

A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED GHOST STORY

by

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FADE IN:

0.0 TITLE AND CREDITS

A good old-fashioned title sequence, right up front, in the manner of the Golden Age of Hollywood.

Lush music.

Title cards, with images of the Tarot.

Dark, ominous imagery.

1.0 EXT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT

The house.

Among the kept lawns and trimmed shrubs of its neighbors...dark devastation at the end of the lane.

A landscape of weeds and vines.

A house isolated. Alone. Forgotten.

Dead.

The wind bursts in the trees.

Leaves scurry over the ground.

A "For Sale" sign in the yard, weathered and untended.

Plywood nailed over a few windows.

A "condemned" warning posted to the front door. Stay out!

A neighbor, a TOUGH GUY walking his poodle, hurries past.

But nature calls, and the dog halts at the mailbox to do its business.

Mr. Tough Guy seems skittish...

He keeps his eyes askance, deliberately not looking up at the house.

The streetlight overhead flickers.

From somewhere within... a child is crying...

A light appears in a window upstairs...

Then another.

Tough Guy raises his wide-eyes up to the house.

Lights where there are no lamps.

Where there are no lightbulbs.

Fear.

From within: a gunshot!

Tough Guy hurries away, dragging the dog behind him in mid-business.

CUT TO:

TITLE UP: "ASK, AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE"

2.0 INT. FINE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

AUGUSTUS is sitting at a table with HELEN, his theoretical girlfriend.

In full, CAESAR AUGUSTUS GOLDFINCH. 35-ish. A frightened mouse of a man. He wears a pastoral collar.

Helen, his theoretical girlfriend, is messaging someone on her cellphone as they sit, waiting for the Waiter, who has better things to do.

AUGUSTUS

Helen...

She holds up her hand: wait.

Waiting.

Nervous, Augustus checks for the ring is in his coat pocket.

Where is it?

Panic!

Ah, there it is.

Thirsty!

His water glass is empty.

A mist of sweat is on his brow. Augustus mops it with a napkin.

There's the Waiter now. Augustus meekly lifts his finger for attention.

The Waiter blows right past.

Augustus expected nothing else.

AUGUSTUS

Helen...

She holds up her hand: wait.

Waiting.

At last, a touch annoyed, Helen pushes the the cellphone away and turns her attention on Augustus.

HELEN

Yes?

He tugs at his pastoral collar.

AUGUSTUS

Helen.

HELEN

Augustus.

She detects something in the offing.

AUGUSTUS

(Ahem.)

I'd like to ask you something...

Something in his eyes.

His voice.

She knows.

His hands are folded on the table. They cup a tiny ring box.

She braces.

Takes a sip of her martini.

The look on her face hints at fear for this moment.

Ding!

Her cellphone rings. Saved by the bell!

HELEN

(With relief...)

I have to take this...

She gets up and leaves the table, cellphone to her ear.

And there it is.

That sinking feeling.

DISSOLVE TO:

## 2.1 INT. FINE RESTAURANT - LATER

The restaurant is empty.

A few waiters stand around after work, waiting to go home.

Augustus still sits there, alone.

Still waiting.

At last, The Waiter approaches and presents the check.

Augustus slips the ring box back into his pocket.

He pays.

He takes up a cane leaning against the wall.

He struggles to get up out of his seat.

## 3.0 INT. APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Supported by his cane, Augustus limps in.

Seeing Augustus enter, GERARD, his room-mate, also in a pastoral collar, takes a bottle out of the fridge.

GERARD

"Behold! the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him!"

AUGUSTUS

Shakespeare?

GERARD

Matthew 25:6. Champagne, Reverend?  
Or should I say--

(Looking at the label)  
--non-alcoholic sparkling apple  
juice?

AUGUSTUS

I don't drink.

It's clear now.

Gerard shoves the bottle back in the fridge.

Augustus sits in exhaustion. Sighs.

Sour.

GERARD

I can't believe it: her answer was no?

AUGUSTUS

I don't know what her answer was. There was no answer. There was no question. Just as I was about to get down on my knees, she had to take a call. That was the last I saw of her.

Dink.

Incoming, a cellphone message from Helen:

"Sorrrrrry!!! Work crisis... "

GERARD

And so you turn the other cheek.

AUGUSTUS

(Sigh)

Am I a wimp, Gerard? Am I a doormat?  
Am I a--uh--

GERARD

Footstool?

AUGUSTUS

How did I become such a weakling? A coward...

Gerard picks up an envelope. He puts it to his nose.

GERARD

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit...

(Sniffing the envelope)

...Lavendar and Lanolin.

He hands the letter to Augustus.

Augustus opens the letter.

GERARD (CONT'D)

I can't remember the last time I got a handwritten letter.

AUGUSTUS

My Aunt. She doesn't trust  
technology.

Augustus scans the note.

Foil stars and moons are pasted to the paper, as if a child had  
decorated it.

In her careful hand:

"Augie!  
Dying! Hurry home!  
xox!  
Auntie Julia!"

He tosses the letter aside.

Gerard reviews it.

AUGUSTUS

She's on her deathbed again.

GERARD

Again?

AUGUSTUS

Aunt Julia has been dying of  
something or the other for decades.  
It's her way of guiltting me into a  
visit.

GERARD

You should call.

AUGUSTUS

She doesn't have a phone.

GERARD

Get out. What?

AUGUSTUS

Electricity makes her nervous or  
something.

GERARD

You know, if she were my aunt, my  
only family, you know what I'd do?  
I'd get on the first plane out of  
town.

AUGUSTUS

I don't fly.

Augustus responds to Helen:

"No prob!"

TITLE UP: "THE PRODIGAL NEPHEW"

4.0 EXT. AUNT'S HOUSE - ROSE GARDEN - LATE AFTERNOON

A small town down south.

A Victorian house steeped in old Southern charm.

AUNT JULIA is in her rose garden clipping buds when Augustus steps out of a taxi.

We could say a lot about Julia, but she will tell us all we need to know soon enough.

AUNT

Well, I'll be! Looky who it is! What a surprise!

AUGUSTUS

What surprise? Aren't you supposed to be on your deathbed?

AUNT

I have no intention of dying in bed. Beds are good for one thing: sleep! At least, at my age.

Right here is where I hope to expire. Just drop down dead among the roses and peonies and let the vines grow over me. Wouldn't that be romantic though?

AUGUSTUS

Auntie...

AUNT

What do you think of these?

She shoves a bouquet of roses under his nose.

AUNT (CONT'D)

My own variety. Have a noseful.

He eases them away. He looks about to sneeze.

