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Beetlejuice

By Michael McDowell

EXT:

A bucolic New England town, but rather too clean and neat to be entirely real. There is no visible population.

Ominous, vibrating music.

On Main Street, a banner proclaims:

COME TO THE
INDEPENDENCE DAY PICNIC
ON THE GREEN
WINTER RIVER, CONNECTICUT

The camera, flying over downtown and several different neighborhoods, sweeps over a rickety bridge crossing a rapidly flowing stream, and then up a hill to a large old-fashioned house. The house stands alone on this prominence, overlooking the rest of the town. The camera lingers.

SUDDENLY A GIANT DADDY LONGLEGS SPIDER --

mounts the crest of the hill behind the house, pauses for a moment, and then starts to climb over the Victorian house in a very menacing manner.

ADAM (v.o.)

You're a big fellow.

A HAND --

perfectly stupendous -- reaches down out of the sky, lies flat, palm up, in the yard next to the house, and the Daddy Longlegs climbs into it. The hand rises into the sky again.

INT:

A new angle reveals Winter River as a miniature town, while the Daddy Longlegs and the hand holding it are perfectly normal in size. Above the model are a complicated mechanism of sun, moon, clouds, and stars -- a whole, tiny mechanical universe to track the hours of the day.

The hand belongs to ADAM MAITLAND, who is in his early forties, solid-looking and easy-going. Frank Capra used to make movies about him.

ADAM and the miniature town are in an attic room of a Victorian house. The attic roof slopes on either side, and there are a couple of windows, quite small and low down toward the floor at either end of the long room. Almost the entire space is taken up by the miniature town. A single door leads to a landing and staircase to the lower part of the house.

ADAM carries the spider to the window, kneels on the floor, and pushes open the window. The spider crawls away outside.

ADAM'S POV --

The real Winter River lies spread out at the bottom of the hill.

BACK TO SCENE --

ADAM, whistling, goes back to the model. He takes a pair of tweezers in which he grips an extremely small sign, whose lettering is so tiny we can't make it out.

He reaches into the model and places the sign on the window of MAITLAND'S APPLIANCE STORE on Main Street.

INSERT -- THE SIGN

It reads:

ADAM AND BARBARA
ARE
ON VACATION
HOORAY!

BACK TO SCENE --

ADAM

Hooray!

ADAM smiles down at the town as he's about to leave the room. He turns off the lamp that acts as sun to the miniature Winter River.

INT:

A tracking shot from the top of the Maitland's house to the bottom.

ADAM leaves the attic room, and trips softly down the stairs, humming a merry tune.

On the walls as he passes are photographs of himself and BARBARA standing beside impossibly large and silly-looking appliances. ADAM passes down the second floor hallway. The doors of the rooms are open, and we pass the master bedroom, a sewing room, a couple of guest rooms, bathrooms, and so-on. It's a big, old rambling house, and it's decidedly old-fashioned, homely, and comfortable. It also looks as if three generations of the same family have lived in it.

Down the stairs into the living room, which is decorated in the same fashion -- big console television, Barcalounger, a living room set from 1961. Through the dining room, with homilies in needlepoint on the wall: BLESS THIS HOUSE O LORD WE PRAY / MAKE IT SAFE BY NIGHT AND DAY / BLESS THE FOLKS WHO DWELL WITHIN / KEEP THEM SAFE FROM HARM AND SIN. Through the dining room door and into the kitchen:

INT:

ADAM's wife BARBARA is in the kitchen.

BARBARA has a kind of wholesome beauty that is mellowing well, as she approaches middle age. There's a hint of unfulfillment in BARBARA that gives her a little more of an edge than ADAM. We will come to see that the only thing missing to complete the Maitland's happiness is a child.

On the table in the center of the kitchen is a large cake about three feet by two. BARBARA is decorating it to look just like the American flag.

ADAM

It's the first day of our vacation, and you haven't been out of the kitchen since five a.m.

BARBARA

(Proudly) I always make the flag cake.

ADAM

Fifty stars, thirteen stripes. Did you get it right this year?

BARBARA thinks for a moment, during which pause there is the SOUND OF A CAR DRIVING UP TO THE HOUSE.

BARBARA

I'll go see who that is. You start counting.

BARBARA goes out of the kitchen into the dining room.

ADAM starts counting the stars by naming off the states.

ADAM

Maine. New Hampshire.
Vermont. Massachusetts
Connecticut.

EXT:

A bottle green Cadillac has pulled up in front of the house next to the Maitland's station wagon. When the driver's door opens, a well-dressed middle aged woman steps out, and starts resolutely for the front steps of the house. (This is JANE BUTTERFIELD.)

INT:

BARBARA comes back in.

ADAM

(Finishing with the stars)
They're all there.

BARBARA

It's Jane.

ADAM

Whose turn is it?

BARBARA's face falls.

BARBARA

It's mine.

ADAM's face lights up.

ADAM

I'm going to pick pears.

DOORBELL rings.

ADAM grabs up a basket by the back door and steps outside.

BARBARA

What do I tell her?

ADAM

What I told her last time.

And what you told her the time
before that. No.

INT:

BARBARA opens the door. Outside on the porch stands JANE BUTTERFIELD. JANE is a tall nervous woman, who looks as if she's divorced three husbands and buried another for good measure. She's ruthless but in her own weird way, quite pleasant.

BARBARA

Hello, Jane.

JANE

How are you, Barbara? How's
the flag cake coming? You
remembered the sugar this
year, didn't you?

BARBARA

Nobody ever forgets these
simple mistakes.

JANE

I'm selling lottery tickets.
Worthy cause. We're sending
the high school honor students
to New York for a few days.
Give them a taste of real
city life. How many do you
want? Ten, twenty?

BARBARA

What's the prize?

JANE

Your flag cake. That's why
I wanted to make sure you
got it right.

BARBARA

Adam and I will take just two
tickets. It wouldn't look good
if we won our own cake.

JANE

There's something else I want
to talk to you about.

(Beat) How would you like
to be rich beyond your wildest
dreams?

BARBARA

Jane, Adam and I are --

JANE

Don't tell me that you're
already rich in the things that
matter, because, believe me,
the things that matter are not
the things that really matter.

BARBARA

Last week we could get four
hundreds thousand for the house.
How much do you think we could
get for it this week?

JANE

Five. No question. This house is a
Property of Quality and Distinction.

EXT:

Small pear and apple trees. The pears are bearing now, the apple
trees not yet. This is an idyllic setting -- but is is also
functional and modest.

Birds are singing in the trees.

ADAM is standing in the middle of the orchard, filling up his
basket with pears.

From the edge of the forest, a young deer peers out at ADAM, and
after a moment's hesitation, creeps out and into the orchard.

ADAM reaches forward with a pear, and the deer takes it out of
his hand.

At this moment, a lovable COLLIE runs up to ADAM, but stops short
when he catches sight of the deer. The COLLIE looks up at the
deer, and the deer looks down at the COLLIE.

The deer slowly turns off, back towards the forest.

ADAM

You watch out for those men
with the guns.

With the deer gone off, the COLLIE throws himself at ADAM's feet, and rolls over on his back. Kicking off one of his Hush Puppies, ADAM rubs the dog's belly with his stockinged foot.

JIMMY, the town paperboy, rides up on his bike, ducking under the branches of the orchard trees.

JIMMY

Don't worry, Mr. Maitland.
Rocket won't bite.

ADAM

Catch, Jimmy.

He throws him a pear. JIMMY deftly snags it with one hand. In return, JIMMY throws ADAM his paper.

ADAM

Go in the kitchen, Jimmy.
Your money's on the
counter. And don't
touch the icing on
Barbara's cake or she'll
skin you alive.

JIMMY drops his bicycle and goes in the back door of the house.

INT:

The paper money is laid out on the counter, as promised, but so is a plate of cookies and a tall glass of milk. JIMMY stuffs one of the cookies in his mouth immediately, and then goes to study the flag cake. He begins counting the stars.

JIMMY

Hawaii. Alaska. New Mexico.
Arizona. Wyoming. Oklahoma.

He stops for a moment, hearing the voices of JANE and BARBARA through the dining room door.

INT:

JANE is at the top of her pitch.

JANE

I'll put it in the Sunday
Times Magazine. Sell the
next day. Some lawyer from
New York will snap it up in
two minutes. You and Adam

will be able to retire. It will be like a permanent vacation.

BARBARA

The only reason we like vacations is that we get to stay here in the house.

JIMMY walks in the door from the kitchen. He's carrying the cookies and the milk.

JIMMY

Thank you for the cookies, Mrs. Maitland. I counted your stars and they're all there. My mom bought ten raffle tickets.

BARBARA

You're welcome, Jimmy. You know Mrs. Butterfield, don't you?

JANE, prompted by the appearance of the paperboy, delivers a final salvo.

JANE

This house is so big. It really ought to belong to people who have children.

BARBARA gives her a sudden wounded look. Jane is immediately remorseful.

JANE (cont)

I didn't mean that.

ADAM walks in from the kitchen with ROCKET.

ADAM

Give up, Jane. Barbara and I are going to stay in this house forever.

EXT:

JIMMY is racing down the hill on his bicycle, ROCKET bounding after him.

At the bottom of the hill is a rickety bridge, spanning the rapidly flowing Winter River.

JIMMY's bike goes BUMPITY-BUMPITY-BUMP across the uneven boards. ROCKET, however, veers off the road in order to chase a squirrel. JIMMY stops his bike in the middle of the bridge, and calls back after ROCKET.

JIMMY

Rocket! Leave that squirrel
alone! Mr. Maitland would
skin you alive if he saw you
chasing his animals!

But ROCKET does not reappear, and JIMMY shrugs, and rides on
towards town.

EXT:

JANE comes out the front door of the house. She holds open the
front door, as ADAM and BARBARA come out with the flag cake
between them.

JANE goes out into the yard, and opens the rear of ADAM and
BARBARA's station wagon.

JANE

I'll see you at the picnic,
won't I?

ADAM

We haven't missed the town
picnic since --

He looks to BARBARA.

BARBARA

We've never missed it.

JANE starts to get into her car, but, glancing up at the house
and seeing it as a big fat commission, she gives it one more
shot.

JANE

Six hundred fifty thousand.
You could move to Maui.

ADAM and BARBARA wave, not even bothering to reply. JANE's car
takes off. Careful of the cake, ADAM shuts the rear door of
their station wagon. As they do, there comes into view a bumper

sticker:

ADAM and BARBARA get into the car, and drive off.

Directly behind them, over the crest of the hills, comes a
hunter's van. A doe is tied to the open back.

INT:

Going down the hill, and towards the bridge.

ADAM is staring with disgust in the rearview mirror at the
hunters, who are tailgating them.

BARBARA, sitting close beside ADAM in the front street, does not
notice.

BARBARA

Don't use your brakes.
I'm worried about the cake.

ADAM

We're going downhill. I have
to use --

BARBARA screams and points.

