THE CREEPY HOUSE

by

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FADE IN

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE-UP on the face of CASEY (11) -- terrified. Eyes squeezed shut, her breath comes in short spurts.

From O.S. the faraway sounds of KIDS LAUGHING and SHOUTING.

   GIRL’S VOICE (O.S.)
   Ten! Nine! Eight!

Casey manages to squeeze open one of her eyes, then the other. She looks around. She’s alone in the foyer of a dilapidated old house. Light comes in from the cracks in the boarded-up windows. Distorted tree shadows loom on the walls.

Casey’s wearing an ill-fitting, homemade clown costume.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The suburban street teems with kids in costume, trick-or-treating.

Keeping watch outside the Creepy House are DOMINIQUE (11) - standing tough in her Katniss Everdeen costume -- and LILAH (11) - goth in her vampire get-up.

Twins HAILEY and BAILEY (6) - dressed impeccably as Thing 1 and Thing 2 -- skip over.

   BAILEY
   Is somebody in there?

   HAILEY
   Nobody’s supposed to go in there.

Dominique leans in to scare the little kids.

   DOMINIQUE
   Of course no one should go in there. It’s haunted.

   LILAH
   The ghost is a girl who got her head chopped off.

Hailey and Bailey SHRIEK and run away.

   LILAH
   I mean, I didn’t see her. It was pretty disappointing actually.
INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Casey looks around the deteriorating foyer: graffiti on the walls; an overturned, splintered chair. She hugs herself and stares at her shoes.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

More KIDS gather around the girls outside.

    LILAH
    Aren’t you supposed to be counting?

    DOMINIQUE
    Oh, right. Seven! Six! Five!

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Something SCUTTLES towards Casey. She shrinks into a corner, clutching her camera and her bag of candy.

Casey’s eyes widen in horror as the SCUTTLING gets LOUDER.

Casey lets out a little SHRIEK --

A mouse runs right over her foot and disappears into a hole in the floor.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

A crowd of kids -- including WYATT (8), dressed as Indiana Jones and JAKE (8), dressed as a ninja -- now surrounds Dominique and Lilah.

    JAKE
    Who’s up?

Wyatt looks at Dominique and Lilah, doing the math.

    WYATT
    Oh no. You really got my sister to go in there?

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

A gust of wind moves through the foyer, fluttering the peeling wallpaper. Faded, long-forgotten pictures RATTLE on the walls.
DOMINIQUE (O.S.)
Four! Three! Two!

LILAH (O.S.)
Almost done!

Casey reaches for the brass doorknob and freezes. Reflected in the doorknob’s surface is a dark, distorted shape moving in behind her.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

The throng of kids waits outside.

DOMINIQUE
One!

LILAH
Woo-hoo!

WYATT
She’s going to have nightmares forever.

The kids look at the door expectantly. It doesn’t open.

LILAH
Where is she?

DOMINIQUE
You’re done, Casey! Come out already.

WYATT
Do you think she passed out in there?

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Reflected in the doorknob, Casey sees a GHOST GIRL (11) -- in an old-fashioned pinafore, hair tied back with an oversized bow. The ghost girl’s hollow eyes bore into Casey.

Casey’s camera clatters to the floor. She finds her voice and SCREAMS.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

The kids outside jump at Casey’s SCREAM. Most scatter, but Dominique, Lilah, Wyatt and Jake surge forward towards the house.
MRS. DUFFY (40s) – an icy soccer mom in yoga pants – marches up with Hailey and Bailey in tow.

MRS. DUFFY
Get away from that house!

Casey sprints out the door, SCREAMING. Her plastic bag bangs the banister and splits open, scattering candy everywhere.

Everyone watches Casey disappear down the street. Dominique rolls her eyes. Lilah looks pained.

MRS. DUFFY
Haven’t your parents told you to stay out of there?

Dominique turns to her, all innocence and charm.

DOMINIQUE
Of course, Mrs. --

MRS. DUFFY
Duffy.

DOMINIQUE
Mrs. Duffy. We tried to tell her --

MRS. DUFFY
It’s bad enough that I have to look at this wreck every day! I don’t need you kids in and out of it!

Hailey smiles at Jake.

HAILEY
I like your ninja costume.

Jake does some ninja moves, pretending to kick her. Hailey gracefully blocks him and lands a kick of her own.

JAKE
Nice!

HAILEY
My sister and I do ballet, but I like Tae Kwan Do better.

Wyatt motions to Jake. They sidle behind Mrs. Duffy’s back and stuff their bags with Casey’s fallen candy. Hailey watches them with interest.

Mrs. Duffy turns on the heel of her spotless athletic shoes and marches off. Bailey follows close behind, sticking out her tongue at the other kids.
Bailey notices Hailey still happily drawn towards the other kids and yanks her arm to pull her into line.

HAILEY
Hey!

A gust of wind SLAMS the creepy house’s door shut. Wyatt and Jake, spooked, abandon the candy and run.

EXT. CASEY’S HOUSE – NIGHT

A section of Casey’s front yard has been divided into a grid, with squares neatly marked off with string – an amateur archeological dig.

Casey – racing full speed towards her front door – trips and falls into a newly-excavated section.

CASEY
Mayonnaise, Wyatt!

INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

AMY (40s) and JASON (40s), keep their eyes on the TV despite the BANGING coming up their front steps.

JASON
Candy’s in a bowl out front!

Casey stumbles through the door, smeared in dirt, her clown costume ripped.

AMY
Oh, honey.

Casey kicks off her shoes, close to tears, and stomps up to the stairs.

JASON
You’re already done? How much candy did you get?

Amy hits him, giving him a “shut up!” look.

CASEY (O.S.)
I dropped all my candy.

JASON
Whaa–? You’re going to let your little brother beat you this year?

Casey’s door SLAMS shut.
AMY
Natalie wore that costume for years
and kept it in perfect condition.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT
Casey throws her bedroom door open again.

CASEY
And why did you let Wyatt dig all
those holes?! I almost sprained my
ankle!

JASON (O.S.)
The string pretty clearly marks off-
Casey GROWLS in frustration and SLAMS her bedroom door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT
Amy and Jason go back to watching TV.

JASON
Rough night.

AMY
I was hoping Wyatt could wear it
next year.

EXT. CASEY’S HOUSE - NIGHT
Dominique and Lilah ring the doorbell.

AMY (O.S.)
Candy’s outside!

Dominique pushes the door slightly open.

DOMINIQUE
Mrs. Cavanaugh?

Amy comes to the door.

AMY
Oh, it’s you girls! Come in!

Dominique’s smile sparkles.

DOMINIQUE
Oh, no thank you, Mrs. Cavanaugh,
we just wanted to check on Casey.
AMY
What happened? Did you split up?

Jason pulls open the door farther.

JASON
How much? C’mon, show me!

Dominique and Lilah hold up their bulging bags of candy.

JASON
Nice! Keep up the good work!

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Casey sits glumly, her back against her closed bedroom door.

JASON (O.S.)
Casey! Your friends are here!

INT. ENTRY HALL - NIGHT

Jason and the girls looks expectantly up the stairs. Casey does not emerge.

DOMINIQUE
Okay, well, tell Casey we’ll see her tomorrow at school?

AMY
Sure. Have fun!

Amy shuts the door.

AMY
Such nice manners.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Casey rolls her eyes.

JASON (O.S.)
Do we have any more beer?

Casey’s room is split in two, a twin bed on either side, a line taped down the center.

One side is neat and little-girlish, with a ruffled bedspread and stuffed animals.
The other side is the realm of a teenager: posters of indie rock bands, piles of novels and journals teetering on the night stand; clothes in piles.

AMY (O.S.)
What time did Natalie say she would be home?

JASON (O.S.)
I guess whenever Brandon drops her off.

Casey looks at the framed pictures on her night stand. One, of her with Dominique and Lilah, she knocks face down. Another, in a “Sisters” frame, shows a younger Casey and an older girl mugging happily for the camera. Casey stares at it glumly.

AMY (O.S.)
You let her drive with him?

JASON (O.S.)
It’s Halloween!

Casey stares sadly across the room at the empty twin bed.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Casey lies in bed, asleep. Her eyes flutter open as ROCK MUSIC suddenly BLARES outside. There are INDISTINCT VOICES.

She sits up and looks out the window.

EXT. CASEY’S HOUSE - NIGHT

NATALIE (15) exits the car. BRANDON (16) reaches for her.

NATALIE
Turn it down! You’re going to wake up my parents!

BRANDON
Natalie! I need you!

NATALIE
Yeah, that’s why I saw you all over Alexis in the backyard!

The porch light comes on.

NATALIE
Shit.
Amy opens the front door.

    AMY
    Get inside, young lady.

The car speeds off as Natalie stoms inside.

INT. ENTRY HALL - NIGHT

Natalie slouches past her mother, towards the stairs.

    AMY
    Are you in your right mind? It’s two in the morning!

    NATALIE
    Dad didn’t give me a curfew.

    AMY
    If you think for one minute you are going out with Brandon and his gang anymore -

    NATALIE
    It’s not a gang, Mom.

    AMY
    Get upstairs. And stay there until further notice.

    NATALIE
    Whatevs.

    AMY
    And do not wake up your sister!

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Casey pretends to sleep.

Natalie takes off her many bracelets, scattering them angrily over her night stand. Then she puts her face in her hands and SNIFFLES.

Casey opens her eyes.

    CASEY
    Are you okay?

    NATALIE
    Jeez! I thought I finally had some privacy.
Natalie kicks off her boots and collapses on the bed, rolling so that her back is to Casey.

Casey studies Natalie’s back with concern.

    CASEY
    Why do you like Brandon?

    NATALIE
    What do you care?

    CASEY
    It just seems like, whenever you go out with him...

Natalie puts a pillow over her head.

    CASEY
    You cry when you get home.

    NATALIE
    I do not! Mind your own business! God.

    CASEY
    Sorry. Can I ask you one more question?

    NATALIE
    No.

    CASEY
    Is he your boyfriend?

    NATALIE
    Kind of. I don’t know.

Casey considers this.

    CASEY
    Why don’t you ever hang out with Taylor anymore?

    NATALIE
    I thought that was the last question.

    CASEY
    I liked Taylor.

    NATALIE
    Trust me. Everything’s different in high school. You’ll see.
Casey tentatively crosses the room and perches on the edge of Natalie’s bed.

NATALIE
Can you get off my bed?

Casey retreats to her side of the room.

CASEY
They made me go in the Creepy House tonight.

NATALIE
Oh yeah? That I would’ve liked to see.

CASEY
Oh—CHEESE AND RICE!

NATALIE
Can you just say “crap” like a normal person?

CASEY
I am in so much trouble.

Natalie turns to look at Casey, interested.

CASEY
The camera I borrowed from Ms. Sanchez. I dropped it.

NATALIE
Dumbass. Why’d you take a school camera trick-or-treating?

Natalie chuckles and rolls back over.

CASEY
What am I going to do? I can’t go back in there.

NATALIE
Yeah. Casey, for real? You should stay out of there.

INT. KITCHEN – DAY

Casey stumbles in, sleepy-eyed.

CASEY
Where’s Mom?
JASON
She had an early meeting. Oatmeal?

Casey shakes her head. Wyatt is absorbed in a book.

WYATT
Hey, Dad, look at this mummy.

Jason glances at the book.

JASON
Awesome. I wouldn’t want to run into him in a dark alley.

WYATT
It’s a her. They used to suck the brains out the nose before they embalmed them!

JASON
Casey, you have to eat something.

CASEY
Now I really want to eat something.