AUNT (CONT'D)

I don't know what to call them. "Red Wedding?" "Scarlet Rendezvous?" "Bloody Beauty?" Maybe just "Miss Julia Goldfinch." Kinda says it all, don't you think?

AUGUSTUS

Your letter said you were dying.

AUNT

What letter? Oh, I wrote that weeks ago. I'm feeling much better now, no thanks to you.

AUGUSTUS

You know, if you had a phone like everybody else--

AUNT

Terrible contraption. The worst. If I need to reach out and touch anyone, I do it the old-fashioned way: through dreams. I sent you a message last night, did you get it?

AUGUSTUS

Julia, you said you were dying.

AUNT

Did I?

She looks wistfully off at a nearby oak, blasted by lightning.

AUNT (CONT'D)

(Distantly)

Did you hear? Lightning hit the old oak the other day. My grand-daddy planted that tree.

AUGUSTUS

Julia.

She re-focuses, removes her gloves.

AUNT

We'll talk about it later. It's a kind of a bummer. Let's go in and catch up over a gin and tonic.

5.0 INT. HOUSE - A SHORT TIME LATER

Julia and Augustus move through the house, into the kitchen, on their way to the front porch.

AUNT

Are you a priest yet, Augie? I see you're wearing a dog collar.

AUGUSTUS

Pastor. I told you the last time you were on your deathbed, I am Assistant Pastor at The Church 2.0.

AUNT

(Muttering, with a look)  
"2.0..." Well, I don't know about that...

(Brightly)

I was seeing a priest for a time. Oh, he was a handsome man. Greek. He was like a Greek god. His name was Zeus, believe it or not. Anyway, Zeus left the priesthood to manufacture cologne or beer or something. He grew very fat and well to do. Before he died, he sent me a note with a big check attached. He said, "Julia, you are going straight to hell, but until then, have fun."

AUGUSTUS

That's kinda your motto, isn't it?

She mixes herself a gin and tonic.

AUNT

(With a laugh)  
I guess it is, a little. Can I get you a gin and tonic, honey?

AUGUSTUS

You know I don't drink.

AUNT

That never stopped me. The truth is I don't really like gin and tonic. But I like the idea of it--you know what I mean? Its fizz reminds me of a hot afternoon in Madagascar.

AUGUSTUS

When were you ever in Madagascar?

AUNT

Too long ago.

AUGUSTUS

Julia, you are telling fibs again.

She indicates an African witch doctor mask on the wall.

AUNT

Where do you think I got that mask, Mr. Smarty-Pants? Potent magic. How about some milk and cookies?

AUGUSTUS

'Kay.

She gets him a milk and cookie and herself a gin and tonic.

AUNT

Let's have our gin and milk on the porch, it's such a nice evening.

6.0 EXT. HOUSE - PORCH - MOMENT LATER

They settle on the porch, surrounded by candles.

Julia lights another candle.

AUNT

So no babies yet, Augie?

AUGUSTUS

Maybe let me get married first.

Auntie dismisses the notion with a wave of her hand.

AUNT

Protocol! Priests are allowed to have kids, aren't they?

AUGUSTUS

No, but pastors are.

AUNT

Good. Well, get to it. Haste makes waste. I smell a storm coming, do you?

AUGUSTUS

(Sniffs)

I have a stuffy nose.

AUNT

Oh, I hope you're not coming down with something.

AUGUSTUS

No. My nose is always stuffy.

Julia breathes the air, vibrating with the approaching storm.

AUNT

Mm! The vibe of ozone, you know?

AUGUSTUS

I can dig it.

Julia spreads out a deck of Tarot cards.

AUNT

Alright, first things first! Close your eyes and take a card.

Augustus sighs heavily.

AUGUSTUS

I don't want to.

AUNT

C'mon, man! Unscrew that big brain of yours. Let your fingers feel for the card. Remember, you do not pick the card, the card picks you.

He sighs, closes his eyes, and lets his fingers run over the cards.

He pulls out a card.

The Nine of Wands.



He tosses it on the table.

Augustus doesn't appear to like the card much.

Julie, an amateur occultist at best, is mystified. She opens a book on the Tarot.

AUNT

Hm! Now that's interesting. The Nine of Wands. Oh, isn't that pretty? Let's see...

(Flipping to a page)

"The Nine of Wands"... Oh, you see? "Order... discipline... Courage in the face of adversity." What I tell you?

She snaps the book shut.

AUNT (CONT'D)

The denizens of the ethereal plane see all.

AUGUSTUS

Hm!

AUNT

Alright, down to business. You arrived just in time, Augustus. Tomorrow would have been too late.

AUGUSTUS

For what?

AUNT

Believe it or not, after sitting empty the past thirty years, the old haunted house on Montgomery has been sold.

AUGUSTUS

(Searchingly)

Old haunted house... "Murder Manor?"

AUNT

Is that what the kids call it?

AUGUSTUS

I have no idea what the kids call it.

AUNT

That is so vulgar. A builder is going to blow it to smithereens and put up something ugly in its place. The wrecking crew starts in the morning. So tonight is the night.

AUGUSTUS

For what?

AUNT

To go there of course!

AUGUSTUS

What?

AUNT

You know I've been meaning to get inside that house for the longest time.

AUGUSTUS

I did not know that.

AUNT

Well, I have. And tonight's my last chance, and I mean to do it.

AUGUSTUS

Is this why you dragged me down here?

AUNT

Did I drag you down here?

AUGUSTUS

Your letter said you were dying.

AUNT

I got better. Excuse me for living.

AUGUSTUS

No, I mean, it's just--

AUNT

Caesar Augustus Goldfinch, I am going to that haunted house tonight with or without you.

AUGUSTUS

Auntie, I am pointless after 10 PM.

AUNT

Don't be a downer, man!

She throws a card at him and it hits him in the head.

AUNT (CONT'D)

Where's your sense of adventure?

He looks down at the card--



Unnerving.

AUGUSTUS

I don't get it. What do you hope to gain from this escapade?

AUNT

Answers.

AUGUSTUS

To what?

AUNT

(Looking at his head)  
Are you losing your hair?

AUGUSTUS

Julia.

AUNT

Oh yes... Who would have thought?  
You know my Daddy went to his grave  
with the fullest head of hair you  
ever did see--bushy and black as  
night.

AUGUSTUS

Your father died at forty.

AUNT

Thirty-nine. Electrocuted by a  
downed power line. Dangerous stuff,  
electricity. I won't have anything  
to do with it if I can help it.

AUGUSTUS

What answers?

AUNT

"All will be revealed." That's from  
the Bible, isn't it?

AUGUSTUS

I don't know...

