

A How-To Guide for the Haunting and the Haunted

Cast of Characters

- **Aurora** - a researcher of the occult, believes her house is haunted
- **Lindsey** - her husband, a musician. Is absolutely unconvinced that his house is haunted.
- **Eliot** - definitely a ghost
- **Rosie** - a medium Aurora calls in to talk to the supposed ghosts
- **Emmett** - the gardener, very confused
- **Maxie** - supposedly a ghost cat. May or may not exist
- **Assorted ghost band members** - troublemakers, the lot of them
- **Hayes** - ghostly butler/caretaker, has been cleaning up the house
- **Killian** - a private investigator that Lindsey calls in to find a reasonable explanation for the ghosts
- **Oliver** - Killian's assistant
- **Jaime** - the neighbor

Setting: Aurora & Lindsey's manor house

Act I

Scene 1 - Library

[we open on a young woman reading a book. This is AURORA, and this is her house. Behind her, HAYES is dusting the room. There is violin music coming from somewhere off to the left]

AURORA

(pauses in her reading. Takes a deep breath. Looks back down at the book. Looks up again. Sighs)

Lindsey. Lindsey!

[the violin music continues, possibly even louder than before]

AURORA
(standing up)
LINDSEY!

[the music cuts out. A door to the left opens, and LINDSEY pokes his head out]

LINDSEY
Rora?

AURORA
Did you hear that?

LINDSEY
(confused)
Yes, that was a rather nice piece by the name of-

AURORA
No! I mean, yes, you sounded lovely, darling, but I don't mean your playing. I keep hearing this *sound*.

LINDSEY
What sound?

AURORA
Listen.

[the two of them listen intently. AURORA looks focused, LINDSEY still looks confused]

LINDSEY
I don't-

AURORA
I swear I keep hearing footsteps.

[HAYES freezes in place]

LINDSEY
My...? Footsteps...?

AURORA

No, I would know if they were yours. I know what yours sound like. These ones are different.

[slowly, HAYES attempts to tiptoe backwards out of the room]

AURORA

There! Those!

[HAYES freezes again]

AURORA

It's like there's someone else in the room.

[in the background, HAYES gestures furiously in frustration]

LINDSEY

Darling, I don't know what to tell you...

AURORA

You don't hear it.

[LINDSEY shakes his head, a bit forlornly. He doesn't like disappointing his wife.]

LINDSEY

I'm sorry

AURORA

(shakes her head)

No, there's no need to apologize, Linds. It's alright. I just wanted to test a theory. And I have. It appears I have lost my mind.

[in the background, HAYES lets out an overexaggerated sigh of relief. AURORA whirls to stare directly at them. She does not see them. They back away, very slowly, AURORA still staring in their direction]

[LINDSEY approaches, puts a hand on her shoulder. She looks back at him.]

LINDSEY

(teasing)

You lost your mind years ago, love.

AURORA

(makes a face at him)

LINDSEY

(smiles)

And I love you for it.

[AURORA softens]

LINDSEY

Are you alright? Is there something you need from me?

AURORA

No, thank you, I'm fine. I've probably just.. Spent too much time working. Reading ghost stories all day, you know? Must have rubbed off on me.

LINDSEY

Are you sure?

AURORA

Yeah, yeah, I think so. Thank you. You're brilliant. I think I'll just.. Try to rest for a bit. Take a nap, maybe.

LINDSEY

Sounds lovely. Anything I can do?

AURORA

You could play some more music for me.

LINDSEY

(excited)

With pleasure!

[he takes her hand and leads her offstage]

[scene change here]

Scene 2 - Ghost Room

[The setting has changed slightly. We are now in a different room. The violin music can once again be heard. HAYES rushes back onstage, stopping when they spot a figure seated in shadow on the other side of the room]

HAYES

What did you do?

[the chair is brought out of shadow, revealing ELIOT, perched lazily]

ELIOT

What a way to say hello.

HAYES

(exasperated)

Hello, Eliot. What did you do?

ELIOT

I've done many things, dear Hayes, which one specifically might you be referring to?

HAYES

I know you've been reading over her shoulder. I know you've been taking notes.

ELIOT

And? It's nice to have a hobby.

HAYES

Driving the woman who owns this house insane is *not* a hobby. It's a problem.

ELIOT

(unfazed)

I had no hand in her insanity, that's on her. Or perhaps the husband.

HAYES

Lindsey is sweet. And Aurora is not insane, at least not yet. She *will* be, if you keep this up.

ELIOT
I plead not guilty.

[HAYES hits him on the shoulder. They're not very strong or very brave, so it isn't much]

HAYES
I swear, one of these days...

ELIOT
(smirking)
You'll kill me?

[HAYES scowls . ELIOT laughs]

ELIOT
What? *(laughs again)* Lost your sense of humor along with your life?

HAYES
You're not funny, you know.

ELIOT
Rude.

HAYES
(after a pause)
What are you up to, Eliot?

ELIOT
Did she see you?

HAYES
(a bit taken aback)
She heard me.

ELIOT
(grins)

Good enough.

HAYES

I *knew* it was you. You did something. You... you're sitting in a chair.

ELIOT

Very astute.

HAYES

How are you doing that?

ELIOT

(pleased with himself)

You're the one who seems to know everything about my every move, you tell me.

HAYES

You- you didn't summon that, you didn't just manifest- you're *sitting* in it!

ELIOT

Yes, darling, I believe we've already established that.

HAYES

But that means-

[shocked and confused, HAYES backs into the wall... and slams right against it. They flatten themselves up against it, startled]

HAYES

Oh... Oh no.

[the lights go out]

[there should be something here depending on whether or not the garden will be in front of the curtain or somewhere else not on stage]

Scene 3 - Garden

[the manor's garden is a lovely, happy place. EMMETT, the gardener, is humming as he waters his plants. Light piano music starts playing]

EMMETT

(stops humming, looks up in the direction of the manor window)

Do you mind?

[the music cuts out. EMMETT begins to hum again]

AURORA

(enters stage left, walks by the gardener without looking his way)

Morning, Emmett

EMMETT

(turning to her with a smile, tipping his hat)

Good morning, Miss Rora.

AURORA

(nose in a book)

How are my black roses doing?

EMMETT

(sadly)

Not very well, I'm afraid. Something keeps getting at them. A cat, most likely.

AURORA

(frowns, looks up)

We don't have a cat.

EMMETT

(bends down to inspect some flowers)

Well, it was either a cat or a very cat-shaped rabbit.

AURORA

(quietly)

Maybe it was ghosts.

EMMETT

(laughs)

Now that would be something.

AURORA

You don't believe in ghosts, Emmett?

EMMETT

I believe in a great many things, my dear.

AURORA

That's not much of an answer.