JASON
I’ll make you some toast.

Jason moves to the other side of the kitchen.

Wyatt leans in, speaking quietly.

WYATT
What was your deal last night?

Casey glares at him.

WYATT
Why’d you scream like that? Did something happen in there?

CASEY
Like I’m going to tell you. After I twisted my ankle in your stupid dinosaur hole.

Wyatt shrugs and goes back to his book.

WYATT
I’m not looking for dinosaurs.
INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Casey and other STUDENTS watch ARTHUR (11) make a presentation. His poster board is titled: “The Forgotten Apocalypse”

ARTHUR
The 1918 Flu actually killed more people than the World War I. Sometimes people caught the flu on the way to work and died when they got home the same night. That’s why it was like...an apocalypse.

Arthur looks up expectantly. The other STUDENTS look back blankly.

ARTHUR
Um, that’s it.

The kind-looking but harried MS. SANCHEZ (30s) applauds.

MS. SANCHEZ
Okay, Arthur, thanks. Come on, everyone!

The students give Arthur lackluster applause.

MS. SANCHEZ
Now, who has questions? For extra credit?

An ENTHUSIASTIC GIRL (11) in the front row shoots her hand into the air.

The wind springs up outside, drawing Casey’s gaze to the window. The trees sway; leaves go swirling through the air.

ENThusiastic GIRL
Why did soldiers die of the flu?

MS. SANCHEZ
Good question...Arthur?

Their VOICES FADE in the background.

Casey doodles in her notebook. A sketch of a girl emerges, with a pinafore dress and an oversized bow.

MS. SANCHEZ
Who hasn’t gone yet...Casey?

Casey studies her drawing, oblivious to the spotlight that’s been turned on her. Students GIGGLE.
MS. SANCHEZ
Casey! Earth to Casey?

Casey suddenly realizes everyone’s looking at her.

CASEY
Oh! Sorry, what was the question?

MS. SANCHEZ
It’s your turn. Are you ready?

Casey turns green.

CASEY
Um... no.

The class LAUGHS. The bell rings. As students file out, Ms. Sanchez approaches Casey’s desk.

MS. SANCHEZ
Why do you keep avoiding this?

Casey looks down.

MS. SANCHEZ
I told you, you can pick anything about the World War I era.

Casey doesn’t say anything.

MS. SANCHEZ
You have to learn to do this. Did you get any ideas from taking pictures? There are lots of things from that era around town.

CASEY
Um, about the camera...

MS. SANCHEZ
I don’t like the sound of that.

CASEY
I know where it is! I can get it back.

MS. SANCHEZ
By tomorrow morning?

Casey nods. Ms. Sanchez examines Casey’s drawing.
MS. SANCHEZ
I’d scold you for doodling if it didn’t look like you’ve been doing research.

CASEY
What?

MS. SANCHEZ
That girl’s straight out of 1918.

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

Casey enviously compares her apple and a peanut butter sandwich to the fries and chicken tenders on Dominique’s tray. Lilah eats sushi from a varnished Bento box.

Dominique indicates the photograph sticking out of Casey’s art portfolio.

DOMINIQUE
What’s that?

CASEY
For the art show.

Dominique peers at it.

DOMINIQUE
You took a picture of shadows?

CASEY
It’s abstract.

Dominique gives her a funny look.

LILAH
Hey, is Sanchez giving a pop quiz?

Casey slides the photograph back into her portfolio.

CASEY
No. But she called on me when I wasn’t paying attention and everyone laughed.

LILAH
You’re such a spacer.

CASEY
I was drawing.

Casey holds up her notebook to show them.
DOMINIQUE
Who’s that? Some anime girl?

LILAH
That is so not anime.

DOMINIQUE
Whatever. Pokemon.

CASEY
Gimme a break, I’m not Wyatt. She’s from 1918.

Casey leans in and lowers her voice.

CASEY
Remember when I screamed last night?

DOMINIQUE
You don’t need to whisper. The whole neighborhood heard.

CASEY
I saw her.

DOMINIQUE
Yeah, right.

LILAH
Wait, you saw a ghost?

DOMINIQUE
Did you take a picture?

CASEY
I freaked out and dropped the camera.

LILAH
It’s not fair! How come you saw her?

DOMINIQUE
You left Ms. Sanchez’s camera in there?

Casey looks miserable.

CASEY
I have to get it back to her by tomorrow.
LILAH
We’ll go with you!

DOMINIQUE
The day after Halloween? There’s no way my mom’s letting me out again on a school night.

LILAH
We’ll say we’re doing a school project.

DOMINIQUE
That could work.

CASEY
Can you guys go in and get it for me?

DOMINIQUE
When are you going to stop being such a scaredy-cat? I thought last night would get you over this.

CASEY
Well, it didn’t, okay? It made it worse.

DOMINIQUE
Okay, how about this? Suicide Slope. Once it snows.

CASEY
Like I’m ever doing that.

The bell rings.

Lilah snaps her Bento box shut.

LILAH
So, meet at Casey’s house tonight?

DOMINIQUE
Sounds like a plan. Around seven?

CASEY
You guys, no!

DOMINIQUE
We’re going to go inside with you.

CASEY
I’m not going back in there.
Dominique picks up her tray.

**DOMINIQUE**
I gotta run. Mr. Li is not playing when it comes to tardies.

**LILAH**
See you tonight!

Casey tosses her uneaten lunch in the trash can in frustration.

**EXT. CASEY’S HOUSE – NIGHT**
Dominique, flanked by Lilah, reaches for the doorbell, but Casey pulls the door open first.

**CASEY**
I told you we are not doing this!

**DOMINIQUE**
You need to get the camera back to Ms. Sanchez, don’t you?

**CASEY**
Where would I even say I was going?

**NATALIE (O.S.)**
Casey! Who’s at the door?

Natalie yanks the door wide. Her face falls in disappointment.

**NATALIE**
Oh.

Natalie slouches off.

**CASEY**
Can’t we do this when it’s light out?

Jason comes to door.

**JASON**
Hi, girls!

**DOMINIQUE**
Hi, Mr. Cavanaugh. Did Casey tell you about our science project? It’s about the night sky.
LILAH
We just need Casey for a few minutes so we can take the measurements...

DOMINIQUE
...with her protractor.

LILAH
Right.

JASON
(to Casey)
Do you have a protractor?

CASEY
No, I don’t even know why -

JASON
I think Wyatt has a protractor around here somewhere. Hey, Wyatt?
Grab your protractor!
(to Casey)
Are you all done with your other homework?

CASEY
Yes, but -

Wyatt comes to the door with the protractor. Jason hands Wyatt and Casey their coats.

JASON
All right then, you guys, but be back soon, okay?

He ambles back inside. Casey glares at Wyatt.

CASEY
You’re not coming. We’re just borrowing your protractor.

WYATT
You want my protractor, you get me, too.

Lilah and Dominique head down the sidewalk.

DOMINIQUE
Just let him come, Casey. We’re wasting time.

Casey and Wyatt hustle to catch up.
EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The kids walk towards the Creepy House.

LILAH
I’m going to need your help contacting the spirit.

WYATT
What spirit?

CASEY
I’m not telling you anything.

LILAH
Casey saw a ghost last night. We’re going to have a seance.

Lilah opens her bag to let Wyatt peek at the Ouija board, candles, and other paraphernalia.

WYATT
I should have brought my tools. There are probably tons of artifacts in there!

They round the corner and see Mrs. Duffy getting out of her minivan. Dominique pushes everyone behind a bush.

DOMINIQUE
Wait until she goes inside.

Hailey and Bailey emerge from the back seat in ballet gear. Bailey pirouettes along the sidewalk in her tutu. Hailey skips past her.

MRS. DUFFY
Hurry, girls! Mommy has Pilates at 7:30!

With Mrs. Duffy’s back turned, Bailey runs for the door. She pushes Hailey out of the way, making her trip and fall.

HAILEY
Ow!

Mrs. Duffy turns to see Hailey sprawled on the ground.

MRS. DUFFY
Hailey, if you want to be a ballerina you have to be graceful.

Hailey grumpily follows the others inside.
DOMINIQUE
Okay. Coast is clear.

WYATT
So, what’s the plan?

DOMINIQUE
We should probably have a lookout.

CASEY
I’ll be the lookout.

DOMINIQUE
No, you’re coming in. Wyatt, hide by the porch and yell if anyone comes.

WYATT
But I want to see what’s in there!

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

The door GROANS open as Dominique, Lilah and Casey tiptoe inside. Lilah lights a candle.

LILAH
It’s like I can feel the presence of something.

DOMINIQUE
Probably of a whole lot of rats. This place is a mess.

Lilah places the candle and her Ouija board in the center of the floor. She sits in a meditation pose in front of the board.

DOMINIQUE
Oh, please. That floor is disgusting.

LILAH
Shhh. I’m trying to summon her.

Casey looks around.

CASEY
I thought I dropped it right here.

LILAH
Seance first! Sit down and give me your hand.
Dominique and Casey join Lilah on the floor. Three hands press into the Ouija board planchette.

LILAH
Now just close your eyes. Clear your mind.

Dominique and Lilah close their eyes. Casey looks around anxiously. The planchette doesn’t move.

DOMINIQUE
What are we doing?

LILAH
Oh, yeah. We have to ask the ghost a question.

DOMINIQUE
Okay. Who are you? What do you want?

LILAH
Now relax your hands. Keep your eyes closed until it starts to move.

There is a SCRATCHING sound from near the front door. The girls’ eyes fly open.

CASEY
What was that?

The SCRATCHING gets louder and more insistent. The girls stumble to their feet.

DOMINIQUE
Something’s by the front door.

LILAH
It’s the spirit!

The sounds of CLAWING and SCRABBLING gets LOUDER. The girls back away. Lilah grabs the candle and the flame dies.

DOMINIQUE
Why’d you put it out?

LILAH
I didn’t!

CASEY
We have to get out of here!
DOMINIQUE
There must be a back door.

The girls run towards the back of the house. Dominique trips over Lilah and CRASHES onto a rotting section of floorboards, which split open and splinter apart. Dominique YELLS as she falls towards the gaping hole.

Casey lunges forward and catches her at the last second. They peer into the hole.

DOMINIQUE
Holy crap! That goes clear down to the basement!

A FRANTIC GNAWING comes from wall near the front door.

Dominique pulls herself and Casey away from the hole, then lunges for a doorknob door behind them.

DOMINIQUE
It’s stuck!

The girls push on the door together and it flies open, sending them tumbling into a windowless pantry. The door SLAMS shut behind them and they SCREAM as they are enveloped in blackness.

INT. PANTRY - NIGHT

Lilah strikes a match and lights her candle. The girls’ faces emerge into the glow.

Above them, messy shelves hold rusty kitchen implements.

DOMINIQUE
This is where the murderer takes his victims.

CASEY
Shut UP!

DOMINIQUE
Why are we hiding in here, anyway? It’s probably nothing.

CASEY
You pulled us in here!

Lilah peers at a dilapidated old-fashioned doll, its porcelain eyes wide and vacant, its cloth limbs half-rotted away.
LILAH
What the heck?

DOMINIQUE
Just somebody’s creepy old toy.
Come on, I don’t hear anything.
Let’s get out of here.

There is a SCRABBLING sound directly outside the door. The girls shrink back. The sound stops.

DOMINIQUE
It’s just a rat.

CASEY
No way. I’m not going out there.

WYATT (O.S.)
ALLIE ALLIE IN FREE!

CASEY
That’s Wyatt.

DOMINIQUE
He’s trying to tell us something.