AUNT

Or maybe Shakespeare. I always get  
the two confused.

AUGUSTUS

(Sigh)  
You exhaust me.

AUNT

Good. Go take a nap. It could be a  
long night.

(Thinking)  
I can't forget to pack a hammer.

AUGUSTUS  
A hammer? What for?

AUNT  
To get in the house.

AUGUSTUS  
You don't have a key?

AUNT  
Don't be silly. The property is  
condemned.

AUGUSTUS  
Auntie, that's trespassing!

AUNT  
Oh, nobody cares!

AUGUSTUS  
I care! It's a crime!

AUNT  
Nobody'll even know! Tomorrow they  
blast the place to Kingdom Come. What  
harm can we possibly do? It's almost  
a crime not to break in!

Augustus bows his head, gathering his thoughts.

This is serious.

AUGUSTUS  
Julia... Listen to me. This is  
wrong. I'm sorry, but it's illegal.  
It's breaking and entering.  
Trespassing. What if we get  
arrested? Do you know what would  
happen to me if the church found  
out? We could go to jail!

She listens quietly, seriously.

Gathering steam.

## AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)

Even if we don't get caught--I'm sorry but I have to be honest--what you're doing here--toying with magic and spiritualism--the occult--you're playing with fire. You're playing in the devil's sandbox. It's dangerous, and--I'm sorry--it's a sin. I can't do it. I'm sorry. I just--

Julia STANDS!

She erupts with a seriousness never suspected of her--

## AUNT

THIS IS IMPORTANT TO ME!

Augustus shrinks back, astonished.

## AUNT

(Pointing!)

And to you too!

## AUGUSTUS

Me?

## AUNT

I'm going at 10 o'clock. You are welcome to come with, but if you're scared, I'll go by myself.

She goes inside.

Augustus sits, amazed.

## 7.0 INT. HIS OLD BEDROOM - EVENING

His old room stands as it stood when he was a teen.

Augustus looks around at the posters on the walls, his teenage memories...

...a sad museum to his sad youth.

A bowl of poutpourri and satchels of herbs hang here and there. Even a strand of garlic.

Augustus sniffs some herbs--  
--and flinches at the stink.

He limps to the closet.

His old stuff.

A tuxedo in plastic, hanging up.

Up on the shelf, in the back, his metallic leg braces and crutches.

He closes the door.

He sits on the bed.

He hangs his cane up on a hook by the bed.

He calls Helen on his cellphone, ringing...

...ringing...

He looks in the drawer of the bedstand.

A Superman comic book.

Under it, in the back, an old framed photo turned face-down.

He gets up and goes to the window, looking out on--

--the GARDEN below.

Aunt Julia is standing under the old oak tree.

Odd!

FADE OUT.

8.0 EXT. BEACH - DAY

It's a dream.

A sunny dream by the bright sea.

In his big trunks, Augustus clanks NOISILY along the beach with his crutches and his metallic braces. His crutches are like stilts.

Clank clank--Augustus clanks along like a rusty machine.

He clanks past where pretty girls are laughing and bouncing in the surf.

Wistful.

Helen is among them. She whispers something to another girl and they laugh.

At him.

Augustus spies a corked bottle with a message, bobbing in the water.

He wanders out into the water to fetch the bottle.

But it eludes his grasp.

He chases after it, but the bottle goes farther out to sea.

He watches it drift away.

He cannot swim.

#### 9.0 INT. HIS OLD BEDROOM - LATER

Asleep, Augustus stirs in bed.

AUNT (OS)

(Calling off-screen)

...time to get up...!

AUGUSTUS

(In his sleep)

...don't wanna...

He opens his eyes.

The room is dark.

Augustus blinks up at--

--a shadowy figure looming over him.

With a gasp, Augustus reaches for the lamp.

He switches it on--

--and in a brief instant before the lightbulb blows--

--we see a MAN'S face, a villainous hateful face, pockmarked with buckshot. In his hands is Augustus's cane, held like a cudgel, brandished like a weapon.

MAN

Bastard!

--the lightbulb blows out and the room goes black.

The MAN suddenly begins beating Augustus with the cane--thrashing his legs without mercy.

Now he's atop Augustus, the cane across his throat--

--choking him--

--his entire weight pressing down on his windpipe--

--Augustus struggles--

--kicks--

AUNT (OS)

(Calling off-screen)

...10 o'clock...

Augustus thrashes and falls out of bed.

The MAN is gone.

Augustus gasps for breath.

## 10.0 INT. HER HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Dressed for adventure, Julia is packing a picnic basket.

Sandwiches.

Hammer.

She fills a Thermos with gin.

Augustus stumbles in and goes straight to the coffee.

AUNT

Oh, good, you're up. Nice nap?

AUGUSTUS

Deep dreams...

AUNT

I sent you a message. Did you get it?

AUGUSTUS

No.

AUNT

Hm! That's strange.  
(Noticing his throat)  
Oh, what happened?

AUGUSTUS

What?

AUNT

Your throat... it's all red...

He goes into the--

11.0 INT. POWDERROOM - CONT'D

--and looks at his throat in the mirror.

It is red--as if he had been choked by pockmarked madman with a cane.

He buttons up his clerical collar.

12.0 INT. KITCHEN - CONT'D

He returns to the kitchen and sits.

AUNT

Dog collar too tight? I should think  
it would be...

AUGUSTUS

The Pockmarked Man...

Julia goes white as a ghost.

She stares at him in disbelief.

AUNT

No...

AUGUSTUS

I haven't dreamed of him since... I  
lived here. It's that room. My old  
room.

AUNT

I put out some herbs...

AUGUSTUS

It's this house. This town.

AUNT

I am sorry, Augustus.

AUGUSTUS

Something haunts me here, Auntie,  
and I don't know who or what or why.  
I don't know anything. I am an  
ignoramus.

She goes up to him.

She kneels before him and takes his hands, warmly, sincerely.

AUNT

"All will be revealed."

AUGUSTUS

What does that mean?

AUNT

(Checks the time)

Oh, we're late for the horror show.  
C'mon. Let's rip this joint.

## 13.0 EXT. SIDEWALK IN TOWN - NIGHT

They stroll down the sidewalk along main street.

It's quiet, peaceful.

Augustus' cane clicks, clicks on the concrete.

Lightning illuminates the horizon.

AUGUSTUS

This town never changes. It's Rip  
Van Winkle.

AUNT

On Quaaludes. Look! lightning. What  
I tell you? Good ghost weather. I do  
so love storms, don't you? I simply  
curl up and die under a clear blue  
sky.

AUGUSTUS

You really think this place is  
haunted?

