, it's probably because Amber was cheating at monopoly.

KATIE
Who?

Another <WHOOSH> and NURSE AMBER appears. She wears slightly blood-stained scrubs.

NURSE AMBER
Make it quick Ez, I'm mid-operation.

MYRON
And you're cheating at that too! I don't know how yet, but nobody removes the wishbone on their first try.

Amber takes in the scene.

NURSE AMBER
Oh boy. Katie, right?

KATIE

Y-yes.

MYRON

(to Amber)

How did you-

NURSE AMBER

Myron, she's one of *them*. We shouldn't be here.

MYRON

Hey, *she* summoned *us*. That's a green light as far as I'm concerned.

NURSE AMBER

(to Katie)

Does Ezra know about this summoning portal?

KATIE

(super guiltily)

Does Ezra know? Why wouldn't... pffft, I mean... right?

MYRON

See? It's fine!

Another <WHOOSH> and REESE (haughty, British) appears.

REESE

(bored)

Oh look. A party.

MYRON

Hey Reese.

Reese looks at Katie, then turns to Myron and Amber.

REESE

You two are in trouble.

KATIE

No one's in trouble! I just... I wanted to meet everyone.

REESE

Why?

KATIE

I mean, why not?

A cloud of golden mist appears, accompanied by a <TINKLE OF BELLS.> Everyone besides Katie <GROANS.>

The golden mist solidifies and transforms into DELPHI. She's dressed in white robes like a Greek goddess, and has a slight supernatural glow about her. She's rather plain looking, and has a slightly nasal tone.

MYRON/NURSE AMBER
(unenthusiastic)
Hi Del.

DELPHI
*Be joyous all, the Muse is in
Let the merriment begin!*

REESE
(to Katie)
That answer your question?

Delphi eyes Katie and gives a knowing smile.

DELPHI
Ahh, I know that look. I know it well. Tis the countenance of a mortal when first laying eyes on a goddess.

Delphi gives a little twirl.

KATIE
You're a goddess?

NURSE AMBER
Delphi is a muse.

DELPHI
(defensively)
Which is a type of goddess!

Behind her back Myron wavers his hand in an 'ehhh' gesture.

DELPHI (CONT'D)
*When your imagination tires
My divinity inspires*

KATIE
Really! What kind of stuff have you inspired?

DELPHI
Oh all sorts of things. Crocs with socks... last season of the West Wing-

REESE

Oof.

DELPHI

Spiderman...

KATIE

(impressed)

Spiderman? Really?

DELPHI

(proudly)

That's right! But enough about Broadway...

EZRA (O.S.)

Dammit you guys!

Ezra enters. He immediately walks over to the candle and blows it out. The pentagram stops glowing.

KATIE

Hey!

Ezra ignores her.

The spirits all shift guiltily, staring at the floor in shame.

EZRA

We talked about this, guys.

The spirits all start <LOUDLY PROTESTING> at once. Ezra holds up a hand, and they fall silent.

We hear Walter calling up from downstairs:

WALTER (O.S.)

Katie? Everything okay up there?

EZRA/KATIE/ALL SPIRITS

Yeah!/No problem!/It's fine!/All good!

A beat.

WALTER

(cheerfully)

All right then!

Ezra turns back to the spirits.

NURSE AMBER
(pointing)
Myron trashed the den!

INT. AMANDA'S OFFICE - DAY

Amanda and Grumpus are having a heated argument.

GRUMPUS
How is that a conflict?

AMANDA
How is that *not* a conflict?

She quotes from a document she's holding.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
(reading)
...with related disputes settled by
an *independent and qualified*
judicious committee-

GRUMPUS
And you don't think the Seven Faces
of Queen Grazeer is *qualified*?

AMANDA
I'm not even sure it's a committee,
it sounds like one person.

Grumpus groans.

GRUMPUS
I keep telling you, it's ONE WOMAN
but she wears the mask of a
THOUSAND FACES.

AMANDA
You *just* said seven faces

GRUMPUS
Seven are on the *committee*.

Amanda sits back down. She pushes the document aside and
picks up another.