Dominique steels herself and flings the door open with a BANG.

An enormous raccoon darts away, directly across the Ouija board.

DOMINIQUE
See? That’s all it was.

LILAH
It’s actually kind of cute.

WYATT (O.S.)
HELP!

The girls look at each other.

DOMINIQUE
Uh-oh.

Dominique and Lilah run for the front door.

Casey gets there last -- and the Ghost Girl emerges from the gloom.

Casey skids to a stop, terrified. The Ghost Girl blocks her exit, the hem of her dress fluttering, her face blank.
Casey is frozen with fear.

But then she has an idea. She finds her voice.

    CASEY
    Are y- are you from 1918?

Deep in the ghost’s empty eyes, a spark of recognition faintly glimmers.

    CASEY
    Did you die from the flu?

The spark in the Ghost Girl’s eyes glows. A more human expression flickers across her face. Casey stares at her in wonder.

    WYATT (O.S.)
    CASEY!

    CASEY
    That’s my little brother.

The Ghost Girl slides out of the way to let Casey pass.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Casey flies out the door, almost smack into Mrs. Duffy, who holds a very scared Wyatt by his hood.

    MRS. DUFFY
    Caught one!

    CASEY
    Let go of him.

    MRS. DUFFY
    This is all beginning to make sense. You’re Jason Cavanaugh’s kids, aren’t you?

Casey reacts with shock.

    MRS. DUFFY
    I thought so. I remember how he’d send you to the playground alone when you were Hailey & Bailey’s age. Outrageous.

    CASEY
    We were just --
MRS. DUFFY
Not surprising that this is what
that kind of free-range parenting
leads to. And let me guess -- your
mother’s still at work, right?

CASEY
We weren’t doing anything!

MRS. DUFFY
What you’re doing is trespassing,
and it’s a crime.

Mrs. Duffy grips Casey’s shoulders with her free hand and
turns her toward the house.

MRS. DUFFY
Since your parents have failed to,
apparently I need to explain it.
That house is falling apart. The
very first time you step on a nail
in there, you’ll be foaming at the
mouth. Because you probably didn’t
get vaccinated either, am I right?

Mrs. Duffy releases them both. Casey catches hold of Wyatt
and puts him behind her, protectively.

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT
From the window, the Ghost Girl watches the scene outside.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT
Mrs. Duffy looms over Casey and Wyatt.

MRS. DUFFY
But maybe that’s what it’s going to
take. Some child seriously injured
before the town finally condemns
it.

Hailey and Bailey emerge from their house in identical, bunny-
eared pajamas.

HAILEY AND BAILEY
We’re ready, Mama!

Mrs. Duffy narrows her eyes at Wyatt and Casey.
MRS. DUFFY
Go home. Your parents will hear from me.

Mrs. Duffy marches back to her house, ushering Hailey and Bailey inside.

CASEY
Jeez. She’s almost as scary as the ghost.

WYATT
You saw her again?

CASEY
Come on.

Casey walk down the block. Wyatt hustles to catch up.

WYATT
Hey, Casey?

CASEY
What.

WYATT
Just, you know. Thanks.

Casey half-suppresses a smile.

CASEY
Whatever. Don’t get used to it or anything.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY – DAY

The hallway is a cacophony of kids. Casey unloads her backpack into her locker. Dominique and Lilah hurry over.

DOMINIQUE
Dude. What happened?

LILAH
Did she catch you?

Casey ignores them, carefully arranging her textbooks.

DOMINIQUE
Uh-oh. She’s gone ice queen on us.

LILAH
We’re sorry.
DOMINIQUE
We had to run.

CASEY
You just ditch my little brother out there with Mrs. Duffy?

LILAH
We thought you were right behind us.

CASEY
Well, Duffy called my house.

DOMINIQUE
Oh, no. Are you grounded?

Casey smiles.

CASEY
Natalie answered. She told Mrs. Duffy I’d be grounded forever.

DOMINIQUE
Sweet!

CASEY
Yeah, she can still be all right sometimes.

Ms. Sanchez, hurrying down the hallway, stops abruptly when she sees Casey.

MS. SANCHEZ
There wasn’t anything on my desk this morning.

CASEY
It will be tomorrow. I promise.

Ms. Sanchez sighs and continues on her way. Casey turns to her friends.

DOMINIQUE
I got cheerleading after school.

LILAH
Sorry. Hebrew school.

CASEY
I can’t go back in there alone.
LILAH
It’s so unfair. You don’t even like ghosts!

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY

Casey paces in front of the house, doing Lamaze-like breathing.

CASEY
I can do this. I can do this.
Ghosts probably sleep during the day.

Hailey and Bailey, their jump-rope game paused, watch Casey curiously from the sidewalk across the street.

BAILEY
Who are you talking to?

CASEY
Myself. My imaginary friend.

BAILEY
You still have imaginary friends?

CASEY
Whatever, don’t worry about it. Go back to your business.

Mrs. Duffy hustles out of the house, her car keys in hand.

MRS. DUFFY
Girls! Get in the car!

Mrs. Duffy stops short at the sight of Casey.

MRS. DUFFY
Now why would you be here? Again.

CASEY
I’m just...going for a walk.

MRS. DUFFY
This is what your parents call grounding?

Mrs. Duffy closes her eyes and takes a conscious yoga breath.

MRS. DUFFY
Come on, cupcakes. No Starbucks for little girls that make Mommy late!
BAILEY
My mom’s going to call the police
if you go in there again.

MRS. DUFFY
Never mind, Bailey. That’s the
scared one. She won’t go in there
all by herself.

Mrs. Duffy speeds away. Casey steels herself and marches up
the steps of the Creepy House.

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY
The door creaks open. Casey peers in.

CASEY
Hello?

Casey steps over the threshold.

CASEY
I can do this.

The Ghost Girl peers around the corner, curiously. Casey
doesn’t see her.

CASEY
I will find it.

Casey gingerly peels aside pieces of trash in the entry hall.
The Ghost Girl inches closer, soundlessly. Casey paws through
dusty junk.

CASEY
Where is it?!

The Ghost Girl points at the camera, discarded in a corner.

GHOST GIRL
This?

Casey whirls around and SHRIEKS. She sprints for the door,
but the Girl slides into her path again.

Casey tries to stop, but skids right into the Girl. Casey
SHRIEKS again, dancing in a circle to shake off ghost
cooties. She forces herself to meet the Ghost Girl’s gaze.

CASEY
I just need the camera. Please?
The Ghost Girl sweeps back to where the camera lies on the floor and scrutinizes it.

    GHOST GIRL
    Camera?

Casey tentatively tiptoes forward. The Ghost Girl looks up at her.

Casey lunges for the camera. The Girl blocks her path.

Casey surges back with another SHRIEK.

    CASEY
    Come on!

The Girl struggles to find more of her voice.

    GHOST GIRL
    You’re scared of me.

    CASEY
    I don’t meet a lot of ghosts.

The Ghost Girl blinks at Casey, a smile flickering over her face. She concentrates, reaching for a distant memory.

The Ghost Girl curtsies.

    GHOST GIRL
    Edith...Warwick. So pleased to... make your acquaintance.

The Ghost Girl -- EDIE -- looks proud of herself.

    CASEY
    Hi. Um, Edith.

Edie shakes her head.

    EDIE
    Edie.

    CASEY
    Okay. Edie.

Edie’s face glows at the sound of her nickname.

    EDIE
    I’m Edie.

Edie stretches out her ghostly fingers, seeing them in a new light.
CASEY
Uh -- nice to meet you.

Edie gestures at Casey.

CASEY
What? Oh, you want me to...

Casey mangles a curtsy. Edie giggles.

CASEY
Well, people don’t really do that anymore.

EDIE
And your name?

CASEY
Casey. Cavanaugh.

EDIE
Casey Cavanaugh.

Edie peers down at the camera.

Casey gingerly scoots by Edie and nabs the camera. Edie peers at it with interest. Standing at arm’s length, Casey shows Edie how the camera turns on. Casey scrolls through some pictures. Edie gapes at the screen.

Edie points at a portrait of Natalie staring pensively into the distance.

CASEY
You like that one?

EDIE
It’s like a painting. Lovely.

CASEY
I’ll probably have to delete it. If she ever sees it she’ll kill me.

A pebble STRIKES the window. Casey and Edie peer outside.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY, CONTINUOUS
Wyatt is on the sidewalk. Casey opens the door.

WYATT
I knew it.

Wyatt leaps up the steps.
WYATT
Mom wants to know why you didn’t unload the dishwasher.

CASEY
You unload the dishwasher.

WYATT
I’m setting the table.

Wyatt tries to peer around Casey, but Casey steps to block his view.

WYATT
What are you doing in there?

CASEY
Just tell Mom I’ll be home soon.

WYATT
Maybe I’ll tell Mom you’re...what’s it called? Trespassing.

Casey groans and shuts the door in Wyatt’s face.

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY, CONTINUOUS
Casey turns back to Edie.

CASEY
I gotta go.

Edie peers at her mournfully from the shadows.

CASEY
I’ll come back. I promise.

Edie brightens and gives a little curtsy. Casey takes a picture. Edie jumps at the flash.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY, CONTINUOUS
Casey shuts the door behind her.

Wyatt reaches for the doorknob. Casey hip-checks him out of the way.

WYATT
It’s not yours, whatever’s in there!
Wyatt tries to push past her, but Casey hustles him down the steps.

WYATT
Get off!

CASEY
Can you just stay out of my beeswax for once? Please?

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY

Edie watches Wyatt and Casey get smaller as they walk away down the street.

EDIE
Casey Cavanaugh.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Casey does homework on her bed. Natalie’s stretched out on her bed, eyes closed, earbuds in.

CASEY
Natalie.

Natalie doesn’t respond. Casey comes over and taps Natalie’s leg. Natalie removes an earbud.

NATALIE

Casey retreats to her side of the room.

CASEY
I just wanted to ask you something.

NATALIE
This better be good.

CASEY
Do you believe in ghosts?

NATALIE
No. Anything else?

CASEY
Natalie, there’s a real ghost that lives in the Creepy House.

NATALIE
Did you see it?
Casey pulls out her camera and turns it on.

CASEY
I took a picture of her! Look!

Casey finds the picture. Natalie peers over her shoulder.

Casey stares in dismay at

INSERT
A digital photo of the foyer of the Creepy House -- empty.

CASEY
But she was right there!

NATALIE
Ghosts don’t show up in photographs.

CASEY
Oh.

NATALIE
I’m just kidding. Ghosts aren’t real, loser!

Natalie replaces her earbud and closes her eyes again.

CASEY
I talked to her!

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY

Casey steps over the threshold and closes the door behind her.

CASEY
Hello? Edie?

Edie steps slowly down the stairs, fixated on Casey. As she moves, the peeling wallpaper flutters around her. Casey watches her descend, a little nervously.

Edie stops right in front of Casey. They stare at each other.

CASEY
Hi. I was just on my way home from school and...

Edie circles Casey, stirring up a wind around her. The hair stands up on the back of Casey’s neck.
CASEY
What are you doing?

Casey backs slowly towards the door and puts her hand on the doorknob.

EDIE
No! Please don’t go!

CASEY
You’re kind of freaking me out.

Edie stops circling Casey and makes a visible effort to contain herself.

EDIE
Sorry. It’s just...been a long time since anyone’s come here. To see me.

Casey relaxes a little.

EDIE
Please, welcome. To my home.

Casey looks around, taking in traces of faded elegance beneath the years of grime and neglect.

CASEY
It must have been nice when you lived here.

EDIE
I still live here!