AUNT

I know it is...

AUGUSTUS

How do you know?

AUNT

Isn't that where what's her name  
used to live?

He looks up at a house as they pass by.

AUGUSTUS

"What's her name..."

AUNT

You know. That cute little girl you  
dated in school. The pom-pom chick.

AUGUSTUS

Margorie Gay Presley. I didn't date  
her.

AUNT

You took her to the Prom.

AUGUSTUS

I didn't go to the Prom.

AUNT

Of course you did. I bought you a tuxedo. It cost me three hundred bucks. I even have a photo...

She rifles through her purse.

AUGUSTUS

Julia, believe me, I didn't go.

AUNT

(Searches her purse)  
...somewhere... We bought a corsage for what's her name too...

AUGUSTUS

I may have asked Marjorie, but I think she was busy.

AUNT

Who the hell is busy on Prom Night? What--you mean you didn't go at all?

AUGUSTUS

No.

AUNT

But what about my three hundred dollar tux?  
(Searches again for the photo)

AUGUSTUS

I don't remember, but I think I just walked around town all night.

She scrutinizes his face.

She sees he's embarrassed.

AUNT

(Snaps her purse shut)  
You should count yourself lucky. You know that little pom-pom married a lawyer twice her age?

AUGUSTUS

Auntie...

AUNT

She had five kids and blew up like a beached whale. I saw her in the Piggly Wiggly just the other day. She was in one of those go-carts, zooming up and down the aisle like she was hot stuff.

AUGUSTUS

Julia, stop. I always liked Margorie. She was nice to me.

AUNT

(Lightly)

I guess I am going to hell, aren't I?

AUGUSTUS

Well...

She suddenly puts her hand on his arm.

AUNT

(Seriously)

I don't want to go to hell, Augustus.

He's a little startled.

AUGUSTUS

No, of course not.

AUNT

I have not been perfect.

AUGUSTUS

No one is perfect. Auntie, you're a good soul. But you do like to flirt with the devil.

AUNT

I've told a awful lot of lies. To protect those I love.

He pats her hand.

AUGUSTUS

You won't go to hell. But you might have to spend some time in Heaven's waiting room.

AUNT

What's that?

AUGUSTUS

You know, like a doctor's, only bigger and more crowded.

AUNT

Oh.

(Beat)

I think I'd rather go to hell.

15.0 EXT. SIDEWALK IN TOWN - CONT'D

After a moment...

AUNT

Are you affianced yet, Augustus?  
What was the name of that girl you were seeing? The lawyer.

AUGUSTUS

Helen. No, not yet.

AUNT

Well, what are you waiting for?  
You're not getting any less bald, you know.

AUGUSTUS

Auntie, why didn't you ever marry?

AUNT

What are you talking about? I was married three times.

He stops dead in his tracks.

AUGUSTUS

Excuse me?

AUNT

Thrice married, thrice disappointed.  
After that, I gave up. To hell with it. I'm outta here.

AUGUSTUS

I'm speechless.

AUNT

My first was at fifteen. Algernon Bannister. A sweet boy, but the less said about that dumb sitcom the better.

The second I don't remember at all. And I don't want to.

But the last was the real deal. Jean-Paul. He was Belgian. Oh, a very handsome man. He could charm the pants right off you, and did. He was an airline pilot. I was his head stewardess.

AUGUSTUS

Wait, what? Stewardess?

AUNT

"Coffee, tea, or me."

(Laughs, gestures)

Sorry, it was the 70s. We had fun. Sue me. Jean-Paul was always jetting off to some exotic locale, so we hardly saw each other. It was just about the perfect marriage. Until his plane disappeared somewhere over the Indian ocean.

AUGUSTUS

I'm shocked.

AUNT

What?

AUGUSTUS

Why am I just hearing about this?

AUNT

This was way before you.

AUGUSTUS

I know nothing about my past. You, or my mother or father...

AUNT

You never asked, honey. You were always too scared to look into that dark attic, chock full of skeletons and ghosts.

AUGUSTUS

I don't know where I came from. How can I know where I'm going...?

16.0 EXT. SIDEWALK - CONT'D

They continue toward the house.

Augustus is pensive.

AUNT

Speaking of the past--what is the past, anyway? What is history? There--that moment--it's here, now it's gone. A page is turned. What was it?

AUGUSTUS

What about the past?

AUNT

I forgot. Oh, that's right. You should probably know, Augustus--I think you're old enough now--and I think it's important that you know, now, while I'm still here--

AUGUSTUS

(Impatiently)  
What is it?

A breath.

AUNT

When you were little, you were not exactly run over.

AUGUSTUS

What?

AUNT

You didn't exactly get hit by that car.

He stops, astounded.

AUGUSTUS

What do you mean...?

AUNT

The truth is, there was no car.

AUGUSTUS

What are you saying?

AUNT

I'm saying you were not run over.

AUGUSTUS

How can that be? I remember it very clearly. I can still see that red Mustang--

AUNT

That was just a fib we told, and it musta stuck. We told a lot of fibs, I'm afraid.

AUGUSTUS

What fibs? And who is this "we?"

AUNT

Me. And you too!

AUGUSTUS

Me?

AUNT

Don't be coy. You told fibs! To yourself, I mean.

AUGUSTUS

Julia, what happened to me?

A moment.

AUNT

You had a bad fall.

AUGUSTUS

What do you mean?

AUNT

You fell off a balcony.

AUGUSTUS

A balcony? How...?

She walks on.

He follows.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)

Julia, how did I fall off a balcony?

AUNT

I don't know.

AUGUSTUS

You're not telling me the whole truth.

AUNT

I don't know the whole truth. Nobody knows the whole truth. Except maybe you.

AUGUSTUS

Me?

AUNT

You were there, weren't you? You're the only one left standing.

Augustus stands astonished, as if just recalling a buried memory.

He staggers.

AUGUSTUS

My God!

AUNT

What?

AUGUSTUS

My God! Julia! I just remembered... Just now! I can't believe it...

AUNT

It's not true!

AUGUSTUS

...When I was in school--Oh my God-- Bobby Freeland's sister told me my mother shot my father, then killed herself.

AUNT

Lies!

AUGUSTUS

...I ran home crying--to you. My God, I just remembered that. After thirty years!

AUNT

Don't believe a word of it!

AUGUSTUS

Julia, what happened to my parents?

AUNT

They died.

AUGUSTUS

How?

AUNT

I don't know.

AUGUSTUS

You must tell me. I have a right to know!

AUNT

I know you do. That's why we're here...

CUT TO:

17.0 EXT. HOUSE - CONT'D

They look up at--

--the haunted house, the dark devastation.