ROCKET has just run out into the path of the car, and is staring stupidly at the approaching vehicle.

ADAM applies brakes violently to avoid hitting ROCKET.

EXT:

The hunters' van smashes into the back of ADAM and BARBARA's station wagon, and sends it into the side of the rickety bridge. It crashes through the railing and hovers a moment on the edge. ROCKET has ambled slowly out of the way, unhurt. The Hunters' van also screeches to a halt in the middle of the bridge.

INT:

A piling has smashed through the window on the passenger side, crushing the upper part of BARBARA's arm. She is wailing in pain and fright.

ADAM attempts everything at once. He tries to help BARBARA. He tries to get out of the car to save his own skin. He attempts to maneuver the car onto the bridge again. None of this succeeds. The car rocks back and forth a moment, and then slides forward toward the river.

EXT:

The station wagon plunges into the rushing water. It floats for a moment, and then sinks like a stone.

The hunters' van peels away from the scene of the accident. For the first time we see an I LOVE NEW YORK bumper sticker on the car, directly beneath the bloody head of the dead doe.

UNDERWATER --

The station wagon floats downward with panic-stricken ADAM and BARBARA inside. For a moment we hear their screams, then as the car fills up with water, the screams are cut off.

EXT:

ROCKET is standing on the bridge staring into the water. Bubbles of air come up from the bottom and break on the surface of the water.

The bubbles stop.

ROCKET trots off in the direction of town.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT:

NOISE OF A SLOW CLOCK TICKING.

One after another, we see the rooms of the Maitland house, still, empty, dimly lighted. From the top of the house to the bottom. The last room to be seen is the living room.

The clock stops ticking.

A moment of silence and stillness.

Suddenly and for no apparent reason the fire laid in the hearth ignites and burns with a furious cheerfulness.

BARBARA and ADAM enter, dazed, wet and bedraggled.

BARBARA

What a wonderful start to
our vacation.

ADAM

You'll feel better when
you're dry.

ADAM leads her toward the fire. He holds out his hands to be warmed. BARBARA comes up beside him. All this time she's been holding her injured arm with the other hand.

BARBARA

This fire wasn't burning when
we left the house.

ADAM

How's your arm?

BARBARA

I'm not sure. It feels
frozen.

She holds her hands out to warm them.

BARBARA'S LEFT ARM --

slowly slides out of her sleeve of her coat and plunges into the fire.

ADAM and BARBARA stare at it dumbfoundedly before ADAM regains his senses and snatches it out of the fire. Two of the fingers are burning like candles, and BARBARA industriously blows them out.

CUT TO:

INT:

ADAM and BARBARA are sitting on the couch together. BARBARA is

looking away slightly -- as one does when a doctor is drawing blood -- while ADAM tries to reattach her arm. He's a little unsure of the procedure, since he's never had to do it before.

BARBARA

Do you remember how we got
out of the car?

ADAM gets up, a little absently, and wanders to the front door. He peers out.

ADAM

I don't think we survived
that crash.

BARBARA tests her arm by turning it in the shoulder socket. She clenches and unclenches her fist. They work fine.

BARBARA

Works.

ADAM opens the door and steps out onto the front porch.

EXT:

A gorgeous sunset. ADAM's face is painted with the color. He stands at the top of the steps leading down to the front yard. BARBARA stands just inside the open threshold, looking out worriedly.

ADAM

(Quiet sarcasm) The end
of a perfect day.

ADAM starts to step down to the yard.

BARBARA

But we can't be dead.
We're here!

ADAM steps off the last step into the yard and promptly disappears.

BARBARA

Adam!

EXT:

ADAM is nowhere. There's no ground, no sky, nothing to stand on or hold onto or give boundaries or distance. Just vast nothing. Not white and not colored either. Noise of a CLOCK TICKING. ADAM looks about in surprise, and doesn't like what he doesn't see. He turns right around to head back up the steps. There are no steps.

ADAM

Barbara?

He runs off a little in the distance, and calls again from over

there.

ADAM

(Quietly) Where are you,
darling?

He goes even farther away.

IN THE FOREGROUND --

an enormous geared wheel -- the size of a man -- rolls by,
tearing up the unseamed ground. Something pours up out of the
tear -- ooze or stuffing.

ADAM runs forward and stares after the wheel, which is now out
of sight.

TWO SMALLER GEARS --

looking very much like components of a giant watch -- spin along
behind him. One of them veers suddenly towards him, and though
ADAM jumps out of the way, the gear snags his trouser leg and
shreds it.

A PERFECTLY ENORMOUS GEAR --

comes barrelling towards him. ADAM leaps out of its way. The
gear turns, fish-tailing, kicking up ooze and stuffing.

ADAM flings himself suddenly to the right, but trips into the
path of the gear. As he's about to be crushed, he's suddenly
jerked up to safety.

EXT:

It's BARBARA who's grabbed him, and quite evidently saved his --
not life, perhaps -- but existence. He's shaken, breathless.
BARBARA stares at him, as if wondering what he's just been
through.

ADAM

(Weakly) You saved my --
uh -- something.

BARBARA

Two hours.

ADAM

What?

BARBARA

That's how long you were
gone.

Over WINTER RIVER, the Independence Day fireworks explode. ADAM
and BARBARA's faces are painted with the light.

INT:

BARBARA leads ADAM into the house.

ADAM

Anything happen while I
was away?

BARBARA

I made a couple of small
discoveries.

She is standing in front of the mirror over the hearth mantel.
On the mantel is BARBARA's prized collection of porcelain horses.
ADAM comes to stand beside her. They look into the mirror, and
there is no reflection of them.

BARBARA picks up one of the horses, and trots it through the air.
The horse is imaged in the mirror.

BARBARA

There's that, and there's
this.

She points to a book that is sitting on the coffee-table. It's a
massive sheaf of indexed pages in a bureaucratic-looking binder.
It looks like this year's tax code.

CU:

BARBARA

I don't know where this
came from.

INT:

ADAM is already in bed, reading from the Handbook. BARBARA is
walking about the room, getting ready for bed. It's evident that
they're going through a ritual of sorts that they practiced every
night of their married lives.

BARBARA

I don't like situations like
this. I hate it when I'm not
in control. So just tell me
the basics.

ADAM

What do you want to know?

BARBARA

There are a thousand things
we want to know. Is this a
punishment? Or is it a re-
ward? Are we halfway to
heaven or are we halfway
to hell? Why did you dis-
appear when you walked off
the front porch? And how long

is it going to last? That's
for starters.

ADAM

This book isn't arranged
that way.

INSERT:

ADAM (cont)

Warning. Proceed step by
step through this manual.
Do not begin on Section
Two until you have fully
mastered the concepts con-
tained in Section One.

BARBARA

Then start with Section One.

ADAM turns the page and reads aloud.

ADAM

(Reading) Section One.
Behavior at the Funeral.
Paragraph One. Lie very
still.

BARBARA

That's starting at the
beginning all right.
Anyway, we didn't have
a funeral... that I can
remember.

ADAM

I think I'm going to skip
ahead a few pages.

BARBARA is standing inside the open closet door. As ADAM talks,
she glances at her non-reflection in the mirror. She touches the
surface of the mirror, and her eyes go wide as her hand
penetrates the surface.

ADAM

This book reads like the Tax
Code. I don't see anything
about "Rewards and Punish-
ments" or "Heaven and Hell".
Wait, maybe this is something,
under "Geographical and Temporal
Perimeters." (Reading)
"Functional perimeters vary

from manifestation to manifestation." It really does sound like the IRS had a hand in this.

He looks up but BARBARA is nowhere to be seen in the room.

ADAM

Barbara! Where --

The closet door swings slowly open, so that the full-length mirror inside the door is directly facing ADAM in bed. But it's not ADAM who's reflected, holding the Handbook on top of the covers, it's BARBARA.

ADAM

How did you get in there?

BARBARA

I walked through. It's easy.

ADAM

What's it like?

INT:

The bedroom is reversed, but there are other things different too. The room just fades out on the edges, and beyond is the great void that ADAM was in earlier.

BARBARA begins to feel frightened. She peers at her side of the mirror and sees ADAM in bed on the other side. The image is dark and fading -- as if the door between the two worlds were closing off.

BARBARA

It's --

The mirror grows darker.

On all sides of her, the walls of the room fade away entirely. The room tilts, and the furniture slides away into the void. At the last possible moment, BARBARA bolts through the mirror back into the real world.

INT:

ADAM looks at his wife. BARBARA is shaken.

ADAM

The handbook discourages that sort of experimentation. Trans-dimensional instabilities, whatever that means.

BARBARA

I've got a pretty good
idea.

EXT:

Showing the appliance store, with a black wreath on top of the GONE ON VACATION sign.

Across the street is JANE BUTTERFIELD'S REAL ESTATE AGENCY.

IN THE WINDOW OF THE REAL ESTATE AGENCY --

JANE is squeezed between the glass and a large cork board, bearing the legend AVAILABLE PROPERTIES OF DISTINCTION. She is putting up a new photograph of ADAM and BARBARA's house.

At the same time, she's talking into a telephone with a long cord.

JANE

It came out of probate only two days ago. This entire house is replete with extras and amenities sure to please the discriminating buyer, such as yourself. (Beat) I know you'll love the place, Mrs. Deetz. And so will your illustrious husband and your marvellous three -- two children. (Beat) There is a master bedroom suite consisting of a bedroom of dimensions approximately fifteen by twenty-two feet, two large walk-in closets with full-length bevelled mirrors, a third --

The fit in the window is so tight that JANE gets stuck. In trying to get out, she slips and falls sideways, and is caught even more securely in the twisted telephone cord. Two children stand in front of the window passively watching her distress.

JANE

Help! Help!

INT:

The model town looks to be thriving. ADAM's obviously had plenty of time for his hobby lately.

Right now, ADAM is setting up a small monument in the town cemetery. It reads ADAM AND BARBARA MAITLAND / UNITED IN LIFE/

UNDIVIDED IN DEATH.

ADAM

Do you think this is
heaven?

BARBARA

In heaven there wouldn't
be stains on the wall-
paper.

ADAM

This is how I always
imagined heaven. Being in
this house. With you.
With time to do all the things
I never had time to do before.

INT:

This is the bedroom with ADAM and BARBARA's wedding photograph in
it.

BARBARA stands leaning against the sill of the window, looking
out over distant Winter River.

ADAM comes in behind her.

ADAM

Cabin fever?

BARBARA

What?

ADAM

Do you feel trapped? We're
not allowed to leave the house.

BARBARA

No. I don't feel trapped.
I never imagined death would
be like this. I'm so happy.
Sometimes I just wonder how
long it's going to last. How
long we're going to be allowed
to stay here.

INT:

BARBARA and ADAM are dancing to Artie Shaw. The Manual lies open
on the coffee table.

ADAM continues the conversation from upstairs.

ADAM

It'll take us at least a
hundred years to get through

that manual.