CASEY
I mean when you were...alive.

EDIE
Oh. Yes. It was. Mother kept everything so nicely. She was teaching me to make lace.

CASEY
Do you ever go outside?

Edie shakes her head.

CASEY
Really? You haven’t left this house since 1918?

Casey runs to the front door and throws it open to the sunshine. Edie looks alarmed.
CASEY
This’ll be great! Where should we go first?

EDIE
I can’t.

Edie recedes back into the gloom. Casey follows her.

CASEY
I get it. It’s scary for you to go outside. Just like it was for me to come in.

EDIE
That’s not it.

CASEY
There’s so much I want to show you! We can get Happy Meals. Wait ‘til you play Minecraft!

Edie hovers in the shadows.

CASEY
Edie, I know what it’s like to be scared. But --

Edie sweeps forward to the front door. She takes a deep breath and dips one toe over the threshold.

A gale force wind blows up around her foot, sucking it towards the outside.

Edie fights against the wind, reaching with the rest of her body towards the gloom inside the house.

The wind tears at her, but Edie grits her teeth and pulls against it. Her body goes sideways, perpendicular to the floor -- her hands clawing for the shadows inside her house as her foot threatens to be torn off by the wind.

Casey watches in horror as Edie gives it everything she’s got.

Edie finally wrenches her foot out of the clutches of the outside wind. She’s free, but the release sends her somersaulting back into her house.

Edie collapses into a ball in a corner. Casey runs to her.

CASEY
Are you okay?
Edie raises her head, weakly.

CASEY
Why did you do that?

EDIE
You were rather insistent.

Edie pulls herself up with effort. Casey crouches beside her.

EDIE
It’s always like that. It’s easier if I just stay in here.

Edie shivers and puts her head in her hands. Casey watches her with concern.

CASEY
Jeez. I’m really sorry.

Edie collects herself.

EDIE
You didn’t know.

Edie lifts her hand and creates a gust of wind that makes the door SLAM shut. The girls smile at each other.

CASEY
Cool. What else can you do?

Edie shrugs.

EDIE
How did you know it was 1918?

CASEY
We studied it in school. The flu and all that.

EDIE
How novel!

CASEY
What?

EDIE
My life. It’s in schoolbooks now.

CASEY
Don’t you get bored?
EDIE
I do miss my hill. Above the cemetery?

Casey shakes her head.

EDIE
You can see the whole town. I used to watch the sky. And when the leaves changed...divine.

CASEY
Is that what you did for fun?

EDIE
I also went to the pictures. Is the cinema still there, downtown?

Casey shakes her head.

CASEY
There’s a multiplex at the mall.

EDIE
Mary Pickford.

Casey looks at her blankly.

EDIE
She was my favorite.

CASEY
It must be hard to be stuck in here.

EDIE
It’s not so bad.

Edie gestures toward the door.

EDIE
I can’t go out there. I’m not like you.

CASEY
Like me?

EDIE
Brave and strong.

Casey laughs.
CASEY
That is not how my friends would describe me.

EDIE
A true friend can see who you really are.

EXT. CEMETERY HILL - DAY

Casey leans against her bike at the top of the hill. The old cemetery is below her, and beyond that, the steeples and rooftops of her town.

At first she sees the vista as it must have looked in Edie’s day – the sleepy, compact town surrounded by forest and fields, with one road snaking out into the wider world.

The only sounds are the wind RUSTLING the trees and BIRDCALLS.

As she watches, the vision fades, and she sees the vista as it now exists. The farm fields become big box stores surrounded by parking lots. Multiple roads radiate from the town, towards a busy highway in the distance. An airplane flies overhead.

The sounds of TRAFFIC and AIRPLANES fade in with the modern scene.

Casey makes a careful stack of colorful leaves and puts them in her pocket.

EXT. CASEY’S HOUSE - DAY

Dominique and Lilah jump up from Casey’s front steps as Casey coasts into the driveway on her bike.

LILAH
There you are!

Casey busies herself locking up her bike.

DOMINIQUE
What happened with the camera?

CASEY
I got it.

DOMINIQUE
You did not go back in there by yourself.
CASEY
What if I did?

DOMINIQUE
No way.

CASEY
I’m not as scared of everything as you seem to think.

DOMINIQUE
Since when?

CASEY
A true friend sees you for what you really are.

DOMINIQUE
Says who?

CASEY
Says Edie.

Lilah gasps.

LILAH
You met the ghost girl.

DOMINIQUE
Oh, come on.

CASEY
You don’t believe me?

INT. CREEPY HOUSE – DAY

Casey leads Dominique and Lilah over the threshold.

Edie slides out from the shadows, her eyes empty.

Lilah breaks into a SCREAM. Casey claps a hand over her mouth. Dominique turns to run but Casey grabs her with her and holds on.

CASEY
Edie, it’s me.

Edie’s eyes focus on Casey, and a more human expression flickers over her features.

EDIE
Casey Cavanaugh.
Edie smiles and her eyes come alive again.

  CASEY
  Yeah. Hi.

Dominique shrinks behind Casey and stares, open-mouthed.

  DOMINIQUE
  Holy holy.

Casey removes her hand from Lilah’s mouth. Lilah SCREAMS again, and Casey claps her hand back.

  CASEY
  Shhh! Do you want the evil twins to hear? I thought you were super into ghosts.

Lilah tries to talk, but the sound is muffled. Casey removes her hand.

  LILAH
  I never actually met one.

Casey gently releases her grip on Dominique, who shivers but stays put, her eyes locked on Edie.

Casey pulls colorful autumn leaves from her pocket and holds them out.

  CASEY
  I brought you these.

Edie gasps in delight and holds out her hands, but the leaves flutter past them and scatter on the floor.

  CASEY
  Oh, sorry --

  EDIE
  Don’t worry. Ghost hands don’t work so well. But I’ll look at them lying there all day.

She beams at Casey.

  EDIE
  You have an artistic temperament.

  CASEY
  What’s that?

Edie gestures at the colorful autumn leaves.
EDIE
Mother used to say it. I’d bring home robin’s eggshells just because they were the bluest blue...Do you like poetry?

CASEY
We read some Shel Silverstein at school.

EDIE
“I would I were alive again/To kiss the fingers of the rain/To drink into my eyes the shine/Of every slanting silver line”

CASEY
Wow. Did you make that up?

EDIE
Edna St. Vincent Millay. She’s one of my favorites.

CASEY
You sound different.

EDIE
Things are starting to come back to me. Ever since you came around.

They smile at each other. Dominique clears her throat.

Casey turns to her friends, remembering them again.

CASEY
Sorry. This is Dominique and Lilah.

Edie curtsies.

EDIE
Shall we sit in the back parlor? That was my favorite room.

INT. BACK PARLOR - DAY

The girls follow Edie. Lilah stumbles in a hole in the floorboards and her friends steady her.

EDIE
Oh dear, my apologies. It is a little treacherous.
Edie turns slowly in a circle, examining the mildewed furnishings of the room.

EDIE
It’s not quite how it was in my day, of course.

She perches over a ruined antique chaise lounge.

EDIE
We used to take tea in here.

Edie sips from an imaginary teacup. The girls giggle nervously.

CASEY
Can I ask you a question? If you’re still here -- why aren’t lots of dead people around?

EDIE
Most of them go on, I suppose.

CASEY
Why did you stay?

EDIE
You have a brother.

Casey nods.

EDIE
When the flu came, Mother went first. And then it was my turn. I thought Willie would be next. But he pulled through.

As Edie talks, the back parlor fades into what it looked like in 1918. The peeling wallpaper is intact again; the faded furnishings restored.

FLASHBACK

INT. EDIE’S HOUSE, BACK PARLOR, 1918 – DAY

Two coffins - one large and one smaller - dominate the center of the room.

MOURNERS talk quietly from chairs on the perimeter.

Edie’s FATHER (30s) steadies himself against the larger coffin, his face a mask of grief.
WILLIE (8) dejectedly drags a wooden baseball bat behind him. The bat catches on a large vase of flowers, spilling its contents onto the carpet.

FATHER
William!

Father strides angrily to Willie and slaps him across the face. The mourners shrink back in shock. Willie runs from the room.

EDIE (V.O.)
Father was - I just couldn’t leave Willie alone with him.

INT. ENTRY HALL/STAIRS, 1918 - DAY

Willie races up the stairs, clutching his baseball bat, his face smeared with tears.

Father chases after Willie. A TRANSPARENT EDIE intercepts Father, throwing up a wind that makes him stumble and cough.

Father looks around wildly - he can’t see Edie - and then shivers. He pulls up his collar and takes a flask from his jacket pocket. He drinks from it, looking around uneasily.

EDIE (V.O.)
I couldn’t protect Willie as much as I wanted. But I tried to keep Father at bay.

END FLASHBACK

INT. BACK PARLOR - DAY

The parlor fades back in to its present dilapidated state.

CASEY
Your father and Willie couldn’t see you?

EDIE
It was all so new. I hardly knew what I had become myself.

Edie moves to the window.

EDIE
A lot of good my hanging around did, anyway.

(MORE)
EDIE (CONT'D)
Willie ran away as soon as he was 16 - just walked off down the road as if he were 'The Tramp.'

CASEY
What tramp?

EDIE
Charlie Chaplin?

Casey gives her a blank look.

EDIE
Never mind. In any case, a few years later, Father packed a bag, walked out the door and never returned.

LILAH
You've just been alone here ever since?

Edie looks out at the road curving away from the house.

EDIE
The worst part is -- I don't know what became of Willie.

The sound of HAMMERING comes from the front door. The girls jump.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - DAY
The girls peek out the window.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY
Mrs. Duffy stands by proudly while MS. JACKSON (50s), in classy corporate attire, hammers a notice to the front door.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - DAY
The girls duck down, out of view.

CASEY
Duffy.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY
The women survey the notice with satisfaction.
MRS. DUFFY
We just have no room anymore. With Hailey and Bailey getting bigger --

MS. JACKSON
It makes perfect sense.

MRS. DUFFY
Wait ‘til you see the designs for the pool. We’re looking at this Mediterranean tile--

MS. JACKSON
Sounds gorgeous!

MRS. DUFFY
Suzanne, it kills me that you won’t get the commission. After everything --

Ms. Jackson winks.

MS. JACKSON
Just consider this good constituent service from your favorite council member. I’ll remind you at election time.

The women go smugly down the steps, away from the house.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY
Casey cracks the door open and checks to see if the coast is clear.

The notice nailed to the door reads: “ORDER TO RAZE.”

CASEY
What does that mean?

Edie’s face falls.

Dominique reads out loud.

DOMINIQUE
“The town board has found that the following described building is old, dilapidated, or out of repair, and, consequently, dangerous or otherwise unfit for human habitation.”
EDIE
But it’s my house!

CASEY
What does “raze” mean?

LILAH
They’re gonna tear it down.

Casey notices Edie drifting away from their circle.

CASEY
But Edie, if they tear the house down...what will happen to you?

Edie recedes into herself, her eyes emptying out again. Casey turns back to Lilah and Dominique.

CASEY
You guys, we can’t let them do this.

DOMINIQUE
What are we supposed to do about it?

CASEY
Well, we have to figure something out!

Edie has disappeared into the house’s gloom.

CASEY
Edie! Where are you?

The wallpaper flutters as a wind stirs up. The faded pictures on the hallway walls RATTLE.

Dominique and Lilah gravitate together, nervously, but Casey steps forward.

CASEY
Edie! Come back!

The wind and the RATTLING stops. Edie speaks from the shadows.