EMMETT

Do *you* believe in ghosts?

AURORA

(looks a bit embarrassed)

I shouldn't, I know. Lindsey doesn't.

EMMETT

Lindsey prefers to dwell on what he knows is true, I think. The possibilities of the infinity of the universe make him a bit uncomfortable.

AURORA

(smiles)

I don't fault him for it. But sometimes I feel as though... I love him, I do, and he tries so hard, but I don't think he understands how very much this is a part of me. Does that make sense?

EMMETT

Aye, it does. I have faith in you both, though. You should try having some yourself. Talk to him.

AURORA

I.. thank you, Emmett. I'll try.

EMMETT

That's our girl. Speaking of Lindsey, however, when did he pick up piano?

AURORA

He.. hasn't. Lindsey's never played piano.

[the piano music returns, this time melodramatically spooky]

AURORA

Excuse me.

[she rushes out of the garden, leaving Emmett alone with the flowers]

EMMETT

Must be that cat-shaped rabbit.

[exits, chuckling to himself]

[again, if the garden is in front of the curtain, then this scene change can be happening back there during the scene, if not scene change here]

Scene 4 - library

[LINDSEY is sprawled across a table/platform, scribbling furiously on sheets of paper. ELIOT is leaning in the doorway behind him. He waves slyly at the audience, then puts a finger to his lips. He then looks to the right as

AURORA barges in]

LINDSEY

Rora! Excellent! Tell me what you think of-

AURORA

(interrupting)

Linds, we're haunted.

[dramatic piano riff]

LINDSEY

Oooh that's good! *(scribbles something down)*

AURORA

Lindsey.

LINDSEY

(looks up)

Hmm?

AURORA

We're *haunted*.

LINDSEY

I don't follow.

AURORA

The sounds I've been hearing? I'm not crazy. There are *ghosts* in our *house*.

[behind her, ELIOT mimes shocked surprise]

AURORA

(when LINDSEY doesn't reply, starts pacing)

I thought it was just me, I really did. But then I talked to Emmett this morning, and he asked me when you'd started playing piano. You've *never* played piano. I didn't understand how he could think that you did. And then I *heard* it. Someone *was* playing piano. *In our house. And it wasn't one of us.*

LINDSEY

We don't *have* a piano.

AURORA

EXACTLY!

[desperate, she sits down in front of LINDSEY and takes his hands]

AURORA

Look, Linds, I know you don't believe in this, and I understand it's a lot to ask. I know you're going to fight me on this. And I promise you I'm not angry with you for it. But I swear this is real. I have this *feeling*, this visceral feeling that I'm being *watched*-

[she gestures vaguely in a direction that happens to be the audience. Behind her, ELIOT winks at them]

AURORA

And I can't just ignore that or explain it away anymore. I've spent my whole life researching events like this. I'm kind of an expert. All the signs are there, and I intend to prove it to you. I *will* prove it to you, Lindsey.

LINDSEY

(seeing how important this is for her)

And I will listen, and I will do my best to see things through your eyes. I promise.

AURORA

(smiles)

If it would make you feel better, we could make a competition out of it.

LINDSEY

Oh?

AURORA

If I'm trying to prove what I think is true, it would only be fair if you had a chance to try to prove what *you* think is true.

LINDSEY

(grinning)

Is that a challenge?

AURORA

If you dare to accept.

LINDSEY

I dare.

AURORA

I look forward to proving you wrong.

LINDSEY

And I look forward to prove that you're wrong in proving me wrong.

AURORA

Well then, I look forward to proving you wrong in proving me wrong in proving you wrong.

LINDSEY

And I- I look forward to proving you wrong that me wrong- I lost it.

[both laugh. Insert sweet gesture (maybe a forehead touch?)]

AURORA

You're really going to let me do this?

LINDSEY

I'd let you do anything if it made you happy.

[a moment]

AURORA

So, what was it you wanted me to tell you my thoughts on?

LINDSEY

Right! Yes!

(scrabbling for his papers)

I have a new song! What do think of this?

[he begins to hum what is unmistakably Never Gonna Give You Up]

[scence change as the ghost band picks up the song]

[for this one maybe split the stage? Half and half?]

Scene 5 - Killian's Office/Rosie's Office

[open on private investigator KILLIAN MARTIN. There is a sign on her desk that reads 'Killian Martin, private investigator'. The phone rings]

KILLIAN

(picking up the phone)

PI Martin. Yes, how can I help you, Mr. Knox? *(listens)*. Well. That's not one I've ever heard before. Sure, I'll take it. Yeah, why not? Sounds like a good time. I mean, sounds like an investigation for sure.

Tomorrow? Yeah, I can start tomorrow. Yeah, I get it, thank you. I won't let you down. Yup. Tomorrow, then. You too.

(puts the phone down, with a slight shake of her head)

(calling to what is assumedly a secretary) Liv, if anyone calls by the office, just set them up with an appointment. I've got a date with some ghosts.

(to herself) This'll be one for the books.

[on the other side of the stage, ROSIE comes into light. She is less professional, no sign to indicate who she is. Her phone rings as well.]

ROSIE

(picks up the phone. She holds it daintily, like it's fragile. Or perhaps like she is.)

Hello? No, I can't say I know who you are. Are you sure you have the right number?

(a beat. Her face goes slack, and then a slight smile creeps onto her features)

(slyly) Oh, you *do*. No, of course I'll come. Anything to help a fellow expert. Say, nine o' clock? Perfect. I'll be there on the dot. Of course. My pleasure. Bye-bye!

(she sets the phone down, smiles, and waves at the audience)

Aren't we going to have fun!

[aaand that's another set change]

Scene 6 - Entryway

[back at the house, HAYES is alone, cleaning. They are clearly upset]

HAYES

(to herself)

A *medium*. She called in a *medium*. This is bad this is bad this is *ba-* *(trips and stumbles)* Maxie, *no!* Bad kitty!

What have I told you about sneaking up on me like that?

[no cat can be seen, but it's clear from HAYES' reaction that one is indeed present]

HAYES

Aw, Max, you know I can't stay mad at you.

(they bend down and scoop up the invisible cat)

Especially not now. When there's so much ELSE to be mad at. Eliot, for one. You know, I still don't know where he came from? I died in this house. He... He's not right. You know? And he's *definitely* up to something. The thing is, I don't know what or how to stop it. I'm not brave, Maxie. I'm not someone who stands up to people. And I've always been content with that. But now... I don't know. I might be worrying for no reason. I probably am. I just-

[footsteps]

[HAYES, once, again, freezes in place. LINDSEY enters, still scribbling on a piece of paper. He doesn't look up as he passes]

LINDSEY
(absentmindedly)

Hello.