BARBARA

I don't know why you keep trying. It hasn't told us one useful thing yet.

ADAM

At least we know we're supposed to stay away from shellfish.

They dance on for a minute, and then, while dancing, a thoughtful expression creeps over ADAM's features.

BARBARA

What are you thinking about?

ADAM

I was just wondering who bought the appliance store.

They stop dancing. The music stops as well. A terrible thought has occurred to them both.

BARBARA

I wonder who's going to buy this house. You know how desperate Jane was to sell it.

ADAM

I guess we just have to hope she sells it to someone nice.

AN OMINOUS RUMBLE --

like a 4.0 earthquake shakes the house. Glass rattles, the ceramic horses on the mantelpiece jump around. BARBARA and ADAM look at one another with misgiving.

The rumble builds to a climax, there is a loud metallic squeal, and then a crash...

A MOVING VAN RAMP --

smashes open the front door and crashes down into the foyer.

BARBARA and ADAM --

half expect a division of Marines to storm down the ramp but instead --

A TEN-FOOT ELECTRIC BLUE ITALIAN LEATHER COUCH --

slides smoothly down the ramp. On the couch sits DELIA DEETZ.

DELIA is relentlessly New York, relentlessly fashionable, relentlessly thin -- a totally self-assured Joan Rivers.

She is also a woman with a mission -- to gut BARBARA and ADAM's house and remake it in her own very upscale image.

DELIA's gaze is on the living room, but she looks through ADAM and BARBARA as if they weren't even there (which to her eyes they're not).

The couch crashes into the base of the staircase, smashing the newell post and several of the balusters. One of the balusters falls at Delia's side. She grasps it like a scepter.

Two MOVING MEN rush down the ramp.

MOVING MAN #1

Sorry about that, Mrs. Deetz.

DELIA

Don't worry. It was going anyway.

Staggered by DELIA's grand entrance, BARBARA looks toward ADAM, but he has disappeared. Flustered, BARBARA glances around the room, shakes herself experimentally, then with a look of surprise on her face that it works -- disappears herself.

Still holding the baluster, DELIA gets up off the couch and moves into the living room, surveying it with an odd mixture of ambition, contempt, and resolution.

Behind her, the two MOVING MEN bring in a matching blue leather armchair. In the armchair sits LYDIA DEETZ.

LYDIA is the nec plus ultra of whatever is fashionable in sixteen-year-old SoHo girls -- this week that makes her a DEATH ROCKER. She's has on a black tunic emblazoned with alternating rows of skulls and crucifixes. She's also wearing a hand grenade baldolier and a necklace of human finger bones. Also around her neck are a couple of very expensive cameras.

LYDIA is already taking photographs, not of the new house, but of the moving men. LYDIA is cool, LYDIA is sullen, LYDIA is her father's daughter by his first marriage.

The MOVING MEN still hold up the chair, waiting for DELIA to decide where she wants it. LYDIA calmly surveys the house with a cold eye.

LYDIA

We gave up sixty-five hundred square feet of prime loft space on Prince Street for this?

DELIA

Shut up, Lydia. You're too young to comprehend fluctuations in the real estate market on a nationwide or even regionwide scale. This place was a fucking steal.

DELIA signals wearily that the MOVING MEN can put the chair down anywhere.

DELIA (cont)

Your first job is to get all
this other crap out of here.

LYDIA hops down out of the chair, and comes farther into the living room.

LYDIA

Jesus. Who lived here? Norman
Rockwell?

DELIA

Where is Charles?

LYDIA

Checking out the kitchen.

That's the cue for CHARLES DEETZ, who comes in through the swinging door, and across the dining room. He's holding a butcher knife in one hand, and a massive meat cleaver in the other.

CHARLES is not exactly the equivalent of his wife, being at heart a basically pleasant man. But pleasant isn't in this year, and CHARLES does his best to be off-handed and brittle.

CHARLES

Only things in the whole damn
kitchen worth saving. You
wouldn't believe the kind of
junk those people ate. I found
bottled Thousand Island in the
refrigerator. Hungry Man
Dinners in the freezer. A
whole case of Spam in the
pantry. They probably died
of gastronomic boredom.

At the front door, the fourth member of the DEETZ family climbs over the moving ramp. This is CATHY DEETZ, nine years old. She is dressed totally SoHo, but there's something off about the outfit -- as if she's not quite comfortable with the look. She gazes around the living room with obvious pleasure.

CATHY

A real house. It's totally
great. I can't believe it.

CHARLES

You really like this place,
don't you, honey?

CATHY

You bet.

LYDIA

You're such a weenie.

A VIOLENT FALSETTO SCREAM turns the DEETZ family's attention to the front windows.

OTHO (o.s.)

HELP!

Caught in the window frame is a massive body, wedged at the waist. The short, stubby legs, dressed in the world's largest pair of Giorgio Armani slacks, protrude into the living room, waving frantically. A pair of expensive Italian loafers are kicked off the feet revealing a pair of expensive patterned socks.

By their feet shall ye know them.

DELIA

It's Otho.

CHARLES

Otho, why didn't you just come in the door?

OTHO's voice as if from a great distance.

OTHO (o.s.)

It's bad luck.

CATHY

Hold your breath and we'll pull.

With much concerted effort, the entire DEETZ family at last manages to pull OTHO into the living room.

All this while the MOVING MEN are variously carting out the handsome old furniture and bringing in the hideous new furniture. OTHO is Robert Morley at his most obscenely fat and faggoty. But he's not all fat and fun -- this customer carries emotional weight as well.

As OTHO is pulled through the window he is holding onto the curtains for support. And when he is at last all the way through, and upright on his feet, he suddenly gives a tremendous yank. The whole drapery apparatus, including valences, crashes to the floor.

OTHO

That was the single most unattractive window treatment I have ever seen in the entire of my existence.

DELIA

I'm so glad you could come, Otho.

OTHO is looking around the room with an eye of quiet horror.

OTHO

Well, when you told me about this place, I had an intuition. Call it a hunch -- that it was going to be a fabled monstrosity of a house. And it certainly is. Charles, you're going to have to write two romances, a western, and three of those wretched detective novels to afford what I'm going to have to do to this place.

CHARLES

That's fine, Otho. I'm starting work as soon as the word processors get here. This country air. I'm going to be able to write twelve books a year instead of just eight. I can feel it already -- plots. Plots crowding in on every side of me. Plots mean books, and books mean money, and with money you buy the things you haven't got. Like fabulous houses, in fabulous, fabulous Connecticut.

During this speech OTHO has been surreptitiously posing for LYDIA's camera, while DELIA pokes about the room with disdain.

OTHO

Is the rest of the house as bad as this?

DELIA

The rest of the house is worse. When can you and I get started?

OTHO

No time like the present, as my wicked stepmother used to say.

With an unexpected and dramatic sweep of his hand, OTHO sweeps BARBARA's entire collection of ceramic and porcelain horses from the mantelpiece. They all crash to the hearth -- except for two, which CATHY dives to catch in either hand.

CATHY

Otho, that's terrible.

OTHO

My sentiments exactly.

He takes one of the porcelain horses out of CATHY's hand and flings it into the fireplace.

CATHY manages to save one by hiding it in her pocket. CATHY glances into the mantel mirror, and sees the reflection of BARBARA, standing on the staircase, with a look of despair on her face.

CATHY whirls around.

BARBARA is no longer there.

CATHY starts to say something, but she's pre-empted by OTHO.

OTHO

Delia, let's get this show
on the road.

Then out of the pockets of his size 56 Georgio Armani jacket, OTHO takes two cans of spray paint -- the kind the graffiti artists use -- and shakes them as if they were castanets. They certainly sound like it.

INT:

At one end, near the stairs leading up to the attic, BARBARA and ADAM are slumped against opposite walls.

ADAM

How did this happen? We didn't
even see Jane showing off the
house. And now it's already sold.

BARBARA

Remember when that damn manual
got us stuck in the chimney for
three days? That's when it
happened. (With vehemence that
surprises even BARBARA) God I
hate those people. That woman
wants to destroy my house.

ADAM

What can we do about it though?
We're ghosts.

BARBARA

(Adamant) Right. We're ghosts.

OTHO and DELIA appear, coming up the stairs at the opposite end of the hallway.

OTHO

We're dealing with negative
entertainment potential here.
I mean there's absolutely
no flow-through.

They're rounded the bed, and OTHO looks down the hallway. It's empty. ADAM and BARBARA are no longer there.

DELIA

What's wrong?

OTHO

I thought I saw something.

DELIA turns and spray-paints on the wall -- probably in luminous orange -- the word ECRU.

DELIA

Okay?

OTHO

You read my mind. I love clients who can read my mind. I don't think people realize how strong a connection there is between interior decoration and the supernatural.

DELIA and OTHO have reached the first door on the right. DELIA opens the door and they step inside.

DELIA

This will be Lydia's room.

INT:

It's not LYDIA's room yet, of course, because it still has the MAITLAND's furniture in it -- it's merely an old-fashioned and little-used guest bedroom.

DELIA

What do you think?

OTHO

Viridian?

DELIA

Call it Graveyard Green and she'll love it.

OTHO spray-paints the word VIRIDIAN on the wall -- right over a wedding picture of ADAM and BARBARA.

Behind DELIA and OTHO, the room's closet door swings slowly open with an ominous CREAK.

DELIA and OTHO turn that way, with a suggestion of dread.

BARBARA --

stands inside the closet. She grins a ghastly grin, grasps her temples, and tears off her face, leaving nothing but muscle and bone beneath. Her eyeballs dangle on her cheeks.

DELIA and OTHO stare aghast.

OTHO

Well, we just have to hope that
the other closets are bigger
than this one.

He walks over and slams the door in BARBARA's contorted face.

INT:

DELIA and OTHO come out of LYDIA's bedroom.

OTHO

This whole house smells so
dowdy. Whole lifetimes
of dowdiness. Generations
of dowdiness.

DELIA

The master bedroom suite.

DELIA opens a door on the opposite side of the hallway -- ADAM
and BARBARA's old room.

INT:

The room looks as if BARBARA and ADAM left it just a few hours
ago. DELIA and OTHO poke around, the crassest of crass
intruders.

OTHO goes over to the closet door, and opens it -- but before he
actually looks inside, his attention is drawn back to DELIA.

DELIA

I was thinking of a pale
ochre.

OTHO picks up a porcelain figurine he finds particularly
offensive.

OTHO

I was thinking dynamite.

He tosses the figuring, then turns and looks in the closet.
We're expecting another apparition -- but it's just ADAM's
clothes. OTHO fingers the material with distaste.

OTHO (cont)

What happened to the people
who lived here before?

DELIA

They died.

OTHO

Yes of course, but how did
they die?

DELIA has gone over to the bathroom door, and pushed it wide
open. But before she goes in, she stops a moment to think.

DELIA

I think they drowned.