EDIE
It was better before you came. I had stopped feeling things.

CASEY
No, Edie --
Edie comes halfway out.

**EDIE**
Don’t you see? I missed my chance. When they take my house I’ll just be -- nowhere.

**INT. LIBRARY - DAY**

Dominique and Casey huddle over a table among the stacks of books. Lilah is absorbed in an ancient-looking volume.

**CASEY**
Her dad left in 1920-something. Why would the house be empty all these years?

**DOMINIQUE**
Well, if her dad never sold it, but kept paying the taxes...

Casey looks at her quizzically.

**DOMINIQUE**
My mom’s a real estate lawyer.

**CASEY**
But how can they tear it down now?

**DOMINIQUE**
Maybe the taxes are in arrears.

**CASEY**
Now you’re just showing off.

Casey notices Lilah, lost in reading the dusty tome.

**CASEY**
Lilah, do you have to read your vampire books right now? We could use your help.

Lilah looks up at them with wide eyes.

**LILAH**
She’ll be doomed.

**DOMINIQUE**
What?

Lilah shoves the book towards them. Dominique and Casey lean in.
INSERT - BOOK ILLUSTRATION

Lilah’s finger points to a Gothic black-and-white engraving of ghoulish ghosts attacking a terrified child.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Dominique pulls away from the gruesome image.

DOMINIQUE
Uhh. I do not need to see that.

LILAH
A ghost that loses connection to its life becomes a wraith.

DOMINIQUE
A who?

CASEY
Oh no. You’re saying without her house --

LILAH
She’ll wander the earth. Forever.

Lilah points to the engraving again.

LILAH
And she could turn evil.

The girls digest this information.

CASEY
No way. We are not letting Duffy turn Edie into a -- a --

LILAH
-- wraith --

CASEY
-- a wraith just so she can build a McMansion.

DOMINIQUE
Totally.

CASEY
Think, you guys.

DOMINIQUE
Well, we can at least find out who owns the house. It’ll be online.
INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

Casey, Lilah and Dominique peek their heads around the front door, which is ajar.

From a back room comes the sound of MUFFLED VOICES.

CASEY
Is someone else here?

Edie sweeps into view so quickly that Casey jumps and SHRIEKS until Lilah clamps her hand over Casey’s mouth, stifling it.

DOMINIQUE
I thought you weren’t afraid of ghosts anymore?

Casey pushes Lilah’s hand away.

CASEY
She startled me! It’s not because she’s a ghost.

EDIE
Shhh! They’ll hear you.

The girls share a look of concern.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Casey, Lilah, Dominique and Edie peer into the back parlor through a crack in the wall.

INT. BACK PARLOR - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

In a corner, Brandon and ALEXIS (16), pass a flask back and forth, talking in whispers.

TAYLOR (15), a bright-eyed girl but clearly not one of the cool kids, examines architectural details in a different corner. Next to her, Natalie fiddles uncomfortably with her many bracelets.

NATALIE
This place gives me the creeps.

TAYLOR
Yeah -- but the wainscoting is beautiful. And that wallpaper? Must be original to the house. Maybe 1890s?
NATALIE
I don’t understand anything you just said.

Taylor giggles.

TAYLOR
Sorry. Historic preservation geek over here.

Natalie looks pained.

TAYLOR
I’m surprised this house hasn’t been restored. It’s a gold mine.

Natalie watches Brandon and Alexis whispering and flirting across the room.

TAYLOR
Hey, by the way -- thanks for inviting me. We haven’t hung out in so long. Do you guys always hang out here?

Natalie shakes her head.

BRANDON
Yo, Nat. Come here.

NATALIE
Just a sec.

Natalie joins Brandon and Alexis.

NATALIE
You guys, I don’t think --

ALEXIS
I told you she’d chicken out.

BRANDON
What do you care about her anyway?

Brandon swigs from the flask and then holds it out.

BRANDON
Hit this. And then go tell her you want to show her something interesting in that closet.

Alexis and Brandon crack up. Natalie sighs and drinks from the flask.
INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Edie, Casey, Lilah and Dominique watch through a crack in the wall.

DOMINIQUE
What’s your sister up to?

CASEY
That’s the dumb guy she likes.

INT. BACK PARLOR - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Taylor examines details in the faded wallpaper. Natalie opens the door to a closet with resignation.

NATALIE
Taylor? There’s something in here I want to...

Natalie glances over at Brandon and Alexis, who smile, egging her on.

NATALIE
...show you.

Taylor skips over.

TAYLOR
In the closet?

NATALIE
Just go in. You’ll see it.

Taylor tentatively steps into the closet.

TAYLOR
I don’t see --

Brandon whips out his phone and starts filming. Alexis runs forward, pushes Taylor all the way in and slams the door shut.

TAYLOR (O.S.)
HEY!

Alexis finds the bolt and slides it shut.

ALEXIS
Brandon! Don’t get me in the shot!

Taylor BANGS on the door.
TAYLOR (O.S.)
Open the door! Natalie?

Natalie watches, miserable.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Casey, Dominique and Lilah watch through the crack in the wall. The sound of Taylor BANGING on the door resonates, shaking the walls.

Casey notices Edie, her eyes grown cold. The wind whips up around her.

CASEY
Edie?

Edie, lost in a memory, peers into the back parlor.

FLASHBACK

INT. BACK PARLOR, 1918 - NIGHT

The back parlor is restored to its former grandeur.

Edie’s father grips her arm as he drags her towards the closet.

EDIE
You’re hurting me! Father, please --

Edie’s father shoves her into the closet.

FATHER
I have had enough of this insubordination!

He slams the door and bolts it.

INT. CLOSET, 1918 - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Edie rattles the door from the inside.

EDIE
Please, Father! Don’t leave me in here! Mother! Willie!
INT. BACK PARLOR, 1918 – NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Edie’s father ignores her cries and marches out of the room.

END FLASHBACK

INT. HALLWAY – NIGHT

Edie rises into her full stature, her eyes coldly glowing, the wind WHIPPING around her. The windowpanes RATTLE.

Casey, Lilah and Dominique shrink back.

INT. BACK PARLOR – NIGHT

Brandon, Alexis and Natalie look up as the walls VIBRATE and plaster flakes from the ceiling.

The ancient chandelier SHAKES above them. Taylor stops banging.

TAYLOR (O.S.)

What’s going on out there?

BRANDON

What the --

The teens look up in horror as the chandelier SHAKES LOOSE and hurtles towards them.

Brandon grabs Alexis and pulls her to him as the chandelier CRASHES to the floor. Natalie leaps back in the other direction.

Brandon and Alexis race out the door. Natalie unbolts the closet and pulls Taylor out.

NATALIE

Come on! We have to get out of here.

Taylor pulls her hand angrily from Natalie’s.

TAYLOR

What the hell was that?

NATALIE

The door got stuck! I swear!
INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Edie lifts her hand and wind blasts through the crack in the wall.

INT. BACK PARLOR - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Plaster flakes fly off the floor and surge into a mini-tornado around Natalie and Taylor.

Natalie and Taylor huddle together, shielding themselves from debris.

INT. HALLWAY, NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Casey reacts with alarm.

    CASEY
    Edie, stop!

Edie continues, unmoved.

The wind rips the door off the closet and sends it BANGING across the room.

    CASEY
    That’s my sister!

Edie drops her hand.

INT. BACK PARLOR - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

The tornado disintegrates. Plaster rains to the floor.

    NATALIE
    Come on!

Natalie pulls Taylor from the room.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Casey watches Edie, warily.

    CASEY
    Edie?

Edie turns her head towards Casey, but her eyes have gone dead. She floats away, into the gloom.
CASEY

Edie!

Dominique takes Casey’s arm.

DOMINIQUE
I think we should get out of here.

Casey shakes free.

CASEY
No.

Casey chases after Edie, into the parlor.

INT. BACK PARLOR - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Edie hovers in front of the closet, her face grim. Casey watches her from the doorway.

CASEY
Edie, please. Come back.

Edie slowly turns. Casey searches her empty eyes.

CASEY
It’s me. Casey. Are you still in there?

Edie struggles to focus on Casey. Slowly, her eyes grow more human.

CASEY
You scared me.

Dominique and Lilah cautiously enter.

CASEY
Look, we found out what we could about the house. It’s still in the name of William Warwick.

Edie looks back at the closet.

EDIE
My father.

DOMINIQUE
The taxes were paid until a few years ago.
CASEY
Although he couldn’t have lived that long.

DOMINIQUE
Well, someone was paying them. But since they’d stopped, it made it easy for the town to condemn the property. Duffy saw her moment and stepped in.

Edie looks out the window.

EDIE
So that’s it then.

CASEY
No! We don’t have to just give up.

DOMINIQUE
We can try to halt the raze order. If we could prove the house was passed down to someone -

EDIE
But it wasn’t. No one’s been here in years.

DOMINIQUE
Did your dad have a will?

Edie gives a small gasp.

EDIE
Mother always said that there was a box.

INT. FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Edie frantically circles the room, looking in all the corners. The other girls watch her.

EDIE
A metal box, in the event it had to withstand a fire.

Edie touches the walls clumsily.

EDIE
Useless ghost fingers.

She motions to Casey.
EDIE
Here, knock right here.

CASEY
Why?

EDIE
Just do it.

Casey knocks on the wall.

EDIE
Hear that?

CASEY
Not really.

EDIE
The tone. I believe it’ll be slightly lower if there’s something inside the wall.

Casey looks at her blankly.

EDIE
Don’t you read Sherlock Holmes?

CASEY
Who?

EDIE
Never mind. When Father had the house built, he inserted a box with copies of important papers, for safekeeping. In a wall, I suppose.

CASEY
But which wall?

Edie bites her lip.

EDIE
They never told me.

LILAH
So it could be anywhere? How could we find it without tearing down the house?

EXT. CASEY’S FRONT YARD – DAY

Wyatt and Jake are on their knees, hunched over the archeological dig.
Casey, Lilah and Dominique approach.

DOMINIQUE
Hey! Indiana Jones.

Wyatt looks up.

CASEY
We need your help with something.

WYATT
Oh, really? Isn’t that interesting.

Wyatt goes back to digging.

LILAH
It’s about the ghost.

WYATT
Of course. Everything with my sister is about the ghost these days.

CASEY
Please, Wyatt. They’re going to knock down Edie’s house.

DOMINIQUE
Because evil Duffy wants to build a McMansion.

LILAH
And if that happens, Edie turns into an evil wraith. Forever.

WYATT
What does this have to do with me?

Casey kneels down next to Wyatt.

CASEY
We need an archaeologist.

Wyatt sits back on his heels and breaks into a grin.

INT. WYATT’S ROOM - DAY

Wyatt carefully selects excavation tools from the drawers in his room, piling them into the waiting arms of Lilah and Jake.
EXT. BACK YARD - DAY
Casey and Dominique haul a wheelbarrow out of the shed.

INT. WYATT’S ROOM - DAY
Jake and Lilah stand at attention, their arms piled with tools.
Wyatt muses over his bookshelf, pulling out volumes and pondering their usefulness.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY
Casey pushes the wheelbarrow across the yard. Dominique leaps into it and relaxes luxuriantly like a queen being carted along by her servants.
Casey rolls her eyes and tilts the wheelbarrow, dumping Dominique on the ground.

INT. WYATT’S ROOM - DAY
Wyatt milks his newfound position of importance for all it’s worth, adding books to the piles in Jake and Lilah’s arms, then reconsidering and subtracting books, then adding them again.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY
Lilah and Jake emerge through the back door, teetering under their piles of books and tools.
Wyatt - now dressed in a khaki vest whose many pockets are filled with various archeological instruments - saunters out after them and surveys his team.
Lilah and Jake dump the books and instruments they’re carrying into the wheelbarrow that Casey holds.