HAYES
(once LINDSEY is gone)

What was that? Did he- I- I don't know what's going on in this house anymore. But at least I have you, sweet kitty. At least I have- oh. There you go. You're gone. Okay. (sighs) Okay.

*[wooo yeah scene change things are happening babey] (THIS IS JUST A FIRST DRAFT OK)
[insert some sort of dramatic transition music]*

Scene 7 - Garden

[back to the garden. EMMETT is sitting by the roses, working at them forlornly. ROSIE enters from the right, and stops when she sees him. She waits there for a second, watching. Then she clears her throat. EMMETT jumps, shrieks, and whirls]

ROSIE
(laughing)

Dear me, I did *not* mean to frighten you so. My apologies.

EMMETT
(trying very hard to regain his composure)

No, it's- *ahem*- quite alright. I should have been much more attentive, I was only-

ROSIE

Those roses must be quite something, to have captivated your attention like that.

EMMETT

Well, yes, they are, actually. Black roses, bred specially for Miss Rora.

ROSIE

(coming closer)

Mrs. Knox? She requested these?

EMMETT

Indeed she did. She's an interesting one, that one. Wonderful, but interesting.

[ROSIE crouches down to touch one of the flowers]

ROSIE

So she is much deeper into this than I thought. That can't be good.

EMMETT

Erm, if you don't mind me asking... who are you?

ROSIE

(smiles at him)

Who are you?

EMMETT

I'm.. I mean, I'm Emmett. The gardener.

ROSIE

Are you?

EMMETT

Yes??

ROSIE

Emmett. A rather good thing to be, I would think. I'm Rosie.

EMMETT

(smiles)

Like my flowers.

ROSIE

Exactly like that. Now, if you wouldn't mind showing me to the front door? I have an appointment with the lady of the house.

EMMETT

Of course.

[he rises to his feet, dusts himself off, and loops his arm through hers, walking her back to the house. Just as they exit, KILLIAN enters the garden, followed by a rather disgruntled assistant]

KILLIAN

This is the place?

OLIVER

(checks clipboard)

Y-Yes, yes it is. This is the address you gave me from the man on the phone.

KILLIAN

(impressed)

Fancy.

[a distressed HAYES barrels into the garden, muttering under their breath]

HAYES

(spotting the newcomers and stopping up short)

KILLIAN

Hey. You live here?

HAYES

I- Well, I- I suppose-

KILLIAN

Are you supposed to be here?

HAYES

I- excuse me.

[they bolt past KILLIAN and OLIVER without another word. KILLIAN watches them go]

KILLAN

Liv, put that on the notepad.

OLIVER

(scribbling on the clipboard, muttering to himself)

Trespasser... question mark. Suspicious activity... underlined. INVESTIGATE, all caps. Double underlined. Exclamation mark... exclamation mark... exclamation mark.

KILLIAN

(to herself, and low-key the audience)

I pay him for this.

[at this point, EMMETT returns to the garden. When he sees the new visitors, he throws his hands up in frustration]

EMMETT

Now who are you?

KILLIAN

Do you live here?

EMMETT

I'm the gardener. I live next door.

OLIVER

Are you aware that you have strange people running around your garden?

EMMETT

(staring him down)

Yes.

OLIVER

(nodding, scribbling on clipboard, oblivious)

Gardener. Is. In on it. Circled.

EMMETT

(at the end of his rope)

Can I help you?

KILLIAN

Perhaps. For now, we'll be on our way to the house. It's this way, yes?

[she walks off to the right without confirmation, OLIVER at her heels]

EMMETT

(sighs)

It's the other way.

[the detective and her assistant return, walking briskly in the other direction]

Scene 8 - Entryway

[ROSIE is wandering the entryway of the manor, hands raised as she meanders in slow circles. LINDSEY and AURORA stand off to the side, watching]

LINDSEY

What is she doing?

AURORA

Getting a feel for the place, I think. Sensing it.

ROSIE

(politely)

I work best when no one is whispering about me behind my back.

LINDSEY

(sharing a guilty look with his wife)

Yes, ma'am, sorry, ma'am.

ROSIE

(turning to face them)

It's quite all right. I just like to inform people of that fact before I begin.

AURORA

You- haven't started?

ROSIE

Oh, no, I was just admiring your beautiful home.

AURORA

Oh.

ROSIE

(sweeping past her)

Now, to begin, I will need a candle, a roll of tape, a glass of water, two sugar cubes, a bar of soap, a hammer, a pair of welding goggles, and a knife.

LINDSEY

A- a knife??

ROSIE

Any kind will do, although I do prefer butcher's knives, they are *most* effective.

LINDSEY

(nods awkwardly)

R-right.. Of course.

(quietly to AURORA)

Do we have welding goggles?

[AURORA shrugs helplessly. At this point, the doorbell rings]

LINDSEY

I can get that.

AURORA

I'll go find welding goggles, I guess.

[she disappears up the stairs]

LINDSEY

(to himself as he goes to open the door)

What have we gotten ourselves into?

[the instant the door opens, KILLIAN shoves her way in, OLIVER, as always, at her heels]

KILLIAN

(holding up a blank index card like a badge)

Killian Martin, PI, PhD, MD, MHS, AEET, BAPSY...

OLIVER

(cutting her off)

Oliver Haywood, pleasure to meet you.

[LINDSEY ignores his friendly outstretched hand]

KILLIAN

(sweeping around the room)

So, a home invasion, you say?

LINDSEY

Ehm- yes, of a sort.

KILLIAN

Wife is convinced it's ghosts, is she?

LINDSEY

She hasn't lost her mind.

KILLIAN

I never said she had. But you wouldn't have called me if you weren't skeptical.

OLIVER

(leaning in to whisper to LINDSEY, who scoots uncomfortably away)

She's got you there, my friend.

LINDSEY

Look, I may not see things the way my Aurora does, but there is something going on here. And I would really appreciate it if you could do your job and figure it out, instead of making sly comments about my wife.

OLIVER

(scribbling)

Do NOT talk about his wife. Underlined.

KILLIAN

(ignoring them)

So, Mr. Knox, the mysterious strangers in your house... is that one of them?

[LINDSEY and OLIVER both whirl around comically, only to see ROSIE peering into the room]

LINDSEY

(sigh of relief)

Oh, no, that's just- I mean, she is a stranger and she is in my house, but we invited her.

ROSIE

(looking KILLIAN up and down)

Hello. You appear to be alive.

KILLIAN

Only on the outside, ma'am.

[OLIVER snorts and quickly turns it into a cough as KILLIAN glares at him]

ROSIE

(directing her attention to OLIVER)

You... eh.