AUGUSTUS

What do you mean? What does this house have to do with me?

She starts up the drive toward the house.

He follows haltingly.

Her eyes looks up at the dark house looming overhead.

AUGUSTUS

Julia! Whose house is this? Julia!  
Who lived here?

At last she turns to look at him.

AUNT

You did.

TITLE UP: "ALL WILL BE REVEALED."

18.0 EXT. HOUSE ENTRANCE - CONT'D

Augustus catches up to Julia as they approach the boarded-up front door.

A condemned sign and official warnings posted on the door and windows.

By the door is a porch-light--dark with no bulb.

AUGUSTUS

Auntie, I want answers.

Julia slips her arm into his as they go.

AUNT

"All will be revealed."

Fear enters her face as she looks up at the door.

At the door, she tries the doorknob.

Augustus looks into the darkened windows.

AUNT

We may have to sneak around back.  
Maybe there's a--ouch...!

Suddenly, Julia feels a pain in her chest.

She winces and grabs at her throat.

She gasps for breath.

AUGUSTUS

What is it?

AUNT

...ow... damn pace-maker...

AUGUSTUS

I didn't know you wore a pace-maker.

AUNT

It's going nuts. Oh man... There.  
Oh. It just died... For a second  
there... it was a little scary...

AUGUSTUS

Auntie, I'm worried about you.

She pats his arm warmly.

AUNT

I'm okay now... it quit...

He takes out his cellphone to use the flash-light.

AUGUSTUS

I have a flashlight.

AUNT

That's won't work.

AUGUSTUS

My smart phone?

AUNT

"Smart phone." Stupid phone, more  
like.

The cellphone has no power

AUGUSTUS

That's odd, I just charged it.

AUNT

Augustus, it is a scientific fact  
that supernatural emanations  
interfere with the ebb and flow of  
electricity. Here, in this house,  
the psychic energy is over-powering.  
Look at the street light...

The street light in front of the house flickers and throbs  
randomly.

AUNT (CONT'D)

I brought candles. Old world tech.  
What was that our Lord said about a  
candle...?

AUGUSTUS

(Thinks)

I think he said something about a lamp...

AUNT

"Do not hide your lamp under a bushel basket." That never made any sense to me. He said a lot of weird stuff, didn't he? "Let the dead bury the dead." Now what ever does that mean?

AUGUSTUS

I don't really--

19.0 EXT. HOUSE ENTRANCE - CONT'D

--Julia spies a police car pulling up in front of the house.

AUNT

The fuzz!

AUGUSTUS

Wha--!

AUNT

The cops, man! Ditch it!

They scramble to secrete themselves behind bushes.

The COP gets out of his car and walks up the drive, shining his flashlight toward the front door.

He is clearly unnerved by the place.

AUGUSTUS

(Whispering)

What am I doing?

AUNT

(Whispering)

There have been strange goings-on in this house for years. Decades! Even the cops don't have the guts to investigate. Oh damn, the picnic basket...

The Cop starts to turn away, but his flash-light falls on the picnic basket, still by the front door.

The Cop approaches the door.

The closer he gets, the more his flash-light sputters.

It finally goes dark.

A noise from somewhere.

The Cop is clearly skittish.

COP

(Hoarsely)

Somebody there...?

Suddenly the light by the door flickers.

Inside the doorbell can be heard.

Startled, the Cop panics and darts back to his patrol car.

It speeds away.

Augustus and Julia emerge from their hiding spots.

AUNT

What I tell you? Barney Fife!

20.0 EXT. HOUSE ENTRANCE - CONT'D

Back at the front door, Augustus examines the porch lamp.

AUGUSTUS

That was weird.

AUNT

I told you, this house is a Niagara of psychic confluences.

AUGUSTUS

(Re the light)

That was really...weird. There's no light bulb.

AUNT

That? That was nothing. Let's snoop around back.

21.0 EXT. HOUSE - REAR - MOMENTS LATER

They wander around back of the house.

Julia looks up at--

--the wind stirring the trees. Lightning in the distance.

AUNT

Oh! just in time! I do so love storms. I hope when I have to go I get zapped by lightning. Wouldn't that be a trip?

For some reason, this pains Augustus terribly.

AUGUSTUS

Auntie, don't...!

She puts a sympathetic hand on his arm.

AUNT

I'm sorry, Augie...

She can see his eyes are almost full of tears.

AUNT (CONT'D)

Forgive me...

He nods and looks away.

It's an odd passage, soon forgotten.

Looking up, Julia sees--

--a window on the second floor opening...

The curtains rustle from the wind--or an unseen hand.

Julia scrunches up against Augustus in fear.

AUNT

Augustus, don't look now, but that window just opened...

AUGUSTUS

What?

AUNT

That window. It opened.

AUGUSTUS

You sure?

AUNT

No... I don't know. Maybe you can you climb up and get inside? There might be a ladder somewheres.

AUGUSTUS

You know I don't care much for ladders, or heights.

AUNT

Oh... I forgot. Drag.

They wander some more.

## 22.0 EXT. HOUSE - REAR - CELLAR DOOR

They come upon a stairwell to a cellar door.

AUNT

The cellar. As the philosopher said, "You must go down, to go up."

They go down to the door.

Julia tries the handle.

Locked.

AUNT

Hell and damnation.

She brings out the hammer.

AUNT (CONT'D)

Alright then, we're just gonna have to bust in.

(Hands him the hammer)

Give it a good whack, Reverend.

Augustus tries the door knob again--

--and the door knob turns and the door swings open.

AUNT

I do believe you have the touch, Augie. You coulda been a thief in the night.

She brings out a candle and light it.

AUGUSTUS

Julia, I want answers.

AUNT

"Ask, and you shall receive."

AUGUSTUS

A man who doesn't know his past, doesn't know his future. Or his present.

AUNT

A real nowhere man. "Seek, and ye shall find." That's the Bible, isn't it?

AUGUSTUS

I thought that was the Beatles.

AUNT

What? The Beatles? What the heck kind of priest are you?

He's a little taken aback.

Her remark touched a nerve.

AUGUSTUS

(Very downcast)

Not a very good one, I'm afraid.

She sees he is a little hurt.

AUNT

Nonsense. I'm sure you're a good shepherd to your flock.

A half-hearted expression crosses his face.

He knows better.

She buttons his button like a little boy.

AUNT (CONT'D)

Augustus, listen to me. Whatever happens, whatever we find inside, promise me you won't freak out.

There are no second chances after tonight. We must stay and investigate every unusual thing, no matter how scary or painful. We must be brave.

AUGUSTUS

You think I'm a wimp.