    WYATT
    Careful! Those are delicate instruments.

Lilah looks at Casey in exasperation.

    CASEY
    Please? We kinda need him.

A car pulls into the driveway, and Jason hops out.
JASON
Hey, kids! Ready to unload groceries?

Casey surreptitiously pushes the wheelbarrow behind a bush.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT
Amy types on her phone as Jason dishes up casserole. Wyatt and Casey peer at it.

WYATT
What kind is it, Dad?

JASON
Lentil-bulgur. Should be delicious!

The kids shrink back in horror.

Natalie stares at her phone as she joins them at the table.

JASON
Well, this is an unexpected pleasure.

He goes to serve her some casserole, but she waves it away.

NATALIE
Not hungry.

JASON
No phones at the table.

NATALIE
Tell Mom.

Amy quickly puts her phone away.

AMY
Sorry. Work. Natalie?

Natalie puts her phone down.

AMY
Maybe we can all play a board game after dinner.

NATALIE
That sounds thrilling.

CASEY
Um, actually I have to finish that astronomy project --
AMY
On Saturday?

WYATT
Remember when Casey had to borrow my protractor?

CASEY
I need Wyatt’s help again.

AMY
You’re not going out by yourselves. It’s dark already.

CASEY
Dad lets us!

Amy gives Jason a look.

JASON
What? We’ve talked about this --

AMY
But not after dark --

Natalie finishes typing a text and pockets her phone.

NATALIE
I can watch them.

Everyone looks at her.

NATALIE
It’s not like you’re going to let me go anywhere else. Anyway, I like astronomy.

Amy and Jason look at her with suspicion.

NATALIE
What? I’m sick of you guys stereotyping me!

EXT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Amy watches from the window as Casey and Wyatt push the wheelbarrow down the sidewalk. Natalie trails them, absorbed in her phone.

AMY
And Natalie’s just going to text the whole time instead of keeping an eye on them.
Jason clears plates from the table.

JASON
They’ll be fine.

AMY
Why are they taking the wheelbarrow?

Jason joins her at the window to see the kids disappear around the corner.

JASON
Huh.

He shrugs.

AMY
Don’t you think we should know what’s actually going on?

Jason smiles and embraces her.

JASON
They’re off on some adventure.
Don’t you remember what it was like to be that age?

AMY
Not really.

EXT. STREET – NIGHT

Casey, Lilah, Dominique and Jake line up before Wyatt, wearing head lamps and carrying tools.

Natalie stands off to the side, absorbed in her phone.

WYATT
Okay, team, once we get there, we’re going to divide the house into a grid--

A car pulls up. The younger kids shrink back, but Natalie’s face lights up.

NATALIE
Later, suckers.

Natalie jumps in the car, which is filled with TEENAGERS and driven by Brandon. Natalie slides in next to him.
BRANDON
How’d you get out?

NATALIE
I’m babysitting, can’t you tell?

Casey steps up to the car window.

CASEY
You’re not coming with us?

NATALIE
Why would I come with you?

CASEY
You’re really going to hang out with...them again?

NATALIE
Who are you -- Mom?

CASEY
What are we supposed to tell Mom and Dad?

NATALIE
Who cares? I’m already grounded!

Casey watches the car speed away, MUSIC BLASTING and TEENAGERS WHOOPING.

Wyatt turns his attention back to the project.

WYATT
So once we’re inside --

DOMINIQUE
Hang on. There’s Mrs. Duffy to deal with first. Who’s the lookout?

All the kids look at Jake.

JAKE
I don’t get to do anything?

Wyatt puts his arm around Jake’s shoulders as they continue down the street.

WYATT
It’s actually a really important job. Be ready to hold her at bay.
EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

Jake crouches behind a bush on the side of the house as the other kids scoot past him.

He sinks back, despondent at being left out.

He notices a pebble under the bush, then another and another. He collects pebbles, making a pile.

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

Casey leads the other kids in through the back door.

    CASEY
    Edie?

Edie floats into the room. Her face lights up when she sees Wyatt.

    EDIE
    You’ve brought your brother! Wyatt, is it?

Wyatt stumbles backwards.

    CASEY
    Don’t be scared.

    WYATT
    I’m not!

    EDIE
    It’s a pleasure to finally meet you.

Edie curtsies.

    WYATT
    Uh, you, too.

Edie looks at Casey knowingly.

    EDIE
    He’s just the age Willie was when I died.

The kids look at Wyatt expectantly.

    WYATT
    Right. Head lamps and work gloves on, team.
The kids all switch their head lamps on and point them towards the floor, where Wyatt is unrolling some drawings.

WYATT
First, we need to see what the walls are made of. Let’s each take a room.

DOMINIQUE
And watch out for the giant holes in the floor.

The kids disperse.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

Jake continues to amass a pile of pebbles behind his bush. He has quite a collection by now.

He darts furtively out from the bush’s cover to gather more.

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

Lilah holds a ruler against the wall and draws a line with a pencil.

Wyatt nods in approval and takes the pencil, putting it behind his ear.

Lilah places a chisel against the line and hammers it.

Edie hovers, watching anxiously.

INT. MRS. DUFFY’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Bailey plays with the iPad by a living room window. Hailey watches over her shoulder.

HAILEY
It’s my turn!

Bailey ignores her.

Through the window, Hailey notices the light from the kids’ head lamps moving around inside the Creepy House.

Hailey moves to the window. She sees Jake dart across the yard.

Bailey follows Hailey’s gaze.
BAILEY

Mama?

Hailey runs from the room.

INT. CREEPY HOUSE, PARLOR - NIGHT

Casey pries open a section of wall and is greeted with a cloud of plaster dust, which coats her face and sends her stumbling back, coughing.

INT. MRS. DUFFY’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mrs. Duffy peers out the window. Bailey points to moving lights.

MRS. DUFFY

Oh, for goodness sake -

EXT. MRS. DUFFY’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hailey makes a beeline to the bush where Jake is hiding.

HAILEY

Watch out. She’s coming.

Hailey darts back to her house.

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - STAIRWAY

The group is gathered in the front hall.

WYATT

We need to rethink this. You can’t hide a box in a plaster wall.

CASEY

Maybe the walls are different upstairs?

WYATT

Unlikely.

CASEY

We might as well look.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

Mrs. Duffy marches towards the Creepy House.
Jake gasps as he sees her approaching. He dives for his rock pile.

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT
The kids head upstairs. Edie hovers near the bottom, nervously.

EDIE
Oh, watch that stair, Casey!

Casey’s foot goes through a rotting step and she stumbles. Lilah and Dominique catch her. Casey works to pull her foot from the hole.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT
Mrs. Duffy storms up the front walk.
Jake pelts her with pebbles.
Mrs. Duffy SCREAMS in outrage as she tries to dodge pebbles, many of which hit the mark.

INT. CREEPY HOUSE, STAIRWAY - NIGHT
The kids jump at Mrs. Duffy’s SCREAM.
Lilah looks at Edie in horror and delight.

LILAH
I thought you were the only ghost here.

EDIE
If there were other ghosts, I would be the first to know.

Edie sweeps to the window.

EDIE
Oh dear. It’s worse than a ghost.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT
The stoning of Mrs. Duffy continues.

MRS. DUFFY
Are you kidding me? You cannot do this!
Jake continues to lob pebbles at her, like a machine. Mrs. Duffy gives another yell of frustration and runs back toward her house.

MRS. DUFFY
Don’t think I won’t find out who you are!

She runs into her house, slamming the door behind her. A pebble lands squarely against it.

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT
The kids gather around the window, looking out.

DOMINIQUE
We gotta get out of here. You know she’s calling the cops right now.

Casey peers into the hole in the stair.

CASEY
You guys! Look at this!

Casey pulls a metal box from the hole.

EDIE
That’s it!

Casey tries to open the box.

CASEY
It’s locked.

Police sirens WAIL in the distance.

DOMINIQUE
We have to go NOW!

Dominique runs for the back door. Jake bursts in and collides with her.

JAKE
I think Mrs. Duffy called the cops!

DOMINIQUE
You think?

Dominique and Jake flee out the back door.

WYATT
Wait, take some tools!
Wyatt and Lilah scramble to collect tools. Edie looks crestfallen.

EDIE
I can’t open the box without you.

CASEY
Wyatt and I will open it at home. I’ll be back first thing in the morning, I promise.

Wyatt and Lilah run out the back door. Casey grabs the last of the tools and follows.

Edie stands alone in her dark foyer. Casey sticks her head back around the corner.

CASEY
Don’t let the cops follow us, okay?

Edie smiles at her.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE, FRONT - NIGHT
A police squad car pulls up, lights flashing.
Mrs. Duffy, holding an ice pack to her head, marches out to meet them, steam practically coming out of her ears.

Two police officers, CHAVEZ, a burly guy, and CHEN, a petite woman, climb out of their car in an unhurried manner.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE, BACK YARD - NIGHT
Casey, Lilah and Wyatt hurriedly toss tools into the wheelbarrow.

CASEY
Turn off your headlamps!

Lilah and Wyatt comply, looking anxiously towards the flashing police lights.

LILAH
We can’t go back on the street.

Casey pushes the wheelbarrow towards the next yard.

CASEY
We’ll cut through. Come on!
EXT. CREEPY HOUSE, FRONT - NIGHT

MRS. DUFFY
...pelted with rocks!

Chen makes notes on her pad, nodding.

Chavez peers towards the house with his flashlight. He speaks into his radio.

CHAVEZ
Entering 60 Brewster Street to survey the premises --

EXT. NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lilah holds up a backyard laundry line as Casey and Wyatt quickly duck under it, pushing the wheelbarrow.

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

Chavez pushes the creaky door open, shining his flashlight at the dark interior.

CHAVEZ
Police! Anybody here?

He steps confidently inside, surveying the dusty interior.

He shines his flashlight up the stairs.

His radio crackles and he speaks into it.

CHAVEZ
Appears suspects have left the premises. Place is a wreck. Bunch of kids messing around if you ask --

A wind sweeps through the room, ruffling the wallpaper. Chavez shivers and peers toward the back of the house.

The walls VIBRATE slightly, RATTLING the picture frames, and then everything falls still.

dispatcher (V.O.)
Chavez? You there?

CHAVEZ
Hang on.

The door to the pantry CREAKS open.
Chavez takes a few cautious steps towards the pantry, one hand at the gun on his hip.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE, FRONT

    MRS. DUFFY
    It’s condemned, so I would think
    any act of trespassing -

        CHAVEZ (O.S.)
        Chen!

Chen pockets her pad and bounds up the steps. Mrs. Duffy follows.

        CHEN
        Wait on the sidewalk, ma’am,
        please.

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

Chen joins Chavez a few feet from the open doorway of the pantry.

        CHEN
        What’s up?

Chavez indicates the pantry, and they step forward together, shining their lights inside.

The pantry is empty.

        CHAVEZ
        Huh. I guess it was the wind --

Chen cracks a smile.

        CHEN
        You afraid of haunted houses?

Chavez rolls his eyes.

        CHAVEZ
        Yeah. Petrified.

        CHEN
        I’ll keep you company while we look
        around then.

The cops swagger away from the pantry.
Unseen by the cops, Edie floats on the pantry ceiling, watching.

EXT. SECOND NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE – NIGHT

The kids skid to a stop at a backyard fence.

    WYATT
    Now what?