(waves vaguely and dismissively in his direction and sweeps to the other side of the room)

[there is the pounding of footsteps as AURORA comes down the stairs into the room]

AURORA

Well, I couldn't find welding goggles, exactly, but we do have a rather nice pair of- Oh. Are you my ghosts?

KILLIAN

I'm a *private investigator*.

AURORA

Ah. I see. Do you have welding goggles?

(when no one replies)

No matter, I can go into town to see if anyone has any, I'll just get the candles out first.

(crossing over to the closet on one side of the room)

I've read that candles are the most important part of any spirit contact, something about the light draws them, a bit like moths, you know-

[she opens the closet. A dead body falls out. Silence]

OLIVER

(scribbling)

Dun... dun... dun!!!!

Act II

Scene 9 - Garden

[darkness. Then. A scream. The lights come up on EMMETT, who looks around himself in confusion]

EMMETT

Who-

[footsteps]

EMMETT

(rising slowly, trowel in hand)

Who's there?

[the footsteps grow faster and louder]

EMMETT

(terrified)

I'm not afraid of you.

[finally, HAYES bursts onstage. EMMETT screams and lunges at them. HAYES screams as well, but the trowel goes right through them]

[EMMETT looks down. HAYES looks down. A beat. Then they both scream again]

EMMETT

(repeatedly stabbing with each word)

You- should- be- dead!

HAYES

I am!

[beat]

EMMETT

What?

HAYES

I'm Hayes. I'm dead. And I think everyone else in that house is about to be.

EMMETT

WHat?

HAYES

I'm so sorry, I don't have time for this.

[HAYES shoves their way past EMMETT, and slams right into the front door of the house]

EMMETT
There's a house there.

HAYES
(flat on the floor)
No, really?

[pulls themselves to their feet and walks right into the door again. This time, they catch themselves before they can fall]

EMMETT
There's still a house there.

HAYES
I know that, but I should be able to-

[they place their hands on the door and shove. Nothing happens]

EMMETT
So you're the ghost?

HAYES
I'm a ghost- and the door is locked. Solid, and *locked*.

[a second scream echoes from offstage]

EMMETT
(suddenly all business)
I- I have a key.

[he makes an attempt to take it out of his pocket, it falls right through his hand]

EMMETT
Ah, clumsy me.

[tries to pick it up. It falls through his hand again]

EMMETT

Ah- not again- It must be- I don't know why I'm-

HAYES

(something dawning on them)

Emmett. It is Emmett, yeah? Emmett. Touch the door.

EMMETT

(still trying for the key)

No, no, I've got it, I've almost-

HAYES

Please.

[EMMETT straightens up, looks at HAYES, looks at the door, dusts his hands off on his clothes, and approaches]

[his hand goes right through the door]

EMMETT

Ah....

[he tries to pull his hand back out. It doesn't budge]

EMMETT

(weakly)

Aaaaaaaaa. Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa

HAYES

That. Can't be good.

EMMETT

(a little hysterical)

You *think*???

Scene 10 - Entryway

[a scream]

[lights up on the group in the house gathered around the corpse on the floor. LINDSEY is the one who screamed]

AURORA

(absently patting his shoulder)

It's alright, love, it's just... a corpse. In our house. In our closet. On our floor.

KILLIAN

Missing a heart.

[everyone turns to stare at her, then looks back at the corpse]

AURORA

(gulps)

Missing a heart.

ROSIE

(looking around the group)

Don't you see how this is a good thing?

(when everyone just stares at her, she crouches down by the body)

Where there's a body, there is most probably a ghost.

[the group, now wary, begins to spread out around the room, looking around themselves in fear]

LINDSEY

I really don't think-

EVERYONE

Shh!

[they continue to spread out, slowly]

KILLIAN

This is-

EVERYONE

Shhh!!

[finally, AURORA is in the center of the room. Everyone else is still looking around warily, but she finally huffs and puts her hands on her hips.]

AURORA

Hey!

[everyone whirls to shush her, but she waves them off]

AURORA

If there is someone in here, someone who is not one of us and is significantly less alive than us, would you please show yourself and stop this nonsense. I'm very tired of you tormenting me and my husband and these- people. *Very* tired. And I am about to get *very* angry with you. This is the last time I will ask nicely. Stop it.

[silence. Then, a slow clap]

ELIOT

(grins)

No.

[this time, it's AURORA who screams. She wasn't expecting anyone to actually respond]

ELIOT

(addressing the audience)

Lights.

(lighting change of some sort)

Camera.

(??)

Action.

[a low, spooky sound comes from the closet. Slowly, limb by limb, a figure emerges. A ghost, but a different kind. This one is twisted, bloodied, terrifying. As one, the group backs up, away from it, coming together as they do]

OLIVER

What- what is that??

AURORA

It's also missing a heart!

LINDSEY

What is- What is that-

ROSIE

Her ghost.

AURORA

Whose?

[ROSIE points steadily at the corpse. All eyes follow her finger]

[the ghost growls, and approaches further]

LINDSEY

(backing slowly away, reaching tentatively for AURORA despite the fact that he's moving away from her)

No, no that's just- there's an explanation for this-

AURORA

It's real....

ELIOT

Oh, it's very real.

[time freezes. ELIOT approaches the front of the stage and addresses the audience]

ELIOT

Surprise! Ghosts are real.

Ah. You've guessed that already. Well, excuse *me* for being dramatic. You've got to take pleasure in the little things when you're like me. That is, dead.

(feigning surprise)

'What? Eliot? Dead? Gasp!'

Believe it.

I've been dead for... Oh, it's hard to know how long. Time is... irrelevant, in a sense. How I died is.. Not important, but let us just say that it involved a duel, a case of supposed demonic possession, and largely overestimating my skill with a sword.

(grins)

Oh, yes, I lived a *life*. And I've been living quite a death, too. I've been *learning*, you see, learning about what I am now and what I can do. I know things! For instance, I know that *that-*

(points at the shambling bloody ghost)

Is a shade, a spirit of a murdered innocent. Shades are very unstable, as the untimeliness of their exit from the mortal world has unbalanced their crossing over into the *immortal* world. This one is... a bit more unstable than others, due to the... specific nature of its demise. You see, its heart was removed as part of an... experiment. Because, of course, pointless facts about ghosts are not the only thing I've been learning. I've been studying a certain... art, you could say. And I am about to present my first big project.

There is just one more thing I need...

(he turns partially away, raises his hand, then looks back)

Oh, and you're welcome for the exposition.

(winks, then snaps his fingers. Time resumes)

AURORA

It's not *stopping*.

[KILLIAN steps forward]

KILLIAN

I can handle this.

OLIVER

(noise of protest)

[calmly, KILLIAN pulls out her pistol and aims it at the ghost]

OLIVER

Detective, it's a *ghost*.

KILLIAN

And this is a gun.