Behind DELIA, in the bathroom, the old-fashioned bathtub suddenly overflows with vile water. ADAM's face-down bloated corpse bobs to the surface, and then suddenly spills out onto the tiled floor, flipping over to land face up. His head, drowned stare is ghastly.

DELIA stares downward directly at the corpse, then she points at it.

DELIA

Otho, I cannot live with
these tiles.

The bathroom is now empty. No water, no drowned corpse.

EXT:

CATHY has come out the front door and has gone around the side of the house, exploring her new home with wonder and delight.

She reaches the orchard at the back of the house. The pears are no longer bearing, but the apples are now. She plucks one from the trees and bites into it.

CATHY is suddenly pushed forward, nearly falling. Recovering herself, she whirls around. She is staring into the face of ADAM'S DEER.

For a moment, CATHY is startled and a little frightened. She's not used to wildlife. Then she recovers.

CATHY

Oh. You're hungry.

She gives him her apple to eat.

A second-floor window is suddenly flung open at the back of the house, and DELIA leans far out.

DELIA

RABIES! RABIES!

CATHY! RUN!

The DEER drops the apple from its mouth, and bolts back into the forest.

CATHY stares after it.

INT:

OTHO and DELIA comes out of another room.

OTHO

The new Silver Palate cookbook
has a wonderful recipe for
terrines of venison. (Wearily)
Is there much more of this?

DELIA

There's Cathy's room. But we don't even have to look in there. She'll love whatever you do to it. She's such a little sheep.

OTHO

Oh, as long as we're here...

OTHO reaches out and turns the knob on the third bedroom door. The door swings ominously open on CATHY's room. This had been BARBARA's sewing room, and is furnished accordingly -- straight out of Better Homes and Gardens 1963.

There is a difference however because on the rag rug in the middle of the floor lies the headless corpse of ADAM MAITLAND. Standing over him, holding in one hand a long knife and in the other ADAM's blood- and gore-dripping head, is BARBARA -- with a maniacal look on her face.

OTHO

How ghastly.

DELIA

An honest-to-God sewing room.

Inside the room, the eyes of ADAM's severed head open and look up at BARBARA.

ADAM'S HEAD

They don't see us. They can't hear us.

Outside, DELIA is shaking her head.

DELIA

The woman who lived here had the aesthetic instincts of Betty Crocker.

BARBARA

I'm going to get her.

DELIA

I cannot convey to you the extent to which this house bores me.

OTHO

I'm not so sure about that. I think this place probably has real atmosphere. Once you get out all this tacky furniture, strip off the wallpaper, take down a few walls, enlarge the

first-floor windows, alter the traffic patterns, re-do the exterior, call in the landscapers, and -- perhaps -- give some thought to a solarium for rare cacti -- once you do all that, the place might just be livable. Isn't there a third floor?

DELIA

Attic space.

OTHO

Let's see. Maybe we could turn it into a media room.

They head up the stairs to the attic.

INT:

ADAM'S HEAD has a look of terror on it.

ADAM'S HEAD

Oh God. I forgot to lock the attic door.

ADAM's headless body jumps up off the floor and rushes out of the room.

INT:

OTHO and DELIA climbing. The headless corpse rushes past them, around the bend in the stairs and out of sight.

DELIA

Did you feel something?

OTHO

I felt something cold.

INT:

The headless corpse rushes through the open door into the attic.

INT:

DELIA tries the knob. The door is locked.

OTHO

You don't have a key?

DELIA

Maybe Charles does.

OTHO

I have a feeling there's something interesting behind

this door.

INT:

BARBARA still holding ADAM'S HEAD.

ADAM'S HEAD

Whew! That was close. (Sighs)
What's the use of tearing your
head off in front of people if
they can't see you?

BARBARA

I can't live with this.

ADAM

We have to. We're dead.

BARBARA

I'm getting out of here.

She puts down his head on an end table and storms out.

ADAM

Barbara, where are you
going?

INT:

BARBARA storms in, straight from the room upstairs. She heads
straight for the back door. Just as she reaches for the door,
ADAM comes in -- putting his head back on.

ADAM

Don't go out there. We don't
know --

BARBARA

I can't stay inside this house
a minute more. Not one minute.

She flings open the door and steps outside. She promptly
disappears.

ADAM

Barbara!

EXT:

BARBARA is on Titan with an enormous Saturn looming in the sky.
She looks around with wonder and some fear.
A sulfur volcano erupts in the distance.
A meteor crashes with a lurid explosion.
As from a great distance she hears ADAM's voice.

ADAM

Barbara!

She turns slowly in the dense sand that covers the surface of

this distant moon.

BARBARA'S POV --

ADAM is struggling towards her. Behind him, hovering isolated in the air, is the kitchen door.

BACK TO SCENE --

ADAM at last catches up to her.

Behind them, something is burrowing rapidly towards them through the sand. The Something looks as if it might be right out of DUNE.

BARBARA and ADAM watch for a moment, and then realize that it just might be a very fine idea if they got the hell out of there. They turn and run towards the kitchen door.

The kitchen door has moved, but they veer in the new direction.

The Something gets right up to them and rises out of the sand. Whatever it is is very big, very nasty, and very hungry.

ADAM and BARBARA slip and sink in the sand as they are pursued by THE BEAST. They make it through the door just in time, swing it open and hurl themselves through.

The door shuts with a bang.

The BEAST roars and roars in frustration, howling to the ringed planet.

INT:

The kitchen is very much as it was when ADAM and BARBARA were alive, and boy it sure feels good after a stint on Titan.

BARBARA, weeping, throws herself in ADAM's arms.

ADAM

It's okay, kiddo. This house may not be heaven for us any more, but at least it isn't hell.

As if demolishing ADAM's assurances, a 2500-pound, gleaming, six-burner, double-oven Vulcan stove crashes through the breakfast nook windows, and drops into place.

Outside can be seen the truck and crane which delivered this monstrous piece of culinary extravagance.

BARBARA and ADAM duck out of its path, stumbling into the dining room.

INT:

Where they are greeted with hot blasts of noisy steam from the guns of the WALLPAPER REMOVERS, dressed in satanic red jumpsuits, wearing Walkmans that resemble horns.

BARBARA and ADAM stumble through to the living room, where --

INT:

-- they are bombarded with plaster splinters and dust, and the ear-shattering noise of drills, hammers, and electric saws, carving up the ceiling to make room for DELIA's water clock (which we'll see later).

Aghast, BARBARA and ADAM flee up the stairs to the second floor.

AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS --

A six-foot diameter spool of cable comes barrelling down towards them, in a parody of RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK. They rush back down the stairs, and then, without knowing how they accomplish it, ADAM and BARBARA make a deft and ghostly hurdle over it to the second floor landing.

INT:

They're not out of this SoHo hades yet.

As they make their way down the hallway, they run the gauntlet past every open door. Outside LYDIA's room, ADAM and BARBARA pause and glance in the open door, looking for refuge. A HUNDRED AND TWENTY DECIBELS OF EAR-SHATTERING DEATH ROCK send them on down the hall, where next they are driven against the wall by a JET STREAM of hot water -- the plumbers' error in the bathroom. With the plumbers' curses ringing in their ears, they try to hurry on towards the attic stairway.

But just as they pass the doorway of the master bedroom, a six-foot chest of drawers sails out on caster wheels, separating them, plowing on through the open doorway opposite, and smashing through the window. A moment later we hear its SPLINTERING CRASH on the ground outside.

BARBARA

That's been in my family
two hundred years.

ADAM drags her on.

Just outside the door of CHARLES's study, when they have nearly reached their goal (the second flight of stairs to the attic), a shower of electrical sparks and a loud crackling pour over them, from an ELECTRICIAN rewiring for CHARLES's computers.

ADAM's entire body is briefly outlined in the electrical storm. This quickly subsides, except for a remaining charge on his hand. BARBARA tries to beat out this painful electrocution, while ADAM jumps around in evident pain.

When at last the charge dissipates, ADAM finds that his hand is black and smoking.

ADAM and BARBARA rush up the stairs to the attic, and throw

themselves through the door into their sole refuge.

INT:

ADAM and BARBARA.

ADAM

Barbara, we're trapped in
this house forever.

EXT:

The entire front yard is filled with trucks and vans and automobiles. These include vehicles and representatives of the telephone company, the television cable company, plumbers, electricians, kitchen supply houses, computer supply services, Goodwill and St Vincent DePaul, and whatever else there might be. In the road in front of the house are several cars of rubbernecking locals, astonished by all the activity. The City has come to Town.

We see these small vignettes, and perhaps others as well.

Moving men going in with very modern and expensive furniture, colliding with the charity men coming out with ADAM and BARBARA's furniture and personal belongings.

CHARLES in deep conversation with several men who stand with long lengths of cable draped over their shoulders. He is distracted by a large crane on the side of the house which is trying to get a stainless-steel refrigerator -- even larger than the Vulcan stove -- through the broken breakfast nook window.

DELIA is standing at the door of the barn/garage, directing half a dozen fine art movers in the placement of her gallery of sculptures. These are colossal, nightmarish images constructed in an improbably combination of welded steel and feathers. LYDIA is under everybody's feet, relentlessly photographing the operation.

CATHY is simply standing out of the way, as if frightened of being trampled.

CATHY'S POV --

She looks at the whole house from the bottom to the top. And when she reaches the top, she sees BARBARA and ADAM's faces in the window.

BACK TO SCENE --

CATHY blinks hard. Her mouth drops open. She looks all around -- as if she'd just seen a ghost or two.

JANE BUTTERFIELD's car pulls up, and JANE gets out. She surveys the whole business, and looks pleasantly impressed. She waves to CHARLES but he doesn't see her. Then JANE catches sight of CATHY

and comes over, squeezing between two vans.

JANE

Boy, when you city people
do something, you do it
right, don't you?

CATHY

Did you know the people who
used to live here?

JANE

They were my best friends in
the whole world. I know they
would have been pleased to
know it was your family
who brought their house.

JANE hands a key to the CATHY.

JANE (cont)

Here, darling.

CATHY

What is this?

JANE

It's a key to the attic. Your
father asked me to drop it by.
Actually it's not a key to the
attic, but it's a skeleton key.
It'll open any door in the world.
Will you give it to your father?
And tell him if I can do anything
else, just call.

JANE goes back towards her car. After a few steps, she looks
back.

JANE

You're going to be very happy
here. I can see it in your
face.

CATHY smiles back, and then her face turns serious as she looks
back up at the attic windows.

CATHY'S POV --

Nothing -- and no one -- there.

BACK TO SCENE --

CATHY is startled by a voice -- LYDIA's.

LYDIA

Hey!

LYDIA snaps a picture of CATHY.

LYDIA (cont)

You look dazed.

CATHY

The sun was in my eyes.

CATHY surreptitiously slips the skeleton key into her pocket.

LYDIA

Delia says Move Your Ass.

Everybody's got to help today.

CATHY looks up. DELIA is impatiently waving her over to the barn. More sculpture -- worse than before -- is being carted inside.