Casey and Lilah struggle to lift the wheelbarrow over the fence, but it tilts precariously, spilling supplies over the side.

    WYATT
    My tools!

The wheelbarrow comes down with a THUD.

    CASEY
    Wyatt – shush!

Wyatt switches on his headlamp, searching the ground for tools.

Inside the neighbor’s house, a dog BARKS.

    NEIGHBOR (O.S.)
    What is it, girl?

A security light clicks on, flooding the back yard with light.

    LILAH
    Uh-oh.

    CASEY
    Head for the driveway!

INT. CREEPY HOUSE – NIGHT

The cops shine their flashlights into the hole in the floor.

    CHEN
    The sooner they tear this place down the better.

In the pantry, Edie’s eyes narrow.
EXT. SECOND NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Casey, Lilah and Wyatt run down the driveway towards the sidewalk.

The dog BARKS ferociously now. The back door BANGS open.

    CASEY
    RUN!

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - NIGHT

The cops find the back door wide open.

    CHAVEZ
    That’s where they went out.

    CHEN
    Let’s take a look out back.

Inside the dark interior of the pantry, something TUMBLES to the floor.

Chavez and Chen share a look.

The creepy doll comes sliding out of the pantry, its limbs askew, one eye missing. It comes to a stop at their feet.

Chen reaches down for the doll.

Wind BLASTS from the pantry’s interior, sending the doll skidding out of reach. It’s thrown violently against the wall, SMASHING its porcelain head and then dropping lifelessly to the floor.

Chen and Chavez scramble towards the back door, but a funnel of wind stirs up around it, sending it BANGING open and shut repeatedly.

The cops hightail it out the front door.

Edie peeks out of the pantry and watches them go, giggling.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE, FRONT - NIGHT

Mrs. Duffy waits on the sidewalk. Chavez and Chen race past her.

    CHAVEZ
    All clear in there, ma’am!
MRS. DUFFY
That’s it? Aren’t you going to search the neighborhood?

The cops dive eagerly into their car.

CHEN
We’ll file a standard report and keep you updated on the situation.

MRS. DUFFY
This is unacceptable! I want your badge numbers --

They speed off. Mrs. Duffy looks after them in exasperation.

EXT. SECOND NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE, FRONT - NIGHT

The kids emerge onto the sidewalk and tear around the corner.

The NEIGHBOR, his dog lunging at the leash, jogs down his driveway. He stops on the sidewalk, just missing seeing the kids disappear around the corner.

NEIGHBOR
Hey! Who was that?

INT. CASEY’S HOUSE, FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Casey, Wyatt and Lilah roll the wheelbarrow behind the bush. Dominique and Jake are waiting there.

DOMINIQUE
Boo!

Lilah jumps.

LILAH
Hey! You scared me.

DOMINIQUE
Really? Because Casey here didn’t even flinch.

Casey and Dominique smile at each other.

JAKE
So what do we do now?

Everyone looks to Casey.
JASON (O.S.)
Natalie-Casey-Wyatt! You guys out there?

CASEY
Now we all better get home before we get caught.

JAKE
Hey, by the way, one of Duffy’s twins is totally on our side now.

WYATT
Which one?

JAKE
Who knows? They look exactly the same.

INT. WYATT’S ROOM – NIGHT
Casey, clutching the box, shuts the door behind her and releases a deep exhale.

She sets the box down on the carpet where Wyatt sits, waiting.

CASEY
Okay, here goes.

Wyatt hands her a tool and Casey pries off an ancient, rusted lock. She opens the box.

Inside are a few dusty papers.

Casey takes the first one out and peers at the unfamiliar print.

CASEY
Birth certificate. Edith Florence Warwick, 1907. Wow – that’s her!

Wyatt takes the next paper out.

WYATT
William Herbert Warwick, 1910.

CASEY
That’s her little brother.

Casey smooths out the next paper.
Wyatt takes out the final piece of paper.

**WYATT**
A deed to the house.

Casey peers into the empty box.

**CASEY**
That’s it? What about the will?

**WYATT**
Maybe her dad didn’t write one.

**CASEY**
But there’s nothing in here that can stop the house from getting torn down!

**WYATT**
Maybe we could find something out about her brother --

**CASEY**
We already Googled him. Nothing.

Casey puts her head in her hands.

**CASEY**
What am I going to tell Edie?

The window RATTLES and Casey and Wyatt look up in alarm.

The window opens and Natalie climbs through.

**NATALIE**
What’s wrong?

**CASEY**
They’re going to tear Edie’s house down. Not that you care.

**NATALIE**
Hey, what did you tell Mom and Dad?

**CASEY**
That you were right behind us. They hardly looked up from their movie.

**NATALIE**
Perfect. Thanks.
CASEY
Whatever.

NATALIE
No, really -- I owe you one.

Natalie slips out the door.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

Natalie picks at her lunch, left out of Alexis’s and Brandon’s joking around and flirting.

Natalie looks up hopefully when Taylor walks by.

NATALIE
Hey. Taylor.

Taylor ignores her and chooses an empty table.

BRANDON
Nice, Nat. Make up with her.

ALEXIS
Yeah. Maybe we can plan something a little better and actually get it filmed this time.

BRANDON
It’s not my fault that house is frigging haunted.

Brandon leans over to Natalie and plays with her hair.

BRANDON
Okay, I got it. Invite geek girl to the party this weekend.

ALEXIS
We’ll get her totally wasted --

Natalie scoots out of Brandon’s reach.

NATALIE
No thanks.

Natalie picks up her tray.

BRANDON
Where are you going?

Natalie ignores him and approaches Taylor.
NATALIE

Hi.

Natalie stands with her tray, waiting for an invitation.

Taylor throws her lunch in the trash and leaves.

Brandon and Alexis snigger. Natalie sees Brandon put his arms around Alexis and whisper something in her ear.

Natalie throws out her own lunch and marches back to Brandon and Alexis.

NATALIE
Okay, I’m done.

Brandon reaches out for Natalie flirtatiously.

BRANDON
No, don’t give up! It’s gonna be epic --

Natalie steps away from him and turns to Alexis.

NATALIE
Do you know he sends me booty texts when you’re busy?

Alexis slides away from Brandon with a disgruntled look. He reaches for her pleadingly.

BRANDON
Don’t listen to --

NATALIE
And I’m not torturing people for your videos.

BRANDON
It’s just a joke.

NATALIE
Not anymore.

Natalie leaves the lunch room.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Natalie finds Taylor at her locker.

NATALIE
Hey.
Taylor doesn’t say anything.

NATALIE
I’m sorry.

TAYLOR
Really? That’s nice. Now run along back to the cool kids.

NATALIE
You’re right, okay? They’re assholes.

TAYLOR
And yet they’re your new best friends. Go figure.

Taylor slams her locker shut and walks away.

NATALIE
Taylor! Come on!

Taylor whirls around to face Natalie.

TAYLOR
What, you get to act like that and then just – “Sorry”? No thanks.

NATALIE
I don’t know what else to say.

TAYLOR
You know, the worst part is, when you invited me out with you, you actually had me thinking--

Taylor stops herself and walks away. Natalie intercepts her and blocks her path.

NATALIE
Wait.

TAYLOR
Move out of the way.

NATALIE
I’m not just sorry about the other night. I’m sorry about all of it.

Taylor’s listening.

NATALIE
I’m not like you, okay?
TAYLOR
What is that supposed to mean?

NATALIE
When we got to high school, you didn’t change at all.

TAYLOR
Was I supposed to?

NATALIE
You don’t seem to care what anybody thinks. You just do your thing.

TAYLOR
So?

NATALIE
So...I wish I could. Not care.

Taylor looks at Natalie, considering.

NATALIE
When I look at my sister and her little friends -- they’re so, I don’t know, innocent or something. I wonder if they’ll change as they get older. Or keep on being friends.

Taylor rummages in her bag. She holds out a “BFF” necklace: half of a heart shape.

NATALIE
Oh my god. You still have that?

TAYLOR
Of course. Where’s yours?

NATALIE
At home.

TAYLOR
Well, wear it tomorrow and I’ll know you’re serious.

Natalie shifts uncomfortably. Taylor cracks up.

TAYLOR
Gotcha! C’mon, I’m not that much of a dork.

Natalie chuckles with relief and embarrassment.
TAYLOR
I always could get you going.

They smile at each other.

TAYLOR
I think I see a little glimmer of
the Natalie I used to be friends
with.

NATALIE
Look, I’m really sorry we took you
to that house.

Taylor shrugs.

TAYLOR
Yeah, that was closet thing was
super lame.

Natalie hangs her head dejectedly.

TAYLOR
The good news is I love old houses.

Taylor pulls a folder from her bag and flips through some
papers.

TAYLOR
I did some research on that one.
It’s actually a great candidate for
historic preservation.

Taylor pauses on a printed-out obituary.

TAYLOR
Although the owner won’t be any
help. He just died.

Natalie takes the obituary and reads it.

NATALIE
Can I show this to my sister?

INT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY

Casey holds the obituary up. Edie’s eyes pass swiftly over
it.

INSERT - NEWSPAPER OBITUARY

An obituary: “Herb Warwick, 1910–2015”. The photo shows a
handsome World War II sailor in uniform.
Edie looks up, her eyes filled with tears.

CASEY
That’s him, right? Willie?

EDIE
He grew up.

CASEY
“Herb”. That’s why we couldn’t find anything about him.

EDIE
Clearly he didn’t want to carry on Father’s name.

Edie’s expression darkens and she glides away.

CASEY
I thought you’d be happy to find out what happened to him.

Casey looks back at the obituary.

CASEY
Did you read it? He fought in World War II. Became a doctor.

EDIE
But he never came back.

CASEY
Maybe it was too hard for him to come back here.

Edie stares out the window, lost in thought.

CASEY
At least he tried to take care of the house.

Edie looks around and snorts in derision.

EDIE
Is this how you treat a house you care for?

CASEY
I just mean – it must have been him paying the taxes all these years. He didn’t want it torn down. Maybe somewhere deep down he knew you needed it.
The setting sun slants in the window.

    CASEY
    I gotta go home.

    EDIE
    You’re just like them! You’ll just leave me like everyone else!

Wind swirls up around Edie. Her eyes glow coldly, taking on the empty, dead look again.

    CASEY
    Edie?

Edie’s eyes are empty as she raises her arms. The wind tears sheets of wallpaper free. Pictures hanging on the walls CRASH to the floor.

The furniture SHAKES and then rises a few inches off the floor.

    CASEY
    Edie, STOP!

Edie drops her arms. The furniture falls to the ground with a THUD.

Edie crumples to the floor. Casey runs to her.

    CASEY
    Edie. Don’t give up on me. I’m a true friend, remember?

Edie looks up at Casey. Her eyes are back to normal.

    EDIE
    How long will you stay away this time?

    CASEY
    I’ll see you tomorrow, okay? I promise. We’ll figure this out.

Casey hurries out. Edie stays curled up on the floor, hugging herself.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Natalie and Taylor do homework at the table. Casey enters.

    CASEY
    Hi, Taylor.
Casey! When did you get so big? I remember when you were just a cute little kid.

You mean an annoying little kid.

Come here. I want to show you something.

Taylor takes the folder out of her bag.

Natalie told me you’re interested in that old house. Do you know anything about historic preservation?

It would keep them from tearing it down?

Yep. The problem is the original deed is missing from the records office, but I think based on the architectural detail --

I have the original deed.

You what?

Casey races from the room.

Oh boy. I’m glad I invited you over so you can geek out with my sister.

Casey returns with the deed.