[fires. Nothing happens]

OLIVER
It's a *ghost*.

ROSIE
Might I recommend running?

KILLIAN
A solid recommendation.

[*they run*]
{Intermission}

Scene 11- Library

[*the group in the house runs in from back of the house slowing and breathing heavily. OLIVER is breathing comically heavily. AURORA is absent*]

[*KILLIAN is the first to recover. She pulls out her pistol and tosses it across the stage with a noise of disgust, after looking at it in disappointment for a moment*]

ROSIE
Shooting it was brave. Stupid, but brave.

KILLIAN
(*a little sarcastically*)
Thanks. I really appreciate being called stupid.

ROSIE
(*unfazed*)
You're welcome.

[*in the back, OLIVER is still wheezing*]

KILLIAN
(*kicks him*)
Oh, get over it, you're fine.

LINDSEY

I can't believe- Rora, you were right.

(looks around for his wife)

Rora?

Aurora???

(panicking now)

Where is she- she was *right here*- I had her hand in mine she was *here*.

(desperate, shouting)

Aurora!

[in a flash, KILLIAN has him shoved back with her hand over his mouth]

KILLIAN

Do you *want* to get us hunted down by murder ghosts?

LINDSEY

(muffled)

Mmmmmf-

KILLIAN

That'd better be a no.

LINDSEY

My wife-

KILLIAN

You're no help to her if you're crippled by panic.

LINDSEY

(pulling away slightly)

You're right. I just- I don't do well without her. I need a moment.

[he tries to sit down. He falls right to the floor]

LINDSEY

I could have sworn there was a chair-

OLIVER

Um. Don't look now, but... you're sitting in it.

LINDSEY

(realizing that he is indeed sitting in the chair, having sunk through it)

(faintly)

So I am.

KILLIAN

(shrieking, to everyone's surprise)

Ghost!

[everyone stares at her]

KILLIAN

(clears throat)

Ghost.

LINDSEY

(scrambling to his feet)

What??? Where???

ROSIE

She means you, Mr. Knox.

LINDSEY

I'm not a ghost?

OLIVER

Normal human people do not fall through chairs.

LINDSEY

I am not a ghost.

ROSIE

(circling him, slowly)

You'd be surprised at how many ghosts are not aware that they are ghosts.

[LINDSEY presses his hands to his chest, feeling for his heartbeat, suddenly doubtful]

LINDSEY

I am not a ghost. I'm not. They're not real. My heart- it's beating. That's good, right? That means I'm not-
That I can't be- *I'm not a ghost.*

KILLIAN

Then *how do you explain that?*

LINDSEY

I-

[tentatively, he reaches for the chair, his hand gets nearly there, and then-]

[HAYES falls through the wall]

[everyone in the room screams]

HAYES

(picking themselves up)

I really wish people would stop doing that.

Scene 12 - Garden

[Outside, EMMETT is still stuck in the door.]

EMMETT

(to himself)

Went right through the door without me... Typical ghost.

[bored, he looks around him for something to do or help. Nothing. He presses his ear to the door in an attempt to listen in]

[a scream]

[EMMETT jerks his head back]

EMMETT

Sure hope that was a *good* scream.

[with nothing left to do, EMMETT begins to hum. A nonsensical tune. Slowly, the ghost musicians begin to join in, one by one. Eventually, EMMETT begins to add words, making them up as he goes]

[suddenly, a head pops up over the garden wall. This is JAIME, the neighbor]

JAIME

Howdy, Em! Fine afternoon, isn't it?

EMMETT

(not facing their way, very distracted)

I hadn't noticed. Look, Jaime, I'm a bit-

JAIME

Busy, yes, of course you are, you always are.

[EMMETT scowls]

JAIME

I was just popping over to check that all that screaming I heard wasn't anything serious.

EMMETT

Ah- yes... that. Well. There is a simple explanation for that.

JAIME

Yes?

EMMETT

A reasonable one.

JAIME

Of course.

EMMETT

A good one.

JAIME

I don't doubt it.

EMMETT

You see, we're... playing a game.

JAIME

Oooo!

EMMETT

Yes, ooo is right, it's, ehm, very fun. Very complicated.

JAIME

Is there room for one more?

EMMETT

Uh.. well... yes, yes there is.

JAIME

(excitedly)

Excellent! What do I do?

EMMETT

Well, you start by walking.

JAIME

Walking?

EMMETT

Yes, walking backward. Away from the wall.

[JAIME's face disappears, but their voice can still be heard]

JAIME

Like this?

EMMETT

Yes, exactly like that, you're doing beautifully, Jaime. Now go back inside your house and lock the door.

JAIME

Are you sure on the rules? That doesn't seem quite-

EMMETT

Do it, Jaime, or you'll lose. And you don't want to lose.

JAIME

Alright, alright, I'm doing it.

EMMETT

Perfect. Now wait there until I give you more instructions.

[there is the sound of a door closing, and a lock clicking. EMMETT lets out a sigh of relief and steps back from the door. It takes him a moment, but he realizes that his hand is no longer stuck inside the door. He gestures in relief and triumph]

EMMETT

Well then, looks like it's just you and me, little kitty.

[a beat, and then he whirls around and stares at a spot in the garden]

EMMETT

Kitty!

[he bolts off after the cat]

Scene 13 - Library

[back to the group inside the house. LINDSEY, ROSIE, KILLIAN, & OLIVER all stare in shock at HAYES, who has just fallen into the room through the front door]

OLIVER

(belatedly, shrieks and points)

Ghost!

HAYES

(eyeroll)

(deadpan)

Living human!

KILLIAN

(annoyed)

How many of you *are* there?

HAYES

In this house or in the world?

KILLIAN

(beat)

Both.

HAYES

Do you *really* expect me to know how many ghosts there are in the entire world?

OLIVER

Well, how are we to know there isn't some sort of secret ghost network?

HAYES

First of all, that's ridiculous. Would you want to be connected to every other human being on earth?

OLIVER

Well, no.

HAYES

Exactly.

KILLIAN

(exasperated)

Fine, just in this house then.

HAYES

[insert number of people in the cast here]

[shocked silence]

LINDSEY

(high-pitched and a little hysterical)

THERE ARE NOT *[insert number here]* GHOSTS IN MY HOUSE.

HAYES

(shrugs)

Roughly.

[LINDSEY just stares at them, uncomprehending, and begins to hyperventilate, grasping at his chest. OLIVER and KILLIAN rush to help him]

KILLIAN

Whoa, whoa, breathe, Mr. Knox.