AMANDA
We'll table that section for now.

Grumpus looks at her in awe.

GRUMPUS
How... how do you just keep going?

AMANDA

Welcome to the big leagues.

Motivated, Grampus picks up a pile of documents and gets back to work.

INT. KATIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Ezra takes the old book from Katie's desk.

EZRA

A summoning shrine.

He shakes his head in exasperation.

EZRA (CONT'D)

Basically an open invitation for the whole house to show up.

KATIE

Good! I want to meet everyone!

EZRA

Trust me, you don't.

He turns to the spirits.

EZRA (CONT'D)

All right, closing time - you don't have to go home, but you can't stay here.

DELPHI

(smugly to Reese)

I helped write that song you know.

KATIE

Wait! Ezra - you go. They're staying.

EZRA

Highly unlikely.

KATIE

Really? You can't banish them. Not without-

She grabs the book back from Ezra and flips to a page.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Rosemary, beeswax, horse hair, and a hollowed out coconut.

She <SNAPS> the book shut and puts it back on her desk triumphantly.

A beat. Ezra turns to the spirits.

EZRA

If you guys don't leave I'm
changing the Netflix password.

MYRON/AMBER/REESE/DELPHI

See ya./Bye!/What a shame./Fare
thee well!

They each disappear; the spirits in puffs of smoke, Delphi in golden mist.

KATIE

You're the worst!

EZRA

I can live with that.

He takes the candle and string and throws them in the trash, then starts cleaning the pentagram.

Katie hovers around him, angry.

KATIE

I can look after myself you know. I
don't need... ugh, you don't get
it!

Ezra stops what he's doing.

EZRA

I don't get it? Really. I don't get
it? I've lived here for *fifteen*
years. You moved in two days ago.
You don't think there's a *chance*
that I know what I'm talking about?

Ezra cocks his head slightly, listening closely.

We hear <STATIC>, very quiet but slowly getting louder.

Katie hasn't noticed.

KATIE

Well you should just tell me-

EZRA

Katie, get in the closet.

Katie rolls her eyes.

KATIE

Really? Are you giving me a 'time out?'

EZRA

Katie, get in the closet. Now.

Katie looks at Ezra, and is disarmed - for the first time, Ezra looks genuinely scared.

Katie gapes at him for a second, then gets into the closet. Ice starts to <CRACKLE> and form over the windows of Katie's bedroom. The static is getting louder.

IN THE CLOSET- Katie <SHIVERS.> She can see her breath. She slides down onto the floor.

IN THE MAIN ROOM- Ezra is steeling himself.

CELIA (30s, domineering) enters.

EZRA (CONT'D)

What do you want, Celia.

CELIA

(mockingly)

What do *I* want? You made a summoning portal - was I not invited?

IN THE CLOSET- Katie watches through the slats as Celia walks around examining the room with interest.

CELIA (CONT'D)

Unless, of course, it wasn't you...

EZRA

It was.

CELIA

Mhmm...

IN THE MAIN ROOM- Celia picks up the old book.

CELIA (CONT'D)

A little light reading? We both know you know this book by heart.

She continues examining the room, casually opening desk drawers, etc.

Celia picks up a framed photo of Katie with her parents.

CELIA (CONT'D)
Cute. She's not much older than you
were-

EZRA
Get out.

Celia gives a mocking <GASP!>

CELIA
So rude! Where are your manners,
Ezra? Your parents would be
ashamed.

IN THE CLOSET- Katie watches through the slats as Celia draws
closer.

EZRA
(loudly)
We had a deal, Celia.

Celia turns, and walks away from the closet back towards
Ezra.

EZRA (CONT'D)
You keep your end, I keep mine.
Or...

CELIA
Or what? Or WHAT?!

On the last word, Celia expels a wave of energy, throwing
Ezra backwards against the wall.

Katie nearly screams, but covers her mouth in time. She sits
back from the door and scoots to the back of the closet. We
hear the <MUFFLED VOICES> of Ezra and Celia, but can't make
out what they're saying.

IN THE MAIN ROOM- Ezra is back on his feet. Celia is leaving.