INT:

ADAM and BARBARA are lying on the floor, looking out of the window at all that is going on.

BARBARA

That little girl saw us.

ADAM

She couldn't have. We can't make them see us.

BARBARA

But she saw us. I know.

I could feel it. I thought she saw me this morning, too.

(Beat) How's your hand?

ADAM

Already healed.

INT:

The Fine Arts movers are going to it. DELIA in the midst of everything, berating CATHY.

DELIA

Buckle down, Cathy. This is Life. And be a perfect darling, and go get mommy some drugs.

CATHY

Any particular kind?

DELIA

It doesn't matter. Just remember though, too many is better than too few. And a glass of Perrier, one cube.

CATHY takes her marching orders and goes off towards the house.

INT:

A BLAST OF STEAM --

fills the hallway, because WORKMEN are going at the wallpaper here, too. CATHY emerges from it.

All the doors are open, with MOVING MEN and WORKMEN in every room.

Down at the end of the hall stands CHARLES, directing WORKMEN who are carrying computer components into the room that will be his study.

CATHY starts to go into the bathroom -- to get her mother's drugs -- but there are at least three PLUMBERS in there, and the whole place is torn apart.

CATHY continues down the hall.

CHARLES sees her.

CHARLES

Where is your sister? She
could be a little help around
here.

CATHY

In her room?

LYDIA's door is the only one closed. CHARLES goes over and without knocking, flings open the door.

INT:

On LYDIA's bed is a very muscular MOVING MAN, clad only in jockey shorts. LYDIA is moving quickly all around the bed, taking rapid-fire photographs of him.

CHARLES

Lydia, moving day is no time
to make one more attempt at
losing your virginity.

LYDIA

I have a concept for a moving
man calendar.

CHARLES

I want you and Cathy --

As the MOVING MAN gets up from the bed, nonchalantly reaching for his trousers, CHARLES looks around for CATHY. She's no longer there.

CHARLES (cont)

Now I've lost her.

INT:

CATHY creeps upward, taking the skeleton key from her pocket.

She stops momentarily when she hears her father's voice.

CHARLES (o.s.)

Cathy! Cathy!

Then when that voice is covered by other sounds of the moving, CATHY continues upward.

INT:

CATHY quietly inserts the key in the lock of the attic door. She turns it. The key is stiff. She turns harder. It's stuck. CATHY tries the door -- it's no go. She turns the key again. This time it goes all the way around. CATHY grins. Then she puts her hand on the knob and tries to turn it. It's stuck. Then the key pops out of the lock and falls to the floor. CHARLES's head suddenly appears behind her.

CHARLES

What are you doing?

INT:

ADAM is holding on tight to the knob of the door. With an awl (or some similar object) BARBARA has poked the key out. The two stand absolutely still, listening, terrified of the living intruders -- pretty unseemly behavior for a pair of honest-to-goodness ghosts.

INT:

CATHY and CHARLES.

CATHY

I was just trying to open the door. Mrs. Butterfield brought over a skeleton key. But it doesn't work.

She hands her father the key. He waves it away.

CHARLES

Skeleton keys never work. Now, hop to it, Cathy, your mother wants her drugs. And we're all going to feel better if she gets them.

He starts down the stairs, and Cathy starts to follow.

INT:

ADAM and BARBARA, having heard this, pull back from the door in relief. But that relief is short-lived, for at that moment, the door swings open of its own accord.

Right outside on the landing, they see CATHY's back as she's starting down the stairs.

CATHY turns at the sound of the opening door.

ADAM and BARBARA disappear.

REVERSE ANGLE --

CATHY looks into the attic room, and sees the model town.

She enters very quietly, looking around.

The room is dim, and filled with dust motes. There are shadows in all the corners.

The first thing she sees, of course, is the model town. She's entranced. She peers at it from different angles, and is dumbfounded with pleasure, her fear forgotten. She continues to walk about the model, oblivious to everything else.

IN THE MODEL --

BARBARA and ADAM are hiding in the doorway of their appliance store on MAIN STREET. They look up at CATHY's enormous face peering down at them.

They see CATHY stop, her gaze focused on them.

CATHY'S ENORMOUS HAND --

reaches down out of the sky towards them.

ADAM

Barbara. Stand very still.

BACK TO SCENE --

CATHY is reaching down into the model. She picks up the BARBARA figure out of the model. BARBARA does her best imitation of a wooden Indian. CATHY peers at her very closely.

BARBARA'S POV --

A close-up of CATHY's eye. She sees herself reflected.

BACK TO SCENE --

CATHY puts BARBARA down in the street, and picks up ADAM. ADAM has plastered a weird smile on his face.

IN THE MODEL --

BARBARA stands in the middle of the street, pretending to be carved of wood, but she's looking up at CATHY holding ADAM.

BARBARA

(Under her breath) Don't
hurt him, little girl. Please
don't hurt my husband.

CATHY puts ADAM down in the street, but not very near BARBARA. He doesn't quite have his balance and tips over, falling flat on his face. CATHY conscientiously rights him.

Despite her fear of being overheard by CATHY, BARBARA calls out in a hiss.

BARBARA

Are you all right?

ADAM

No. Yes.

BACK TO SCENE --

CATHY continues around the model. She finds a button on the side of the table on which the model rests, and presses it. The artificial sun comes on, and bathes the model of Winter River in sunlight. Then...

A LOUD CRASH --

behind CATHY. She whirls around, barely stifling a scream, confronting only a push broom that she has brushed from its hook on the wall.

In recovering from this false scare, she kicks something. She ducks under the table and comes up with the manual.

She holds the cover up to the light.

CATHY

"Handbook for the Recently
Deceased."

She looks into the model again at the figures of ADAM and BARBARA. They're now standing together.

CATHY

(Hums the 'Twilight Zone'
theme music)

She looks around the room as if suddenly someone were going to be there to answer all her questions. No one is.

A voice sounds from downstairs.

LYDIA (v.o.)

Cathy, Delia needs you!

CATHY gives one more look at the town, and then goes to the door quickly and silently.

LYDIA (v.o.)

Right now!

CATHY finds the real key to the room in the door, on the inside. She takes it out of the lock.

INT:

CATHY locks the door quickly, tries the knob to make sure, and hurries downstairs.

INT:

DELIA stands outside the master bedroom door, arms akimbo. At her feet is a large box of ADAM and BARBARA's personal belongings.

DELIA

Where have you been?

CATHY

Nowhere.

CHARLES comes out of his room, tossing out empty boxes.

CHARLES

Hiding out in the attic.

Did you get that door open?

CATHY

(Hesitating) Skeleton keys
never work.

DELIA

Take this downstairs. Dump
it.

She kicks the box with ADAM and BARBARA's belongings. DELIA and CHARLES disappear again.

CATHY lifts the box, and starts downstairs with it. Then she stops dead still.

At the top of the box is ADAM and BARBARA's wedding picture, with a swath of spray paint over it, obscuring their faces.

CATHY puts down the box, takes out the picture, and removes the photograph from the frame.

CU:

CATHY

I knew it.

She slides the photograph under the door of her room, and then continues downstairs with the box.

EXT:

Dark, quiet, a light burning in the dining room window.

INT:

The DEETZs around the dining room table. There are candles, good china laid out -- but they're eating out of Chinese take-out boxes.

CHARLES, DELIA, and LYDIA are eating with chopsticks, while CATHY uses a plain old American fork.

LYDIA

I can't believe that we're
eating Cantonese.

CHARLES

There's only one Chinese
restaurant in town, darling,
and it happens to be Cantonese.

LYDIA

I could have a stroke from the amount of MSG that's in this food.

DELIA

This is our first meal in this house, Lydia. Why don't we all do our little parts to make it a pleasant one?

CHARLES

I'm building you a darkroom in the basement. Nobody's ever going to steal your chemicals again. That'll be a pleasant change from Manhattan.

LYDIA

I should have stayed in New York with my mother. Just driving through Winter River made me want to slit my throat.

CHARLES

We're the first trickle. In a couple of years this whole town will be filled with people like us. Zabar's will open a Winter River branch.

DELIA

And when Otho and I get through with this house, you people are not going to recognize it as the same place.

CATHY

(Meekly) I sort of like it the way it is.

The family stares at her, unbelieving.

CATHY (cont)

I mean, it's already sort of like somebody's home, isn't it?

There is a pause, as if the family were considering this whole business in a new light. Then the moment and the light fade.

CHARLES

You know, I went in the grocery store today, and they had never even heard of arugula.

INT:

ADAM and BARBARA are pissed.

ADAM is looking through the manual, while BARBARA paces looking over his shoulder now and then.

BARBARA

Ghosts have been scaring people for thousands of years. It must say something about haunting.

ADAM

That electricity hurt. I don't want to have to think about that kind of thing happening to you.

BARBARA

I think I'd rather have a band of gypsies move in here than have to put up with those people. And we don't even know how long we're supposed to stay here? I wish that book would tell us something useful.

A GUST OF WIND --

blows down the chimney, turning the pages of the manual. BARBARA and ADAM shiver with sudden, supernatural cold. ADAM looks at the book.

ADAM

(Reading) Section Seventeen-C.
Intercessions and Exorcisms.

BARBARA

Exorcism. That's where they get rid of us, right?

ADAM

Not this kind. This is where we get rid of them.

BARBARA

What do we have to do?

ADAM

It won't work. We need a graveyard.

BARBARA

And we can't leave the house.

The MOON over the model town comes on suddenly.

ADAM and BARBARA's gaze follows the directed beams of this moon, as it shines down into the MODEL GRAVEYARD.

EXT:

With shovels and lanterns, BARBARA and ADAM are a very unlikely pair of graverobbers. ADAM is reading the manual by lanternlight. The mechanized clouds in the sky move across the mechanical moon, throwing shadows everywhere. There is also ground fog.

ADAM

The manual says look for a
grave marked Swallowtail.

BARBARA

Nobody with that name
was ever buried in this
town.

They pass a small mouldering tombstone, askew, half-buried in the ground, the mound before it covered with rotting white roses. On the tomb is carved the name BETELGEUSE.

ADAM

Yeah, but nobody was
ever buried with that
name either.

He tries to pronounce the name, but it comes out something like

ADAM (cont)

Beetle - gooser.

On a wind suddenly blowing through the trees we hear the ominously whispered pronunciation:

VOICE

Beetle Juice.

BARBARA

Beetle Juice.

Moving on, looking around other parts of the graveyard, ADAM and BARBARA next come to a large, white marble monument crowned by the Angel Gabriel blowing his horn. Carved on the monument is the name SWALLOWTAIL. Beneath it is the legend, HOPE FOR THE HOPELESS.

BARBARA

Do we dig?

ADAM

Well, yes, but it says
we have to chant too.

BARBARA

Chant what?

He turns the page in the book.

ADAM

I don't think it says.

Some sort of music I
guess.

BARBARA

That stupid book. All
right. But you start.