LINDSEY

(slightly hysterical)

You've all gone mad. It's the stress. There was a murder in this house and we're all scared, that's understandable. It's an old house, there are lots of stories about old houses, that's also understandable. We saw a corpse, and then were attacked by a terribly wounded person who lashed out in fear and pain. That person there... *(to HAYES)* you're one of the neighbors, aren't you? We've had you over for dinner, I'm sure. You heard screaming. You came to check...

OLIVER

They fell through a *wall*.

LINDSEY

No, there's a door there... there's always been a door there. I must've... forgotten? It's an easy mistake, it blends into the surroundings quite well...

ROSIE

(softly)

Listen to yourself.

LINDSEY

I'm making *sense!* I won't follow the wild theories of people I barely know when there are *perfectly reasonable explanations-*

KILLIAN

Unfortunately, sir, you have to.

[LINDSEY stares at her, blankly]

[Gently, HAYES comes forward and kneels in front of him]

HAYES

I know this is a lot to take in, Lindsey. I am probably the last person you want to hear this from, but you have to get over it. At least for now. It's harsh, but.. Look. I've lived with you in this house since you moved in, and I like to think I've learned a lot about you in that time. So when I say I know how hard this is for you, I do mean it. And I promise you will have time to deal with it in your own way when this is over, but for now you need to get yourself together, *especially* if you want to save your wife.

LINDSEY

(looks up sharply, momentarily distracted from the ranting by the mention of his wife)

Save her?

HAYES

Ah. I forgot to mention that, didn't I.

[they scan the room, and their eyes lock on ROSIE]

You are the medium, correct?

[ROSIE nods, and sweeps a dramatic bow]

HAYES

Lovely. If you don't mind, could you please locate The Book on the shelf behind you and bring it to me?

[ROSIE quirks an eyebrow, but does as she's told]

[she returns with a large, heavy book and hands it to HAYES, who begins flipping through it]

OLIVER
Um. What is that?

ROSIE
(standing back, reverently)
The Book.

KILLIAN
What book?

HAYES
(absently)
The Book.

KILLIAN
What's it called?

HAYES & ROSIE
(in unison)
The Book.

KILLIAN
... You're kidding, right?

[without looking up, HAYES lifts the book so can be clearly seen in large letters on the front, THE BOOK]

KILLIAN
(sigh)
You are not.

[an awkward silence spreads as HAYES flips through the book, making little noises as they do so. Finally, they snap it closed]

HAYES
Just as I feared.

LINDSEY
(finally standing unsteadily)
What.

HAYES
I know what Eliot is trying to do.

KILLIAN
And?

HAYES
It's bad. It's... *really* bad.

OLIVER
(clipboard at the ready)
Could you perhaps expand on *really bad*?

HAYES
Well... if he succeeds... let's just say... everyone here will quite literally cease to exist.

(dramatic music)

[HAYES glares and makes a cut-it-out motion at the musicians]

GHOST MUSICIAN
(sheepish)
Sorry.

Scene 14 - Creepy Basement

[AURORA is tied to a chair in a dark room. She doesn't appear afraid, simply curious as she watches ELIOT organize items on a table, his back to her]

ELIOT
(glancing over his shoulder)
I do apologize for the accommodations. It simply feels much safer for me if it's this way.

AURORA

(snorts)

Afraid I'll kill you or something?

ELIOT

(grins, approving of the sarcasm)

Or something. I know you've been studying The Book.

AURORA

Skimming it, really.

ELIOT

Skimming it is enough to make you fairly dangerous, my lady. So forgive me for taking precautions.

AURORA

Forgive me for not forgiving you.

ELIOT

(finally turning to face her with a smile)

I've always liked you.

AURORA

Aw, that's sweet, coming from the ghost who just kidnapped me and tied me to a chair in my own basement.

ELIOT

Oh, I assure you, I do that to everyone I like.

AURORA

Oh, good, I was starting to think I was special.

ELIOT

You *are* special.

AURORA

(vague snort)

ELIOT

You don't realize that?

AURORA

I don't *trust* it, coming from you.

ELIOT

Think about it, though. The ghosts. It's rare to find such a heavy congregation in one place. And the sheer *number* you've accumulated around you.

AURORA

That's the house, isn't it?

ELIOT

No, it's not the house. Not entirely. Some, yes, are the spirits of those who died here, but contrary to popular belief, most spirits are not bound to one place or another. There are those who choose to be, like our Hayes, but most are wanderers. Often they are drawn to a location due to a certain... energy there. A presence. One like yours.

AURORA

... okay...

ELIOT

What I mean is that you have a very powerful connection to the spirit world. You are.. In tune with ghosts in a way most aren't, and that is a very special thing indeed. It also happens to be *exactly* what I need.

AURORA

... for *what*, exactly?

ELIOT

I'd thought you might have figured it out by now. As you've admitted yourself that you've, ah, 'skimmed' The Book.

AURORA

I tended to avoid the chapters that involved *ripping out people's hearts*.

ELIOT
Squeamish, my lady?

AURORA
Of course not. I just don't want to hurt anyone.

ELIOT
An honorable notion. Not one everyone can afford, unfortunately.

AURORA
(coldly)
Clearly.

ELIOT
I am sorry, you know. I don't like doing what I have to do. But, well, I have to.

AURORA
I don't believe that for one second. There's never a 'have to' with this kind of thing. It's always a choice.

ELIOT
(bitterly)
A choice, right. Like how I *chose* to fall in love with someone I wasn't supposed to. How I *chose* to be condemned for that. How I *chose* to be stabbed through the back in what was supposed to be an honorable duel. How I *chose* to be stuck here, like this. 'Unfinished business', or so they say. *What* business? It's been one hundred years. There is no one left to finish business with. So why am I still here?
Why can't I *go*? WHY???

[throughout this speech, ELIOT has progressively gotten closer to AURORA until he is leaning right over her chair. She, in turn, is tipping back away from him]

ELIOT
(seeming to notice what he's doing, stepping back)
It simply isn't fair.

AURORA
(quietly)
What do you expect me to do about it?

ELIOT

Help me. I want to get out of here, Aurora. I want to *end* this, this *limbo*. And I've found a way.

AURORA

Through killing others?

ELIOT

No- well, yes, but it's a bit more complicated than that.

AURORA

I don't want to hear it. I won't help you. Not unless there's another way.

ELIOT

(disappointed sigh)

I thought you might say that. But, the thing is, Aurora... if you don't help me... everyone in this house will die.

[dramatic music, a flash of light as the stage shifts so two groups are visible on stage: ELIOT and AURORA, and the group in the library. HAYES is reading from the book, not audible to the audience. ELIOT begins speaking]

ELIOT

The ritual is a bit of tricky business. You see, to gather enough power to initiate a true permanent shift in a spirit's state-

HAYES

(reading)

-a significant amount of life or death energy is required, depending on the nature of the shift and scale of its changes. This can best be procured through-

ELIOT

A death. The end of a life. Or the beginning of one, but I don't see any babies being born in this house.