Where did you get this?

It was in the house.

Taylor examines it.
TAYLOR
Wow. With this, we can really make a case.

Taylor turns to her computer.

TAYLOR
We can file the application right now.

Casey hugs Natalie impulsively. Natalie peels Casey off of her.

CASEY
I can’t wait to tell Edie!

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE - DAY

Casey runs down the sidewalk, where a throng of neighbors are assembled, including Dominique, Lilah and Taylor.

LILAH
I called you as soon as I heard.

An area around the house is cordoned off with yellow ‘caution’ tape.

CASEY
They can’t do this now!

Casey pushes through the crowd to where Mrs. Duffy stands at the front. Taylor and the other girls follow her.

CASEY
Mrs. Duffy!

TAYLOR
Ma’am, we’ve filed for historic preservation status for this house.

MRS. DUFFY
I don’t know what you’re talking about.

She turns to Casey.

MRS. DUFFY
But I do know you had something to do with this.

Mrs. Duffy indicates the band-aids pockmarking her face.
CASEY
We found the original deed --

MRS. DUFFY
Want to know why the council speeded this up? Something to do with a recent uptick in vandalism.

TAYLOR
This house has both historic and architectural significance. Beyond its commercial value --

Mrs. Duffy rolls her eyes.

MRS. DUFFY
Whatever. It’ll all be over in a moment.

A bulldozer moves towards Edie’s house. Taylor steps back in shocked dismay. Casey grabs Mrs. Duffy’s arm.

CASEY
No! You have to stop them!

Mrs. Duffy pulls her arm away with distaste.

MRS. DUFFY
What is it with you and this house?

CASEY
This house is important! You don’t understand!

MRS. DUFFY
Maybe it’s time you grew up a little.

Casey runs towards the house, but Dominique and Lilah catch her and pull her back.

DOMINIQUE
Are you crazy? You’re going to get killed!

The bulldozer slams into the side of the house. Casey SHRIEKS as if in physical pain.

CASEY
EDIE!

Casey collapses into her friends’ arms.
EXT. CREEPY HOUSE SITE - DAY

The bulldozer and the crowd of onlookers are gone.

Dominique, Lilah and Casey look at the pile of rubble that was Edie’s house.

Casey ducks under the yellow caution tape. The creepy doll is half-submerged in the debris.

    LILAH
    Maybe she’s...still here somewhere.

    DOMINIQUE
    Is she going to come after us? I mean, if she’s one of those wraiths now.

Casey tugs at the doll’s arm to free it, and carefully scoops it up. Only a fragment of its porcelain face remains.

    CASEY
    No. I can tell. She’s gone.

Casey tosses the doll back into rubble.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Casey collapses into a seat at the table.

Jason puts a plate of pancakes in front of her.

    JASON
    Perfect timing!

Wyatt eats and reads the comics. Amy drinks coffee and looks at her phone.

    CASEY
    They tore it down.

Wyatt stops with his spoon in mid-air.

    WYATT
    What? Already?

    CASEY
    Duffy got it moved up. Because of “vandals.”

    WYATT
    Oh no.
JASON
Who tore what down?

WYATT
The Creepy House. I can’t believe it.

JASON
That thing was there forever. It’s like the end of an era...And yet another McMansion will rise to take its place.

Natalie slouches in and slumps into a seat. She notices Wyatt and Casey’s downcast faces.

NATALIE
So who died?

Casey gets up from the table and runs out of the room.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Casey hugs her knees on her bed.

Natalie enters and perches at the edge of Casey’s bed.

NATALIE
Can I sit here?

Casey shrugs.

CASEY
It’s your room, too.

NATALIE
Yeah, but this is your side. Very important.

The girls share the silence for a few moments.

NATALIE
I saw her once, you know.

CASEY
You did?

NATALIE
My friends made me go in there, same as you. She had these terrible eyes --
CASEY
Once you got to know her, her eyes were normal.

NATALIE
I just ran. And I never told anybody.

Natalie puts an arm around her little sister.

NATALIE
I can’t believe you actually hung out with her.

Casey buries her face in Natalie’s shoulder.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY
Students work on projects at tables.

Alone at her desk, Casey stares out the window. The wind moves through the trees outside.

MS. SANCHEZ
How’s the project going?

Casey slowly breaks her reverie to focus on her teacher.

CASEY
Is there any way to keep someone from building on a piece of land?

Ms. Sanchez laughs.

MS. SANCHEZ
Not exactly the topic --

CASEY
I mean, you can preserve a house if it’s historic, right? But what about if the house is already gone?

MS. SANCHEZ
Well, there are places that are preserved that don’t have houses or buildings. Battlefields, for instance.

CASEY
Something historic just has to happen there? What about that flu in 1918? A lot of people around here died from it, right?
MS. SANCHEZ
Half the town, from what I’ve read.

Ms. Sanchez pulls a book off the shelf and hands it to Casey.

MS. SANCHEZ
A little local history.

Casey flips through the pages of black-and-white photographs. She freezes on one and gasps in surprise.

Edie stares back at her from a turn-of-the-century family portrait.

Ms. Sanchez looks over her shoulder at the picture.

CASEY
Can this be my project?

Ms. Sanchez smiles at her.

INT. MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

The town council, including the CHAIRWOMAN, COUNCIL MAN, COUNCIL WOMAN and Ms. Jackson -- presides over a public meeting.

Gathered TOWNSPEOPLE include Casey, Dominique, Lilah, Amy, Jason, Natalie, Wyatt, a proud Ms. Sanchez, and an infuriated Mrs. Duffy.

Taylor addresses the council from a podium.

TAYLOR
Which is, in short, why we respectfully propose that the commercial sale of the property at 60 Brewster Street be blocked --

Taylor looks at Mrs. Duffy, whose eyes shoot daggers back.

TAYLOR
-- with the intention of creating a memorial to those that died in the 1918 flu epidemic. Casey?

Casey takes a deep breath and comes to the podium. She aims a remote control at a screen. A picture of the dilapidated Creepy House appears.
CASEY
Until recently, there was a house at 60 Brewster St. Some people in town didn’t like it because it was falling apart.

Casey clicks to the next slide. A black-and-white photo of the same house -- brand new -- appears.

CASEY
But 100 years ago, it looked like this. The Warwick family lived there.

The next slide shows the portrait of Edie and her family.

CASEY
A girl named Edie lived there. She was my age when she died in the 1918 flu epidemic. Her mother died, too. Then the house was empty for a long time.

Casey loses some of her nervousness and speaks more forcefully.

CASEY
Maybe the house was falling apart. But just because it’s gone doesn’t mean we should forget the people that lived there. Where Edie’s house was -- it should be a park to remember what happened there. It’s part of our town’s history. A hundred years from now, don’t you want people to remember us?

The audience APPLAUDS. Casey returns to her seat.

COUNCIL CHAIRWOMAN
Well done, girls.

The chairwoman turns to the council.

COUNCIL CHAIRWOMAN
Comments on the proposal?

COUNCIL MAN
There’s some crossover here with raising awareness of current public health issues.
COUNCIL WOMAN
I’m in favor of whatever we can do to preserve open space. This town is being swallowed up by developers.

Other council members nod in agreement. Ms. Jackson looks uncomfortable.

COUNCIL MAN
But how much would this cost?

COUNCIL CHAIRWOMAN
I move that we vote on blocking the commercial sale of the abandoned property and give these young people a shot at raising the funds needed to turn it into a memorial park.

Ms. Jackson looks apologetically at Mrs. Duffy.

MS. JACKSON
I’ll have to recuse myself. I was the buyer’s agent.

COUNCIL CHAIRWOMAN
Understood. All in favor?

All the council people other than Ms. Jackson raise their hands.

The Chairwoman bangs her gavel.

COUNCIL WOMAN
The proposal to block the sale passes. We’ll revisit the progress on the memorial park at a later date.

The audience ERUPTS INTO APPLAUSE. Mrs. Duffy storms out of the room.

Taylor and Casey, hugging, are joined in celebration by Dominique, Lilah, Natalie, Wyatt, Amy and Jason.

Ms. Sanchez high fives Casey.

MS. SANCHEZ
A-plus!

As the celebration continues, Casey’s attention drifts to the slide of Edie and her family.
LILAH
She’d appreciate this.

DOMINIQUE
Also? We’re egging Duffy’s house
every Halloween from now on.

CASEY
I just wish I could’ve said
goodbye.

LILAH
I have an idea.

CASEY
I’m not doing the Ouija board.

LILAH
No, this is better.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

The girls kneel in front of a gravestone, whose ornate
carving reads:

“EDITH WARWICK. 1907-1918.”

Casey touches the letters of the inscription as she reads.

CASEY
“She was but a smile/that glistens
in a tear/Seen but a little
while/But, oh! How loved, how
dear!”

Lilah places some wildflowers in front of the grave.

Casey considers the grave, then stands, brushing off her
hands.

CASEY
She’s not here. She never was. But
there’s somewhere else we can go.

EXT. CEMETERY HILL - DAY

The girls climb the winding path. At the top, they catch
their breath, taking in the view.

LILAH
Wow. I can’t believe I’ve never
been up here.
CASEY
It was her favorite place.

Dominique glances towards the trees and reacts with shock.

DOMINIQUE
Uh, you guys...

On a great gust of wind, Edie flies towards them.

Casey runs to her.

Edie makes a visible effort to counter the wind’s force. With difficulty she comes to a stop in front of Casey. Her ghostly form is less substantial now, fractured and flickering.

CASEY
I thought you were gone!

Edie gives Casey a sad smile.

CASEY
You’re not a wraith!

EDIE
No.

CASEY
But we were so worried, without your house --

EDIE
When we first met -- I was practically a wraith then. All those years, alone in that house. Anyone who saw me turned and ran.

(Beat.)

EDIE
But then you came along, and I got to be Edie Warwick again. You saved me, Casey Cavanaugh.

CASEY
And now...you’re going?

Edie reaches her hand up into the wind.

EDIE
I think it’s time. Don’t you?

CASEY
But I don’t want you to go.
“Down in a meadow/Carved in rock/Are these words/Forget me not”

Casey looks perplexed.

EDIE
It’s what I’d write in your autograph book, if you had one. You’ve been a true friend to me.

She looks at Dominique and Lilah, who hang back a bit.

EDIE
And your other friends -- I think they see you better now. Goodbye, Casey.

CASEY
Goodbye, Edie.

Edie closes her eyes and releases herself up into the wind. Her form flashes, fractures, and is gone.

Dominique and Lilah run over.

DOMINIQUE
Why’d she let the wind take her?

CASEY
She was ready to go.

Dominique and Lilah each put a comforting arm around Casey, as they stare in wonder at the space into which Edie disappeared.

EXT. CREEPY HOUSE SITE – DAY

It’s snowing. Lilah and Dominique hold a hand-painted sign steady as Casey hammers in its stakes.

The girls stand back to admire the sign. It reads “Edie Warwick Memorial Park”.

Behind them, the rubble of Edie’s house looms.

CASEY
Well, it’s a start.

LILAH
We can do a lemonade stand to raise money for the cleanup. Or I could tell fortunes!
Dominique shivers and pulls her jacket around her more tightly.

DOMINIQUE
Maybe a hot chocolate stand.

Casey considers the snow.

CASEY
It’s already sticking. Sledding, anyone?

Dominique looks at Casey.

DOMINIQUE
No way.

LILAH
What did I miss?

CASEY
Suicide Slope?

Casey runs down the street through the falling snow.

CASEY
Last one there is a rotten egg!

The other girls run to catch up, laughing.

THE END