They stand over the grave, with spades poised. ADAM thinks for a moment and then, as he turns the first spadeful of foetid earth, he sings

ADAM

"I've got rhythm...
I've got music..."

BARBARA takes it up:

BARBARA

"I've got my man..."

ADAM & BARBARA

"Who could ask for anything more..."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT:

Sometime later. The grave is now nearly six feet deep, and ADAM and BARBARA are invisible inside. We see the glint of the moon on their shovel blades, and we hear them singing. By this time ADAM and BARBARA have really gotten into it, and they're performing a rousing, syncopated version of "I've Got Rhythm" as the earth flies.

-- INSIDE THE GRAVE

ADAM suddenly hits wood.

BARBARA

It's about time.

They lean down and brush dirt off the face of the coffin. There's a brass plate that reads SWALLOWTAIL.

ADAM

I guess we open it.
Right?

BARBARA and ADAM feel a slight tremor beneath their feet.

BARBARA

It seems to be opening
itself.

BARBARA and ADAM exchange glances, and then start clawing the sides of the grave in an effort to escape.

-- BACK ON GROUND LEVEL

ADAM pushes BARBARA out, as the ground rumbles and we hear the splintering of rotten wood. BARBARA helps ADAM out of the grave. They have just risen to their feet, when a MOULDERING CORPSE

springs out of the grave, and jumps onto BARBARA's back, and tries to implant a very large kiss on her lips.

ADAM pulls the corpse off BARBARA's back, and the MOULDERING CORPSE does a Three Stooges hammer to Adam's head.

ADAM staggers backwards. The MOULDERING CORPSE, now between ADAM and BARBARA, grins insanely at them both, and then flies high into the air above their heads.

They turn to see where he has gone, and realize that the MOULDERING CORPSE is merely a jack-in-the-box marionette on a string and pole apparatus.

The pole is held by BEETLE JUICE. He is small and wiry, dark, with vaguely Middle-Eastern features. Here, and whenever we see him again at the beginning of a scene, his eyes are COLD and YELLOW and SHAPED LIKE A SNAKE'S -- but after a moment, they melt, becoming human, and liquid, and brown. This is definitely not a spirit to be trusted.

BEETLE JUICE drops the pole and puppet, takes a long step forward and produces a deck of cards.

BEETLE JUICE

Never mind him. Pick a
card.

Stunned, BARBARA and ADAM do as they're told.

ADAM holds up his card. It's the tarot card for death.

BEETLE JUICE

Death.

BARBARA holds up her card. It's the tarot card of the Falling Tower.

BEETLE JUICE

Destruction.

BARBARA glances up at the statue of the Angel Gabriel.

BARBARA

Are you Swallowtail?

BEETLE JUICE

He's all tied up. I'm
his second-in-command.
The name is Beetle Juice.
Come on. Let's talk.

He gives an arm to BARBARA and ADAM, and leads them out of the graveyard.

As they depart, we see the figure of SWALLOWTAIL -- exactly like the statue of Angel Gabriel -- bound and gagged and out of sight behind his monument. He stares after the retreating figures of BARBARA and ADAM with pity -- he's got a pretty good idea of what's coming.

EXT:

BEETLE JUICE has an arm around the shoulders of ADAM and BARBARA. Main Street is quiet and deserted, of course.

BEETLE JUICE

All right, you guys need help. And help is why I'm here. Who do I gotta kill?

ADAM

You don't kill anybody.

BARBARA

All we want is for you to get some people out of our house.

BEETLE JUICE

Exorcism, right. I love exorcisms. So who are these people you want to get rid of?

BARBARA

The Deetzes.

BEETLE JUICE

Family, right? Mommie, daddy, they got kids?

ADAM

Two daughters. One's about ten, one's about sixteen, except she acts like she's thirty-five.

BEETLE JUICE

Oh yeah? How does she feel about short, older men?

BARBARA gives BEETLE JUICE the fish eye.

BARBARA

I don't appreciate that kind of talk.

BEETLE JUICE

Idle curiosity. So here's the story. You're dead, and you're stuck in this dump for a hundred and thirty-two years --

BARBARA

That's how long we're

going to be here? How do you know?

BEETLE JUICE

How do I know, guys? It's my business to know. Anyway, so you're stuck in this dump ...

ADAM

It's not a dump.

BEETLE JUICE

... and you want it all to yourselves. And even though these live guys have paid their hard earned money for the home of the dreams, you dead guys are gonna drive 'em out in the cold, mommy, daddy, and two little girls, one of whom probably wouldn't say no to a shorter, older man.

BARBARA

The Deetzes are destroying our house.

BEETLE JUICE

Right. And I'm here to help you.

The trio pass the appliance store. The large plate glass window bears the legend: GENERAL APPLIANCES / ADAM AND BARBARA MAITLAND / EST. 1963. BEETLE JUICE points at the window.

BEETLE JUICE

You. The Maitlands. 'Cause people like you are the backbone of the afterlife. Just because you're dead doesn't mean that you can't still hold onto the things that were important to you when you were alive.

BARBARA and ADAM are evidently a little uncomfortable with this selfish interpretation of their actions.

BEETLE JUICE (cont)

So, basically what we got here is a third-class inter-session. Nothing big, and if it's works we're all

happy. I'm gonna teach you
guys a few tricks. And we're
gonna start out with something
simple.

ADAM

You've handled problems like this
before, haven't you?

Behind them, the window of the appliance store suddenly crack
into a spider's web pattern, completely obliterating BARBARA and
ADAM's names. Hearing the noise, BARBARA and ADAM start to turn
their heads, but BEETLE JUICE prods them forward.

BEETLE JUICE

You ever hear of a place called
Amityville?

INT:

DELIA reading in bed, and watching television, and eating. She
hears a noise outside in the corridor, listens for a moment and
then gets up to investigate.

INT:

Empty, but a closet door is open.

DELIA goes down to investigate. She finds in the open linen
closet that one of the drawers is open, and a pile of her best
designer sheets has been dropped on the floor.

DELIA

Damn those girls.

She picks the sheets back up, puts them in the drawer, and shuts
the linen closet door.

She returns to her bedroom.

When she disappears, the linen closet door swings slowly open
again. BARBARA and ADAM come out holding sheets.

BARBARA

I might have known a woman
like that wouldn't have a
single pair of plain white
sheets.

ADAM

I don't think this is going
to work.

INT:

This is the first room to have been totally set up, with four
different word processors. Above each computer are framed covers

of paperback books that Charles has written: thrillers, detective novels, romances, and westerns.

CHARLES is working with two printers at once, and the pages are just spilling out. CHARLES is also working a Xerox machine, and talking on the telephone -- all at the same time.

CHARLES

No, Evelyn, ten per cent
on the first hundred K, and
twelve thereafter. No more
of this --

He hears something in the corridor outside -- a kind of low moaning.

CHARLES

Just a minute, Evelyn.
Somebody --

He goes to the door and flings it open.

Two figures are right there in the doorway -- ghosts under sheets. But they're designer sheets.

CHARLES

Oh Jesus, you two. Is
Connecticut so boring that
you have to think up shit like
this? I've got a book due at
Dell tomorrow morning, and I'll
get a bonus if it's there on
time -- and you want to make
me miss that bonus?

He slams the door, turns around. Then turns around again, and jerks the door open. The ghosts are startled.

CHARLES

And Delia is going to kill you
when she sees that you cut holes
in her Ralph Lauren sheets.

He slams the door again.

INT:

ADAM and BARBARA as ghosts under the sheets.

BARBARA

Don't you think he could
have come up with something
a little more -- I don't
know -- scary?

ADAM

Well, he said we'd have

to start slow.

At this moment, they are startled when the door of LYDIA's room flies open. LYDIA jumps out and takes a whole series of photographs of them, one after the other.

LYDIA

Sick! Sexual perversion! You guys never did this kind of thing in New York. Total gross-out. If you're going to do weird sexual stuff you ought to stay in your bedroom, okay? It's so embarrassing.

LYDIA flies back into her room.

ADAM

(Discouraged) Keep it trying?

BARBARA

Might as well.

They open the door of the master bedroom and glide inside.

INT:

Television still going, DELIA asleep. ADAM and BARBARA go over and stand beside the bed.

ADAM

He said to moan.

Tentatively, they MOAN and GROAN. DELIA doesn't stir.

BARBARA

I feel really stupid.

ADAM

I know. But we're ghosts. And ghosts are supposed to moan.

Moan louder.

They MOAN LOUDER, and more weirdly.

DELIA stirs, reaches over to the bedside table for the remote control device, and without opening her eyes, turns off the television set. Then she turns over, and is lost to the world.

BARBARA sighs. She and ADAM walk towards the door. When they open it however, CATHY is standing there -- and both ADAM and BARBARA jump backwards with yelps of fright.

CATHY

Are you the guys who're hiding out in the attic?

ADAM

(Faked voice of terror) We're ghosts.

BARBARA

(Moans weirdly)

CATHY

What do you look like under there?

ADAM and BARBARA go out into the hall -- as if to keep from waking DELIA with their conversation.

INT:

ADAM, BARBARA, and CATHY.

ADAM

Aren't you scared?

CATHY

Those are sheets. I'm not afraid of sheets. Are you gross under there? Are you "Night of the Living Dead" under there?

ADAM

What?

CATHY

It's this gross movie.

BARBARA

Young lady, if I had seen a ghost at your age, I'd have been frightened out of my wits. I'd suggest you go to your room and think about that. Come on, Adam.

BARBARA and ADAM continue down the hall with as much dignity as they can muster under the circumstances. CATHY trails along behind them, then steps on the dragging tails of their sheets. The sheets slip off, exposing BARBARA and ADAM -- looking pretty silly in their underwear.

CATHY

You're not gross. Why were you wearing the sheets?

BARBARA and ADAM whirl around.

BARBARA

That's what we were told to do.

ADAM

You can actually see us? Even without the sheets?

Then ADAM and BARBARA realize that they are standing in their underwear and grab the sheets to recover their modesty.

CATHY

Is this like a trick question?

ADAM

No, it's not a trick question.
Can you really see us?

BARBARA

Tell the truth.

CATHY

I always tell the truth, even
when it hurts and gets me in
trouble and people don't want
to hear it. Of course I can
see you.

BARBARA

Nobody else can.

CATHY

(Shrugging) Were you trying to
scare my mom or something?

BARBARA

Something like that.

CATHY

It won't work. She's sleeping
with Prince Valium tonight. I
stole the key to the attic, you
know.

INT:

The mechanical moon makes its slow track through the heavens.
Moonlit, serene.

BACK TO SCENE --

ADAM, BARBARA, and CATHY stand just beyond the fringes of the
town, dimly lighted giants.

CATHY

Where are the little figures
I saw in there yesterday?

ADAM

That was us.

CATHY

Really? How'd you make your-
selves shrink?

BARBARA

It just happened. Sometimes
we have control, but most of
the time --

CATHY nods. Life is like that.