AUNT

We must be brave enough to look into that dark attic. Promise me.

AUGUSTUS

I won't freak out...

TITLE UP: "SEEK, AND YE SHALL FIND"

23.0 INT - THE CELLAR - CONT'D

She takes his arm and they cross the threshold.

The dark cellar before them.

Augustus fumbles for a light switch on the wall.

Nothing, of course.

AUNT

(Whispering)

All bad houses, like all bad marriages, begin in the cellar.

AUGUSTUS

The things you say. Oh... dizzy...

AUNT

(Whispering)

You're not scared, are you?

AUGUSTUS

I'm scared of getting kicked out of the pulpit and becoming a street preacher.

AUNT

(Whispering)

Our Lord was a street preacher.

AUGUSTUS

Why are you whispering?

AUNT

(Whispering)

I'm not whispering.

AUGUSTUS

(Dizzily)

Oh...

Augustus swoons. He reaches out for a wall for support.

AUNT

What is it?

AUGUSTUS

My head is spinning... deja-vu...

AUNT

Really?

AUGUSTUS

Auntie, I've been here before...

AUNT

When you were a little itty bitty thing.

AUGUSTUS

I remember it like a dream.

## 24.0 INT. CELLAR - CONT'D

They come upon a room where the fluorescent lights are barely glowing.

Throbbing.

Buzzing.

AUNT

(Whispering)

Oh wow...

AUGUSTUS

You're sure this place has no power?

AUNT

I told you, it's all the psychic energy. This house is so hot with the spirit world, it generates its own light... Even in rooms where there are no lights. Which way, chief?

He thinks.

AUGUSTUS

This way.

He leads her.

## 25.0 INT. CELLAR - STAIRS - NIGHT

They come upon the stairwell leading up to a door.

AUGUSTUS

Up there is the door to the kitchen...

AUNT

You really do remember this house...

Augustus hears the faint rushing of water in the pipes.

AUGUSTUS

Shh...

AUNT

Wha..?

AUGUSTUS

Shh...

He goes to a pipe in the wall and puts his ear to it.

AUNT

What is it...?

The faint rush of water.

AUGUSTUS

Shh...

AUNT

Do ghosts visit the rest room?

AUGUSTUS

Will you be quiet?

She recoils slightly.

He listens more closely...

AUNT

There's no need to be rude.

AUGUSTUS

Quiet!

A face.

AUNT

(Under her breath)

Really!

Augustus hears in the pipe...

AUGUSTUS

A voice...

...the very faint voice of a woman...

AUNT

No!

She clings to him.

AUGUSTUS

...a woman's voice...

AUNT

Oh!

He listens...

AUGUSTUS

...she's singing...

AUNT

You sure it's not a mouse...?  
Because sometimes a mouse--

Suddenly! LOUD footsteps right overhead.

They freeze.

AUGUSTUS

That was not a mouse.

AUNT

No...

They wait...

The floor boards overhead creak under weight.

The creaking stops.

After a moment...

AUNT

Let's go find out.

He doesn't move.

She tries to lead him onward.

AUNT

C'mon. Move your legs.

He tries.

AUGUSTUS

I can't.

AUNT

Augustus, you promised...

At last he musters up the strength and starts forward toward the

stairs.

26.0 INT. CELLAR STAIRS - DOOR - CONT'D

Up they go.

Arm in arm.

Step.

Step.

Step.

They pause at the door and listen.

A creak.

Then nothing.

They look at one another.

AUNT

"Courage..."

Julia turns the knob and opens the door.

27.0 INT. KITCHEN - CONT'D

A flash of lightning illuminates the kitchen.

They enter.

Cautiously.

Warily.

A vase of sunflowers is on the counter.

AUGUSTUS

Sunflowers...?

JULIA

They were your mother's favorite...

He touches them.

AUGUSTUS

They're fresh...

Julia puts the picnic basket down on the counter.

The creak of a floorboard from somewhere nearby.

They see--

--in the doorway--

--a figure in the darkness...

They take a step toward the figure.

In a flash of lightning, they see--

--an OLD MAN, a wild man with wild hair--

--staring at them in wide-eyed terror.

Julia and Augustus CRY OUT in fright!

The Man SHOUTS in fear!

Julia falls back, clutching her chest.

Augustus rushes to her side.

The Man is gone.

Augustus makes sure his Aunt is okay...

AUGUSTUS

You alright?

She nods faintly, gasping for breath.

28.0 INT. KITCHEN - CONT'D

Augustus leaves her side and goes to where the Man vanished in another room.

He listens.

29.0 INT. EXTERIOR DOOR - CONT'D

Augustus comes upon a side-door to the outside.

He peers out the window.

Nothing.

30.0 INT. KITCHEN - CONT'D

Augustus returns.

AUGUSTUS

How are you?

AUNT

Super-cali-fragilistic.

AUGUSTUS

Ex-pia-li-docious?

AUNT

You said it.

AUGUSTUS

Auntie, do you know who that was...?

AUNT

(As if surprised)

It's funny, but I don't have a clue... I thought I knew all the players in this horror show...

The wind rises outside in the trees as the storm threatens.

A strong draft of wind from somewhere...

A KCHUNK! sound from another room.

KCHUNK! like a stone falling.

AUGUSTUS

What is that?

AUNT

Hail?

They wander toward the sound.

31.0 INT. LIVING ROOM - CONT'D

The empty living room.

The door to the front patio is wide-open.

The curtains fly in the wind.

The lights--where there are no lights--flicker.

KCHUNK!

Augustus closes the door.

Julia bends down and picks up--

--a pebble.

AUNT

That's weird.

KLUMP!

AUGUSTUS

Ow!

Augustus is hit in the head.

He bends over and picks up a small stone.

He examines it.

AUNT

I don't think somebody wants us here.

AUGUSTUS

Auntie...

Another, larger stone, crashes at her feet.

AUNT

What?

AUGUSTUS

I'm starting to freak out.

WHEN SUDDENLY THE ENTIRE ROOM IS A HAILSTORM OF STONES!

Stones, pebbles, rocks falling by the hundreds!

The two manage to rush out of the hailstorm--

### 32.0 INT. KITCHEN / PATIO DOOR - CONT'D

--back into the kitchen.

The door to the patio garden is wide open.

The curtains fly in the wind.

They go out into the patio garden.

### 33.0 EXT. GARDEN - CONT'D

They find a seat in the overgrown garden, peopled by statuettes of angels.

Traumatized by the scare, Julia looks very haggard and distraught.

Her hand trembles as she takes a pill and washes it down with a drink from the Thermos.

Augustus looks at her.