HAYES

If no live matter is available, an undead will substitute, but there is a possibility of side effects-

ELIOT

There are typically only about three living persons in this immediate area, as I'm sure you know. Not ideal, but when one factors in the ghosts... of course, the thing with ghosts is that they are not fixed, they exist in fluctuation between two worlds. Trying to harvest their death energy could make things, well...

HAYES

-highly unstable. Take precaution to remove all living from the area when using spirits as a source, lest the barrier between the spirit plane and the world of the living become unbalanced.

[they close the book with a definite slam]

He's trying to bring himself back to life.

ELIOT

I just want to move on to the afterlife.

AURORA

But what does that *mean*?

ROSIE

It means, to put it simply, that everyone here started out alive or dead, one or the other. But the further this goes on, the more the distinction will blur. We've seen it happening already, with Lindsey here falling through the chair.

LINDSEY

I *told* you, that's-

HAYES

(not letting him finish)

And how I've been able to touch things without passing through them.

ROSIE

And if the ritual completes itself, then... I'm afraid there won't be anything left us. Our energy will power the spell, and we will.. Simple cease to exist.

ELIOT

So you see, if I don't complete the ritual and move on to the next stage of my existence, all those in this house won't be able to continue theirs.

AURORA

If you leave it unfinished... they'll all die?

OLIVER

If it gets finished... we'll all die?

HAYES & ELIOT

Worse.

[AURORA takes a deep breath]

AURORA

What do I have to do?

Scene 15 - Library

[back with the group in the library. Everyone is looking a little bit stunned after HAYES' revelation]

LINDSEY

We need to get Rora out of there. That's first priority. Whatever else you may think this is, he has her. And I need her back.

KILLIAN

I agree. Whatever he wants her for, it can't be good. And it'll throw a kink in his plans, for sure.

LINDSEY

So how do we do that?

KILLIAN

I don't know, this is way out of my depth.

LINDSEY

Great. Thanks.

(to himself)

Why did I hire you?

[OLIVER snorts. Everyone gives him a weird look. He fails at covering it up by scribbling on his clipboard]

ROSIE

If I may offer a thought?

HAYES

(gesturing her forward)

No one else seems to have any.

ROSIE

Now, I can't say I know much about your Eliot-

HAYES

He is *not* my-

(shuts up. Looks awkward. ROSIE just looks at him)

ROSIE

But I can speak for myself quite well, and when performing a ritual I typically have a certain area that I use as a base of operations, a place where I can organize my supplies and conduct the main event itself.

Perhaps... he has one as well?

HAYES

(considering)

That's a good bet, actually. Eliot often has everything very.. In order.

KILLIAN

(flopping down on a chair and crossing her legs)

How much d'you want to bet that's also where he's keeping our girl?

OLIVER

Fifty bucks?

[everyone gives him an incredulous look. KILLIAN looks impressed]

KILLIAN

You serious?

[OLIVER shrugs. KILLIAN grins]

KILLIAN
I'll take that.

[they do a little secret handshake]

LINDSEY
So how do we figure out where that is?

[all eyes turn to HAYES]

HAYES
Wh- Oh, come on, just because *I'm* the only ghost here doesn't mean I know everything about all the other ghosts in this house. I don't *know*.

ROSIE
You *do* know Eliot better than anyone here. Where, if anywhere at all, do you think he would make himself at home?

HAYES
Well, he's- he's...
(trails off, staring into the distance)
He's *right here!*

[the group startles as ELIOT appears in the doorway. He waves, and the musicians play a dramatic riff that is suddenly cut short by a gasp and a scream]

ELIOT
Don't mind us, we're just here to borrow someone.

LINDSEY
Us?

[the group parts to reveal AURORA holding the dead heart of one of the ghost musicians, who lies prone at her feet. She stares at it with a mixture of terror and awe]

LINDSEY
... Rora?

Act III

Scene 16 - Garden

[back in the garden, EMMETT is running around aimlessly, searching]

EMMETT
Here, kitty kitty. Here, kitty... kitty? Where did you go, little kitty?
(winds down, stopping in the middle of the stage looking lost)
Kitty.....

[sirens blare]

EMMETT
(perking up)
Uh oh.

[he freezes as a group of police officers surround him]

EMMETT
Um. Hello there.

OFFICER #1
Reports of screaming from this address were given to the department by a neighbor.

EMMETT
(to himself)
Jaime.
(to the officers)

Well, as I politely informed said neighbor earlier, the occupants of this house were simply playing a game.

OFFICER #2

The reports stated that the screaming sounded... terrified.

EMMETT

Yes, well, it's a murder mystery game, you see. They can get very... intense.

[the officers glance at each other, not seeing anything wrong with this explanation]

OFFICER #1

Well then, there should be no harm if we go take a look, yes? Just to make sure you're not lying to us.

EMMETT

(rushing)

Well, I mean, I wouldn't want to interrupt them-

[the officers are already walking away]

[OH so all of this has been happening in front of the curtain. Just a note because this is about to be really cool!]

OFFICER #2

(speaking back to EMMETT)

Won't take a moment, we'll be out of your hair just like th-

[the curtain opens, revealing the library tableau.] In the center, AURORA stands with the heart in her hands. The remainders of the ghost musician rest at her feet. Around her, everyone else stands shocked and silent. Only ELIOT is smiling]

EMMETT

(awkwardly, unsure)

Like I said, it can get... intense.

Scene 17 - Library

OFFICER #2

(unfreezing)

Everyone freeze! Hands up!

OFFICER #1

Drop the.. *(gulps)* heart.

ELIOT

Officers, what a delightful surprise! Are you here for my final sacrifice?

OFFICER #2

I said, freeze.

ELIOT

Aurora, dear, if you would be so kind and do no such thing.

[AURORA, trembling, looks around the room. Her eyes lock on LINDSEY as she lifts the heart above her head]

AURORA

(quietly)

I'm sorry.

[suddenly, the prone musician rises from the floor. The other musicians rise with them, and approach the gathered living, threateningly]

LINDSEY

Aurora....

[she looks after him, sadly, as ELIOT drags her out of the room]

[KILLIAN taps LINDSEY on the shoulder]

KILLIAN

Go after her.

LINDSEY

What?

KILLIAN

Run. Go after her. Stop the ritual, if you can.

LINDSEY

What about you all? What about... that?
(gestures vaguely at the approaching musicians)

[without missing a beat, KILLIAN pulls a pair of decorative swords off the wall and gives them a few swings]

KILLIAN

We'll be fine. Liv?

[OLIVER stretches out a hand and catches the sword KILLIAN throws at him. The two of them form up back to back]

KILLIAN

Go.