CATHY

(To ADAM) You did this? You carved all these little houses and things?

ADAM

(Pleased) I certainly did.

CATHY

And this used to be your house, I bet.

BARBARA

I don't think it would be a very good idea if you told your parents or your sister that we're up here.

ADAM

Unless you think we could scare them.

CATHY

Why do you want to scare everybody?

ADAM

We want to frighten you away. So that you'll move out.

CATHY

You don't know my family very well, do you? (Beat) I like it up here. Can I visit you sometimes?

EXT:

Like all the other shots, but there's a quality of waiting about it. Full sun.

EXT:

Shaded by a tree.

EXT:

Heavily in shadow.

INT:

Shadowed, potentially filled with terror as are all basements in horror movies. CAMERA moves over to a little shed-like room in the corner. Noise of a FAST-MOVING CLOCK.

INT:

DELIA shrieks. Going through the dirty clothes, she's just come across the sheets with the eye-holes cut in them.

DELIA

Lydia! Cathy! Cathy!

INT:

A photograph coming up in the developing tank -- the ghosts in the hallway.

LYDIA

Oh my God... oh shit...

No feet...

INT:

LYDIA, pounding up from the basement with the wet print, collides with DELIA, rushing down from the second floor with the scissored sheets.

LYDIA

Oh God, Delia. They were ghosts! Ghosts! They didn't have any feet!

DELIA

Lydia, I'm going to kill you, honest to God I'm going to kill you. I'm going to lock you in that basement like you were a goddamned hyacinth.

LYDIA stands open-mouthed with the wet photograph. DELIA turns on her heel and storms up the stairs.

DELIA (cont)

Cathy! Cathy! I'm going to kill you too.

INT:

Later in the day. LYDIA has calmed down, changed clothes. She now has a number of the prints. CATHY's there too, looking at the prints, saying nothing, and certainly not giving away the fact that she talked to the ghosts.

CHARLES is seated before the word processor, vainly trying to work.

LYDIA

Can you believe it? I mean, this is the weirdest --

CHARLES

Lydia, I don't know what it is with you and these practical jokes, but --

LYDIA

THIS IS NOT A JOKE!

CHARLES

This is air-brushing. This is a result of that class you took in air-brushing last fall. It's pretty good, but I've seen better. Now would you two please --

The door of the room flies open, and there stands DELIA, carrying several sets of sheets.

DELIA

I want you two girls to know that there is no Ralph Lauren outlet in Winter River. Which means that Otho and Evelyn -- our very first overnight guests in this house -- are going to be sleeping tonight on a polyester blend.

She flings the sheets at LYDIA and CATHY.

LYDIA

Delia, look at these pictures. Please. Just for a minute. Honest. There are ghosts in this house.

CATHY

There are. I've seen them.

The family stare at her for a minute.

CATHY (cont)

I talked to them. They're very nice. (Beat) Their names are Adam and Barbara, and they live --

In the midst of this, DELIA explodes.

DELIA

I can't believe you two are doing this to me! Ghosts. Ghosts. Otho and Evelyn will be here in half an hour and I haven't even begun to salt the ducks and

you are coming to me with this
bullshit about ghosts! I can't
believe that you two are trying to
undermine my self-esteem in this
way.

She storms out of the room.

CHARLES looks at his two daughters.

CHARLES

Great. Fabulous. It's going to
be a terrific evening. I can tell
already.

He goes out, after DELIA.

CATHY is left alone with LYDIA. LYDIA flings the photographs at
CATHY.

LYDIA

You jerk. That would have believed
me if you hadn't thrown in all that
other crap. They'll never listen
to me now.

LYDIA storms out.

CATHY

But it's true. They're...

She's all alone in the office.

One of the printers sputters to life, and begins to spew out
pages.

CATHY slowly walks out of the room, looking through LYDIA's
photographs.

INT:

ADAM and BARBARA are looking at the photographs.

CATHY

Those are the pictures my
sister took, and even when
she showed them to Mom and
Dad, they didn't believe
you were real. And then I
said I had met you, and they
still didn't believe us.

ADAM

Well, we'll have to try
something else. Maybe if
you came back a little later,
we could work something up.
Sort of try it out on you

first.

CATHY

I don't know if I can come back tonight. We're having guests -- Lydia's real mom, and Otho -- he's the one who's helping Mom do all the re-decoration. And Mom says I have to macerate the endive.

CATHY leaves.

BEETLE JUICE (v.o.)

Poor kid.

ADAM and BARBARA look down into the model.

IN THE MODEL --

BEETLE JUICE lies sunning himself in the park. He's wearing the world's smallest Speedo, and has a sunning reflector around his neck.

BARBARA

Those sheets didn't work at all.

BEETLE JUICE

I told you. You have to start small till you get the hang of it. Hey', they're giving a party tonight, and there's your chance.

ADAM

You'll tell us what to do?

BEETLE JUICE

That's what I'm here for, pal. Hey, you're blocking my rays.

ADAM and BARBARA pull back.

INT:

The DEETZ's first dinner party, using EVELYN (CHARLES's first wife,) and OTHO as guinea pigs. Even so, things aren't going as well as DELIA had hoped. It's EVELYN who's putting in the knife, and OTHO (under the guise of friendship) who's twisting it.

EVELYN

Nobody understands why you did it, Delia.

CATHY

Did what?

EVELYN

Drag your whole family into
the wilds of Connecticut.
You'll never get anybody
to visit you.

CHARLES

You came quickly enough,
Evelyn.

EVELYN

That's because I had to get
you to sign some very important
contracts. People come up to
me, and say, "Why on earth did
they do it? What's in Winter
River?"

LYDIA

Zilch. Zilch is what is in
Winter River.

OTHO

Well, I defend you. I tell
people that I think it was
a wonderful idea. Charles can
write without distraction --
and for a conceptual artist like
Delia who is -- let's face it,
in a critical slump... I tell
people it's good for you to
appear inaccessible. But I have
to agree with Evelyn, it's going
to be hard to get people out here.

DELIA, in her agitation, knocks over a glass of water. The glass
falls off the table onto the fine Oriental carpet beneath the
table. There's a little distracting to-do about retrieving it.

DELIA

Well, there's not going to be
any difficulty about getting them
out here when they find out just
how special this house is.

OTHO

It's nice, Delia, and it will be
more than presentable when I've
worked my way with it -- but I
don't know if I'd care to use the
word special.

DELIA

Ghosts aren't special? Ghosts are pretty special in my book.

CHARLES

(Cautionary) Lydia and Cathy tried to play a little joke on us this afternoon.

LYDIA

It wasn't a joke.

CHARLES

They tried to convince Delia and me that this house was haunted.

OTHO's glance is sharp at this.

DELIA

Of course I was a little sceptical at first, but I've always felt I had a sympathy with that sort of thing. And Otho, ghosts should be right up your alley.

LYDIA

Why?

DELIA

Before Otho started slinging chintz he was giving backroom seances in the East Village.

OTHO

Yes, well, the bottom fell out of the psychic market in seventy-two, but my powers are undiminished. And I have never relinquished my profound interest in matters of the spirit.

EVELYN

Delia, it's cute schtick, but you're going to have a pretty rough time convincing me -- or any of your other friends -- that this house is haunted. We're going to need -- what's that phrase?

OTHO

Ocular demonstration.

EVELYN

Right. Proof. We just --

EVELYN suddenly breaks off with --

A VIOLENT SCREAM.

DELIA stares at her for a moment, then an expression of shock crosses DELIA's face and she shrieks as well.

The two women try to push back their chairs from the table, but can't.

The patterned flowers and vines in the carpet have begun to grow, twisting around the chair- and table-legs.

New shoots and vines appear, unfold, and twist even as we watch. The flowers bud and bloom, as in a Disney time-lapse nature film.

Everyone looks on with astonishment as more of the carpet sprouts. There is a general retreat from the table.

LYDIA fetches one of her cameras, never very far away.

LYDIA

It's the ghosts. I told you.

I told you they were real.

CHARLES

Then Cathy was telling the truth too. (To OTHO) She said she had talked to them.

OTHO

It's woooon-der-fulllll. Incontrovertible proof of the presence of the supernatural element in this house. I was, and I remain, an expert in this field.

DELIA shoots a look of triumph at EVELYN.

INT:

ADAM and BARBARA lying on the floor with their heads near the window, looking out over the front yard.

ADAM

Any minute now. They'll all run screaming --

Timid knock at the door of the attic.

BARBARA glances at ADAM and then goes to the door and opens it. CATHY is standing there, sheepish.

CATHY

They'd like for you to come downstairs. Mom says you

can use any sheets you want.

INT:

The DEETZs, OTHO, and EVELYN are sitting expectantly. The photographs are being passed around.

DELIA

I mean, doesn't it indicate a marvellous sense of humor on the part of the ghosts that they actually do appear in sheets? Who would expect that?

OTHO

We are obviously dealing with a very sophisticated pair.

EVELYN

Charles, I want to know why you didn't call me about this right away. The book rights alone could make us a fortune...

She waves a hand toward the dining room. It's a total jungle in there now.

CHARLES

We were just waiting for proof, Evelyn.

He points to LYDIA's photographs.

EVELYN

Yes, of course. Lydia darling, these prints alone --

CATHY appears at the base of the stairs. Everyone looks to her expectantly.

CATHY

They just won't. They wouldn't say why.

DELIA

Well they have to. That's all there is to it.

OTHO

They must have a reason.

CATHY

I think the reason is they were trying to scare you, and you didn't get scared --

DELIA

Of course we weren't scared.

Just a little startled.

CHARLES

I don't see --

He breaks off when he looks back at the dining room. It's completely clear again. All eyes travel to that room.

EVELYN

Of course they were rather spectacular effects -- for Connecticut I mean.

DELIA

Are you insinuating --

OTHO

(To CATHY) You can see them, can't you?

CATHY doesn't answer.

CHARLES

Where do they live? Hide out?

OTHO

All presences have a home space. A place where they work out of, so to speak.

CATHY

The attic.

DELIA

(To CATHY) Well then, come on.

INT:

CATHY AND DELIA

DELIA

They're in there? This is where they've been hiding out?

CATHY nods. DELIA pounds on the door.

DELIA

All right, you dead people, come on out, or we're going to break down this goddamn door and drag you downstairs.

CATHY

Why don't you say please?

DELIA

You've got to take the right tone in things like this,

Cathy, or people -- whether they're dead or alive -- people will walk all over you. These are lessons that it's important for you to learn. (Loud) Come on you, or I will make death so miserable for you that you will wish you had never been buried.

The door cracks open with an EERIE WHINE.

INT:

The family waiting, expectant. DELIA comes down the stairs with a smug smile. CATHY follows, looking worried.

CHARLES

Are they coming?

OTHO

They're already here. I can feel it.

EVELYN

(Sceptical)

How do we know?

She looks at CHARLES, as if to say, DELIA's Trying To Pull a Fast One.