She is changed: weak, dark, feeble.

AUNT

An old man is a comedy; but an old woman is a tragedy.

He reaches in his pocket and pulls out a handful of dust.

AUGUSTUS

Look... that rock...

The dust blows away in the wind.

TITLE UP: "REMEMBER THAT THOU ART DUST"

She drinks again from the Thermos.

AUNT

I'm sorry, Augustus, but I don't think I can do it.

AUGUSTUS

Do what?

AUNT

This. That. I don't think I can go through with it. I thought I could, I wanted to, for your sake, but I am an old woman with an old heart. I'm not as strong as I thought.

(Beat)

Augustus, I'm scared...

AUGUSTUS

We just need to be brave, like you said.

She half-smiles.

She looks up at the wind in the trees. The lightning.

The storm coming.

He watches her, anticipating something.

She takes another sip.

She offers the Thermos to Augustus.

He shakes his head "No, thanks."

AUNT

I think you should.

He understands her meaning. Something is coming.

He takes the Thermos and takes a sip.

It burns.

She gathers strength and draws a breath.

AUNT

Thirty years ago, your mother, my  
sister, Marcia Octavia Goldfinch,  
died in this house with her husband,  
Simon Bleakstaff. Judge Bleakstaff.  
A Fed. They don't make 'em any  
meaner than that.

He built this house for her. But  
Marcia had a lover--to this day,  
nobody knows who. The official story  
is that night Judge Bleakstaff  
learned the truth, and when he came  
home--

The lights come on in the house behind them. As if that night were  
being played out again.

CUT TO:

34.0 INT. THE HOUSE - VARIOUS - 1985

We see this.

--he went straight to Marcia to kick  
her out and take away the child.

Bits.

There was a fight, and then they  
say--the official reports say, the  
police, the reporters, the gossips  
say--that Marcia shot the Judge  
dead.

Flashes.

They say she then went to the balcony and in a fit of madness threw herself and her child to the floor below.

BACK TO:

35.0 EXT. GARDEN - CONT'D

I was overseas at the time. I flew home as soon as I heard.

The whole town came out to say goodbye to Judge Bleakstaff, that pillar of the community.

But there was no funeral for Marcia. There was no memorial. No full-page obituary. After all she was a murderer, an adulteress, a lunatic. Her friends never came around. No one in town spoke her name. Her lover vanished completely. It was as if there was a grand conspiracy to wipe her name from memory. Even her ashes were lost.

AUGUSTUS

Lost?

AUNT

Not a speck of her existence was to remain. Not a fingerprint. Not an eyelash.

And yet, here you are. Marcia's son.

She stiffens her spine.

AUNT (CONT'D)

Well, I don't accept the official story. I have never accepted the official story. And neither has she.

For years, Augustus, I've had the  
exact same dream, night after night.  
I can't shake it...

CUT TO:

36.0 INT. JULIA'S BEDROOM - DREAM NIGHT

Julia is sitting before the mirror, getting ready for bed,  
scrubbing her forehead, when--

--a shadowy figure appears in the mirror behind her.

Julia draws a sharp breath.

Fear.

Petrified.

Unable to move.

Julia turns--

--MARCIA is right behind her.

Marcia is still young.

Julia stands and faces her sister.

JULIA  
(Breathlessly)  
Marcia...

Marcia puts into Julia's hands...

...ashes...

She then presses a thumb to Julia's forehead and smudges ash.

MARCIA  
Remember me...

BACK TO:

## 37.0 EXT. GARDEN - CONT'D

AUGUSTUS

That's why we're here?

AUNT

That's why we're here. To learn the truth. To restore Marcia's name to memory. To make things right.

I don't claim to be innocent in any of this, Augie. I have hid things from you. I have told a lot of fibs. But no more. The truth must come out.

(Beat)

Your mother, Augustus, did not try to kill you.

AUGUSTUS

And you think we will learn the truth?

AUNT

I do.

AUGUSTUS

Then what are we waiting for?

Julia stands resolutely.

Renewed vigor.

She lights a cigarette with a Bette Davis flourish.

AUNT

Fuckin' A, man!

She starts to go.

After a few steps, she stops and looks at Augustus, still sitting, still gawking.

She puts her hand to her lips in embarrassment.

AUNT

Oh, I do beg your pardon, Reverend.

## 38.0 INT. LIVING-ROOM / STAIRS - CONT'D

They return to the living room.

The rocks are now gone.

Augustus bends down and scoops up from the floor a handful of dust.

Aunt Julia notices a chair in the room.

AUNT

That chair was not there before.

AUGUSTUS

What?

AUNT

That chair...

AUGUSTUS

You sure?

AUNT

I'm not sure of anything anymore.

She goes and, first making sure it's really there, sits down on the chair.

Augustus wanders toward the front door where there are the stairs and above--

--the balcony. The railing is still broken.

AUNT (CONT'D)

Well, I guess if rocks can rain down from the rafters, we shouldn't be surprised if chairs pop out of the ether.

Augustus is overcome by a wave of deja-vu.

He has to sit down.

AUGUSTUS

Oh...

AUNT

What? What is it?

AUGUSTUS

Deja-vu...

AUNT

It's all the psychic energy. I'm telling you, this place is electric.

AUGUSTUS

Why didn't they fix the railing?

AUNT

They did! They did fix it! Many times. The bank owned it-- afterwards. The bank manager, Mike Finnegan--he's in the choir at church--he told me they sent a carpenter out a dozen times to fix it. But each time, the next day, it was broken again.

Augustus turns to the front door.

He seems to be recalling something...

AUNT (CONT'D)

Lay it on me.

AUGUSTUS

(Searching his memory)

This house... We came here one Halloween, Bobby Freeland and me and Dale Brown. "Murder Manor." They dared me to go up to the front door and knock...

CUT TO:

39.0 EXT. ENTRANCE - NIGHT - 1990

We see this.

LITTLE AUGIE, 8 years old, dressed in his Superman costume, approaches the front entrance.

AUGUSTUS (VO)

I went up the drive to door, this door, but I didn't knock...

Little Augie goes up to the door and peers through the frosted glass.

CUT TO:

INSIDE, from within the dark interior, we see the little boy gazing through the glass.

Someone, a shadowy woman, is standing in the dark, watching him.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D VO)

There was somebody inside, a woman, watching me... She tried to open the door...but couldn't...

The handle clicks, turns barely...

...as if someone is having trouble opening the door...

The boy turns and limps back down the drive in fear.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D VO)

I ran away... screaming...

BACK TO:

40.0 INT. STAIRS - CONT'D

Augustus is overcome with terrible grief.