CELIA (CONT'D)
This house can give, and it can
take away. You know that better
than anyone.

Celia opens the door. <STATIC> slowly fades up.

CELIA (CONT'D)
(over her shoulder)
Don't be a stranger, Ezra - I miss
our little chats.

<STATIC> stops. The windows de-ice, and the room seems to warm up.

Ezra goes to the closet and opens the door. Katie is sitting against the back wall, crying silently.

Ezra <SIGHS> and sits down in the closet beside her. He puts a comforting arm around her, and she leans her head onto his shoulder.

INT. AMANDA'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

A neat little pile of papers sits on Amanda's desk. Amanda and Grumpus are looking down at it. Both seem a little nervous, but excited.

AMANDA

All right...

She clicks her pen, psyching herself up.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Okay, let's do this.

GRUMPUS

Marvelous.

(pointing to page)

Sign here, here, initial here...

Amanda fills it out and hands the pen to Grumpus.

GRUMPUS (CONT'D)

(signing)

'Grumpus'... 'Grumpus'... 'Grumpus'

(off Amanda's snort of laughter)

Yeah, yeah... and.... 'G'.

Grumpus finishes the final 'G' a flourish.

GRUMPUS (CONT'D)

And with that, the deal has been signed.

AMANDA

Yes it has. Welcome to Galloway and Leeds.

Grumpus shakes her hand enthusiastically.

GRUMPUS
(triumphant)
Yes... Yes... greatness is mine!
For now... I am an intern!

AMANDA
Unpaid intern.

GRUMPUS
(still triumphant)
Paid in work experience! Which
opens doors, right?

Amanda gives a reassuring thumbs-up.

The cover of Grumpus's book glows slightly.

AMANDA
Well, look at that. So - I'll see
you Monday?

GRUMPUS
Monday it is!

Grumpus grabs the book and opens it.

He gets sucked into the pages, and the book falls to the
floor with a <THUD>

Amanda picks it up and dusts it off, and slides it carefully
onto the shelf behind her desk.

INT. KATIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Ezra and Katie are still sitting in the closet.

Finally, Katie breaks the silence.

KATIE
Ezra, you said you've lived in this
house for fifteen years.

EZRA
That's right.

KATIE
The last owners of this house were
killed twelve years ago.

EZRA
Yes they were. But their son
survived. And he never left.

Katie is stunned.

KATIE

And you've just been living here?
Alone?

EZRA

'Alone?' after everything you've
seen here today, could you really
say I was alone?

A beat.

KATIE

I should have listened to you. I'm
sorry.

EZRA

No, you shouldn't have. Do you
remember Rule One?

KATIE

If you mess with the house, it
messes with you back.

EZRA

That's right. And I messed with the
house by trying to hide it from you
guys. But I want you to see it. All
of it - in its chaotic glory.

KATIE

But... what about what happened to
all the other families? To *your*
family?

EZRA

Well your family has something mine
never did- a kickass butler to show
them the ropes.

Ezra stands up and offers a hand to Katie to help her up. She
takes it.

EZRA (CONT'D)

And to lend a hand when-

KATIE

Little on the nose

EZRA

Yeah felt that as soon as I started
saying it.

Katie and Ezra step out of the closet.

KATIE
I just can't believe you did it.

EZRA
Did what?

KATIE
(shaking her head
disappointedly)
You violated Rule One.

EZRA
Oh, shut up.

Ezra heads for the door.

KATIE
Wait! Don't forget...

Katie grabs the old book to give to Ezra.

Ezra considers for a moment.

EZRA
You hang on to it.

Ezra exits.

Katie smiles. She flops onto her bed with the book and starts casually flipping through the pages.

ROLL CREDITS.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (POST-CREDITS)

Ezra is playing piano. Walter is with him.

EZRA
(singing)
*You ironed my dinner
Then cooked me my pants*

WALTER
(singing)
*You watered the garbage
And threw out the plants*

EZRA
(singing)
The kitchen's so messy
It's infested with squirrels.

EZRA/WALTER (CONT'D)
(in harmony)
Cuz you're the worst butler in the
wooooooorld!

END.

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