*[one musician has not risen and now begins a steady rhythm on their instrument, signaling the beginning of a fight]
[in the back, ROSIE squares up with her hands in the air]*

[LINDSEY looks around him, then grabs HAYES by the shoulder]

LINDSEY

I need you.

HAYES

I- wh- ok!

[the two of them maneuver their way out of the room]

[COMMENCE SWORDFIGHT]

[KILLIAN and OLIVER are whirlwinds, moving together, flowing like water. The swords don't actually affect the ghosts, but they do distract and deter them. Whenever a spirit comes near ROSIE, she lifts her hands and they follow along with the motion, moving in the direction she indicates]

[choreography will be more fleshed out as we go]

[at some point, OLIVER's sword is stolen and rammed through his gut. He falls]

[with a shout, KILLIAN drops to her knees beside him, behind them, ROSIE continues to fight]

KILLIAN

Liv....

OLIVER

(weakly)

Ow.

KILLIAN

I'm sorry.

OLIVER

What is there to apologize for?

KILLIAN

I don't know, I'm not.. Good with people. With my friends.

OLIVER

(laughing, pained)

You have friends?

KILLIAN

I have you.

OLIVER

Not for much longer, I guess. Funny... it doesn't hurt.

KILLIAN

(holding back tears)

Good. At least there's that.

OLIVER

(slowly sitting up)
Actually... I feel fine.

KILLIAN
You were *stabbed*.

OLIVER
Was I?

[his hands drift to his stomach, and he frowns]

OLIVER
I was, I remember that, but... there's nothing there?

KILLIAN
Wha-

[she reaches out and touches the spot. Her face lights up with confusion]

KILLIAN
What.

ROSIE
(coming forward to them)
The balance between life and death is unstable here, and becoming less so by the minute.

KILLIAN
Oh.. right then.

[she extends a hand to OLIVER, who takes it as she pulls him to his feet. They look around them and notice that the ghosts are now, for some reason, dancing]

ROSIE
I managed to briefly counteract the possession on them. It won't last long.

OLIVER
I wonder how Mr. Knox is doing.

[as if on cue, the house begins to shake]

KILLIAN

That can't be good.

ROSIE

We have to go.

OLIVER

But- the others-

KILLIAN

They're on their own now.

Scene 18 - Basement

[down in the basement, where AURORA was previously held, the final sacrifice of the ritual is underway. The police officers are tied together in the center of a circle. Neither of them can speak, frozen in place by some sort of power. ELIOT stands by them in the center, eyes closed. AURORA is standing just at the edge of the circle, still clutching the heart tightly. HAYES and LINDSEY enter]

LINDSEY

Rora!

[AURORA turns to look at him, distant]

AURORA

You need to go.

LINDSEY

I came for you.

AURORA

It's not safe.

LINDSEY

Then why are you still here?

AURORA

I...

LINDSEY

Please, Aurora.

AURORA

All my life... I believed there was something else out there. Something just for me. I dedicated myself to studying it, doing my best to prove it to everyone, even to myself. Because if I was wrong... then I had given up everything for nothing. I could have been anyone else. But I chose this. And now... Now I know. It's *real*. And it's like nothing I've ever imagined. It's *powerful*. And it feels... right. This is what I've been preparing for, this whole time. This is what I *am*, Lindsey.

LINDSEY

No. No it's not. I'm not trying to say that... I know how important this is to you.

(he hesitates, swallows. Afraid of what he's about to say)

And you were *right*. You've always been right. And I... I am so sorry that I never had faith in you. I couldn't see it the way you do. I should have tried harder. And yes, this is real. This is all real. But what's also real is.. I love you. And I *know* you. Look around you, Aurora. Look at the people this is hurting. Look at what you're *holding*. I can see the appeal, I truly can, but I can also see that this isn't what you would want. I'm not asking you to give up this.. Piece of you for me. I'm just asking you to find another way. There is so much more out there that you haven't seen yet, and I'm sure it's better than this. And I promise that I will be right by your side in exploring it. But not this. Please, not this.

AURORA

I...

(she gazes around herself, then lets the heart slip from her grasp. It hits the floor with a thud)

Lindsey.

[they hug]

[suddenly, the house begins to shake. ELIOT's eyes snap open]

ELIOT

No.

HAYES

It's too late, Eliot.

ELIOT

NO!

[defiantly, HAYES picks up The Book and flips quickly through the pages. They glance over their shoulder at the Knoxes.]

HAYES

Go. I'll take care of this.

LINDSEY

How will we know when it's over?

HAYES

Trust me. You'll know.

AURORA

Thank you.

[HAYES simply nods. LINDSEY and AURORA share a look, then run off hand in hand]

HAYES

Now. Shall we begin?

[the lights go off]

Scene 19

[back in KILLIAN's office. It is 3 weeks later. The only difference is that the sign on her desk reads 'Killian Martin, Paranormal Investigator'. OLIVER is sitting on her desk, scribbling on his clipboard.]

[someone knocks at the door]

KILLIAN
Come in.

[ROSIE enters]

KILLIAN
All finished up, are you?

ROSIE
Everything seems to be in order. No damage to the house itself, nor its occupants.

KILLIAN
How are they doing?

ROSIE
(smiles)
Quite well, actually. They're planning a trip soon, and asked to borrow some of my supplies. I believe they intend to visit the sites of famous hauntings.

OLIVER
Still no sign of Hayes?

[ROSIE shakes her head]

ROSIE
Nor of Eliot. My best guess is the ritual either destroyed them both, or.. Sent them somewhere else. It's hard to say. Oh, Emmett has a cat now, as well. Sweet little thing, he found her wandering amongst the roses after the event.

OLIVER
Sounds like they're doing just fine then.

ROSIE
Better than fine, I might say. You don't look bad yourselves.

(she taps the desk sign)

KILLIAN

(grins)

Yeah, we thought a bit of rebranding was in order. Oh, and I almost forgot.

(gestures dramatically to Oliver)

May I introduce you to Oliver Haywood, *assistant* paranormal investigator.

[OLIVER waves]

ROSIE

I am very happy for you.

KILLIAN

Y'know, we could always use someone who is actually well-versed in this kind of stuff.

ROSIE

Are you offering me a job?

KILLIAN

Depends. You want one?

ROSIE

It would be my honor.

[the phone rings]

KILLIAN

... and looks like we have our first case already.

(picks up the phone)

Killian Martin, PI, the P stands for Paranormal. What can I do for you?

(pause)

A ghost, you say? Yeah, that should be no problem. Yep. Uh-huh. We're on our way.

(hangs up and rises to her feet)

Liv, Rosie, cancel your appointments for the time being. We've got a date with some ghosts.

THE END!!!!!!