AUGUSTUS

I didn't know! I had no idea... Oh, Auntie...! I didn't know...!

Julia puts her hand on his arm.

AUNT

I am sorry, Augie...

Suddenly, a railing spindle topples--

--falls through the air--

--and clatters on the floor below.

They look up at the railing.

There are 8 spindles standing.

AUNT

(Wide-eyed with wonder)

The Nine of Wands.

AUGUSTUS

Eight.

Julia indicates his cane.

AUNT

Nine. "Courage in the face of  
adversity."

TITLE UP: "THE NINE OF WANDS"

41.0 INT. STAIRS - CONT'D

They go up the stairs.

Step by step.

42.0 INT. LANDING - CONT'D

They reach the landing.

Julia goes to the railing and looks over it.

Augustus hugs the wall. His fear of heights is overpowering, and he stays a safe distance away.

AUNT

The official story was that Marcia  
threw herself and her child off the  
balcony. But why was the railing  
broken? Tell me that. She weighed  
all of ninety-eight pounds. Goddamn  
'em all to hell.

AUGUSTUS

Auntie, please.

AUNT

Sorry, not sorry.

Augustus starts toward the library.

43.0 INT. THE LIBRARY - CONT'D

They step into the library.

A boar's head is on the wall.

In fact, almost everything is in place: books, chairs, paintings, desk, although a few items appear to be missing.

AUGUSTUS

I don't understand. Why is all this stuff here?

AUNT

I don't know. The bank has owned this house for ever. I thought everything had been cleared out.

He goes up to the boar's head.

AUGUSTUS

I remember this head. Its eyes scared me. My father scared me.

AUNT

Simon Bleakstaff was a scary man. But he was not your father...

Augustus looks around at the books, the paintings.

AUGUSTUS

How do you know that?

AUNT

He always suspected there was a lover. But it wasn't until he looked into your eyes that he knew for sure. He took a drop of blood and had it analyzed. The night he got back the results, all hell broke loose.

Augustus comes face to face with the Judge's portrait on the wall,

in his black robe.

In the flashes of lightning, his face is pocked with buckshot.

AUGUSTUS

Julia! The Pockmarked Man...

AUNT

He's not pock-marked...

Unseen by them, in a dark corner, a man stands with his back against the wall, watching them. It's The Pockmarked Man. His face and clothes are painted in such a way that he melts perfectly into the background.

#### 44.0 INT. LIBRARY - CONT'D

And then THE PHONE rings!

Right next to Augustus on the desk, an old style telephone.

Ring, ring!

Augustus leaps out of his skin.

They stare.

Augustus makes a motion to pick up the receiver.

AUNT

Don't answer it.

AUGUSTUS

Why not?

No response.

Augustus makes a wry face and goes for the receiver.

AUNT (CONT'D)

Augustus...

He picks up the receiver and listens.

Silence on the line.

Except...from over a great distance, from beyond the grave... a man breathing...

AUGUSTUS

(Voicelessly)

...Hello...

MAN ON THE PHONE

...Bastard...

Click.

Augustus hangs up.

They stare at one another.

Augustus looks like he is about to faint.

AUNT

I told you not to answer...

A LOUD CRASH from the hallway.

They freeze.

AUNT

(Whispering)

Did you do that?

AUGUSTUS

(Whispering)

Na-unh.

They go warily into the hall.

45.0 INT. HALLWAY - CONT'D

In the hall, the hidden ceiling-ladder to the attic has been lowered.

A naked light-bulb up in the attic blinks, flickers.

They approach the steps.

AUNT

You wicked wicked old man! you don't scare me!

AUGUSTUS

No?

AUNT

Hell no! Go up, Augie.

AUGUSTUS

Me?

He looks up, troubled by fear.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)

There's nothing up there.

AUNT

You promised you would be brave!

AUGUSTUS

I'm here, aren't I?

Augustus shoves the ladder back up in the ceiling.

AUGUSTUS (CONT'D)

Besides, we don't have two good legs between us.

He continues down the hall to another room.

Julia looks at him with a hint of disappointment.

Something else is going on.

#### 46.0 INT. NURSERY - CONT'D

They enter the nursery. It is outfitted as it may have been thirty years ago.

AUGUSTUS

I remember my mother used to sleep with me. Until she didn't.

AUNT

Until she couldn't.

Augustus picks up a favorite stuffed toy, as if he remembers it.

AUGUSTUS

My stuffed giraffe. Julia, how can this be?

Her look: I have no idea...

She goes out of the room.

## 47.0 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONT'D

They enter the master bedroom. It is completely furnished and outfitted as it was 30 years ago.

Julia goes to a closet and opens it.

Everything is there.

She touches her sister's clothes.

AUNT

It's as if nothing has changed from that night thirty years ago.

AUGUSTUS

The bed's been slept in...

AUNT

The old man died in that bed.  
(Archly)  
Nightly, I daresay.

Augustus finds in the back of the closet...

...a shot gun.

Augustus checks out the gun.

AUGUSTUS

Julia, what is going on?

AUNT

That night is coming back to life...

Julia settles into a chair.

Tired.

Distraught.

Fumbling at her chest.

He gives her the Thermos and she drinks from it.

Her eyes close.

He sits on the bed, across from her.

AUGUSTUS

I'm worried about you, Auntie...

AUNT

Just tired...

AUGUSTUS

What now?

AUNT

We wait.

AUGUSTUS

For what?

AUNT

For that mean old man to come through the front door. For that night to return. Like a bad rerun.

He lies back on the bed.

A moment.

AUGUSTUS

What is a ghost anyway? A hallucination? The soul in a bedsheet? A rip in the fabric of time and space?

AUNT

(Muttering sleepily)

What are dreams? What is death? What is life? Questions without answers...

A moment.

AUNT

(Muttering)

I am sorry for all the lies, Augustus...

He looks over at her.

She's asleep.

He closes his eyes again.

FADE TO BLACK.

48.0 INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Somewhere in the house... a sound...

Augustus sleeps.

AUNT

What year is it?

Augustus lifts his head and looks over at his Aunt.

She is asleep.

In the flashes of lightning, her face has changed.

When the lightning flickers, her face is the way it was thirty years ago.

He falls back to sleep...

FADE TO BLACK.

49.0 EXT. HOUSE

A light comes on in a window upstairs.

Then goes out.

TITLE UP: "HORROR SHOW"

50.0 INT. THE HOUSE - VARIOUS

Various shots of the interior of the house.

In the lightning, we can see every piece of furniture is in its place, instead of empty rooms.

A clock ticking...

END OF FREE PREVIEW!

THANK YOU FOR READING!