Then, quite suddenly, these things happen:

An ugly modern lamp is knocked over and smashed.

An enormous rip appears in a dreadful canvas on the wall.

The ugly rug in the center of the room has a pentangle charred into it.

All the chairs are knocked over backwards, with everyone spilling out.

There's a moment of stunned silence, and then the DEETZs and their two guests -- without saying a word -- get up and begin politely to applaud.

INT:

Old-fashioned, turn-of-the-century, parody of Storyville. BEETLE JUICE is surrounded with horned lovelies, drinking champagne, carousing. The song "Honky Tonk Angel" is playing on a piano.

INT:

BARBARA and ADAM, in high dudgeon, are staring down at the model. The whorehouse is garishly lighted -- and we hear the music only faintly.

ADAM

I did not build a
cathouse for Winter River.

He reaches down and lifts off the roof of the cathouse.

INT:

The roof comes off. The horned lovelies scatter with little squeals of fright.

BEETLE JUICE

You went to a party.
Thought I'd have a little
party of my own. How'd it
go, guys?

BARBARA

It went great. Now it looks
like we're going to spend the
next hundred and thirty-two
years doing parlor tricks.

ADAM

It didn't scare them a bit.
They applauded. Are you going
to be able to give us some
real help?

BEETLE JUICE

Yeah. Sure. So you're asking
me to really help you?

BARBARA & ADAM

Yes, we are.

BEETLE JUICE

Then I'll put my thinking cap
on. And you two guys don't
have to worry about anything
anymore.

ADAM replaces the roof, and it shakes the whole house.

BEETLE JUICE sits alone in the whorehouse parlor, sipping champagne. He has a wry smile on his face. Everything is going according to plan.

INT:

We open on a large banner reading: WELCOME BACK WINTER RIVER

BADGERS:

We pan off the banner to three hundred stunned-looking Badgers,

the freshest-faced crop of wholesome American teens ever assembled in one cafeteria.

They all stare dumbfounded at...

LYDIA DEETZ

sitting all alone in full DEATH ROCKER regalia. She wears a T-shirt emblazoned with a holographic image of the CHEST-BURSTER from ALIEN; a skirt that appears to be made of barbed wire; Nefertiti eye make-up; earrings that are dangling mouse skulls. Completing the ensemble is a pair of high-heeled boots with a hobble bar attached.

Sitting in front of her is a single half-pint container of white milk.

From the opposite side of the room, an intrepid female BADGER gets up and crosses to LYDIA. She's blonde and sweet, and obviously drew the short straw.

LYDIA eyes her approach darkly.

The BADGER reaches LYDIA's table.

BADGER

Cheerleader tryouts are
Saturday.

LYDIA

Great. I'll be in New
York.

EXT:

It actually looks good -- at least from the outside. Calm and sedate.

It even seems to turn Norman Rockwell-time when a big yellow schoolbus arrives and deposits CATHY on the front lawn.

The entire busful of children lean out of the windows to wave frantically at CATHY -- she was evidently a hit at school. When the bus takes off, CATHY goes up the front steps of her house, and in at the front door.

INT:

OTHO's worked his magic, and the house is exactly as DELIA probably wanted it. Fashionable in the extremity of the term, angling for a spread in Architectural Digest. Garish, uncomfortable, expensive, not meant in any serious way for human habitation.

CATHY

Hi mom.

DELIA

I'm four minutes off.

DELIA is in the corner of the living room, working on her water clock. This is a tall, enormous, narrow sculpture -- reaching floor to ceiling, and then stretching up through a hole carved through to the next floor. It's a mass of small buckets, dishes, drains, pipes, levers, and counter-weights with running water keeping the whole thing in tremulous motion. It somehow also manages to keep the time on a little dial that's set on a kind of eye-stalk protruding into the room.

BACK TO SCENE --

DELIA is making fine-tuning adjustments.

CATHY

I'm going upstairs to do homework, Mom.

DELIA

I know where you're going, you're going up to the attic.

CATHY

Just for a little while.

DELIA

They know about the thirtieth.

CATHY

I told them.

DELIA

This housewarming party is very important to your father and me. And they had better come across. They're not getting a free ride in this house.

CATHY starts up the stairs.

CATHY

I'll remind them.

DELIA calls after her daughter.

DELIA

Something spectacular, Cathy!

When CATHY is out of hearing.

DELIA (cont)

Then out they go.

INT:

CATHY comes up from the first floor. She drops her book bag inside the door of her room, and goes softly on. She's going to pass the open door of her father's study. He's talking to his ex-wife and agent on the telephone.

CATHY starts to creep by the room, but suddenly
CHARLES'S ARM
reaches out and grabs her, and pulls her inside.

INT:

As usual, two or three printers are going full blast.
CHARLES hangs up the telephone, and hugs CATHY close.

CHARLES

You know what?

CATHY

What?

CHARLES

I just did a four-book
contract with lay-backs
to hard cover, with
eight and ten breaking
at a hundred and fifty.
You know what that means?

CATHY

No.

CHARLES

You're going to be the only
girl in the fourth grade
with your own Limited
Partnership Real Estate
Tax Shelter.

TELEPHONE rings, and CHARLES instantly puts CATHY down and
answers the telephone. CATHY runs out.

CHARLES

Hello?

INT:

ADAM and CATHY are poring over the model. ADAM is looking at a
series of Polaroid photographs that CATHY has brought in.

CATHY

When people asked why I was
taking pictures of everything,
I told them it was a school
project.

BARBARA comes up.

ADAM

Here's a headline for you.
A friend of Cathy's mother
just bought our appliance store,

and turned it into a Jello stand.

CATHY

Not jello. Gelloto.

BARBARA

What's gelloto?

CATHY

Well, it tastes just like ice cream, but it costs about three times as much. Beverly says she's filling a need and will make a fortune.

BARBARA starts looking through the Polaroids.

BARBARA

Beverly is your mother's friend?

CATHY

She just moved here, and Beverly's ex-husband and his Chinese boyfriend are moving up next month. They bought the old Baptist Church and are going to set up an Academy of Aerobic Self-Defense.

ADAM

Defense against what?

CATHY

Muggers.

BARBARA

Nobody has ever been mugged in Winter River.

CATHY

Beverly was. But Mommy says Beverly has a victim complex.

ADAM and BARBARA are getting insight into a world they never knew existed.

ADAM

There certainly have been a lot of changes recently.

CATHY

Mommy wanted me to remind you about her party on the thirtieth.

BARBARA

We haven't forgotten.

ADAM and BARBARA exchange troubled glances.

CATHY

I think it's really great
that all you guys are working
together now. I feel like
I've got two families. I just
wish they could see you the
way I can.

ADAM

Honey, could you go downstairs?
Barbara and I need to talk for
a few minutes. But come back
up in a little while and visit
us.

CATHY

Sure.

She leaves.

BARBARA

I hope we're doing the right
thing.

ADAM

There was nothing else --

NOISE OF A MOTORCYCLE --

turns their attention towards the model town. They peer down
into --

MODEL TOWN --

BEETLE JUICE is riding down Main Street on a Mo-Ped. ADAM and
BARBARA hover above him like titans in the sky.

BEETLE JUICE does wheelies, and comes to an abrupt halt.

BEETLE JUICE

Real cute kid, hunh?

He drags down the length of the street.

BEETLE JUICE

I'm gonna use my imagination
on that one.

BARBARA'S HAND reaches down into the model, and plucks BEETLE
JUICE off the Mo-Ped. The Mo-Ped spins forward and crashes
through a doorway in one of the model buildings.

BARBARA lifts him up towards her squeezing him slightly.

BARBARA

I don't know what you've
got in mind for their party
but leave her out of it.

CU:

BEETLE JUICE grins. Suddenly large spikes shoot out all over his body, piercing the skin of BARBARA's palm and fingers. BARBARA's blood is a rich pink.

She releases the evil spirit and he plummets. BEETLE JUICE parachutes to a soft landing on the town common.

BEETLE JUICE

Watch it. I can work
against you, too.

BEETLE JUICE suddenly lightens up.

BEETLE JUICE (cont)

But don't worry about that
little girl. I'm more
interested in her sister.

INT:

EVELYN is CHARLES's agent and ex-wife; she is also LYDIA's mother. Her apartment is in a section of Queens recently become fashionable.

EVELYN is on the phone to CHARLES. LYDIA stands by, wearing an outfit even more outrageous than before, impatient.

EVELYN

(Into telephone) She
promises she'll be home
by six in the morning,
Charles. But I told her
I had to check with you
first.

EVELYN listens for a moment.

EVELYN

Fine. I'll talk to you
tomorrow.

She turns to LYDIA.

EVELYN

All right. You can go.
If you promise to take
taxis, and not use any
drugs you didn't bring
from home.

EXT:

Rapture is the newest and trendiest New York club, located in a deconsecrated church.

Four hundred Death Rockers are milling around on the sidewalk,

waiting for entrance.

Over the door is a banner reading: TONIGHT ONLY / DANNY DEATH.

INT:

The interior of Rapture has been decorated as the Halls of Hell, in stylish black and red. The crowd is equal to its surroundings.

We find LYDIA standing very near the stage area, surrounded by half a dozen of her old friends from New York.

They are watching one of the evening Talent Acts, which is a MAGICIAN performing the coffin and swords trick to the thrashing pre-recorded music of Motorhead. A YOUNG WOMAN enters an upright coffin and the door is shut, in a way that leaves her face exposed. The MAGICIAN plunges, one after the other, five swords through slits in the coffin. He holds up the sixth and final sword, and then plunges it straight through the young woman's breast.

The YOUNG WOMAN screams, and a LONG ARC OF SPURTING BLOOD spews out into the audience, spraying LYDIA's friends. On stage, the MAGICIAN withdraws the six swords, and opens the coffin. The YOUNG WOMAN, with a bloody gash in her breast spills out onto the stage.

The crowd applauds madly as the stage goes completely black. In the audience, LYDIA wipes the stage blood from her face.

LYDIA

This stuff is so lame.

None of it's real.

FRIEND #1 turns to FRIEND #2.

FRIEND #1

If she mentions those
goddamn ghosts of hers
one more time I'm going
to puke in her cleavage.

LYDIA

I have touched the other
side, you people. And if
you don't believe me just
wait till next Saturday
night.

Suddenly, there is the very loud and very eerie violin obbligato coming from everywhere.

Then, on the blackened appear TWO YELLOW SNAKE'S EYES. Then, a moment later, we see shape of a violin outlined in white neon.

The lights come up gradually and luridly, to reveal BEETLE JUICE

/ DANNY DEATH, alone on the stage with his electric neon violin. He has been transformed into the ultimate DEATH ROCKER. For a few moments, the eerie solo violin continues to play, bringing a surprising hush over the audience. Then, in a hugely amplified version of his own voice, we hear him recite the following poem, to the accompaniment of his violin.

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH

Young soul, put off your flesh and come
With me into the quiet tomb.
Our bed is lovely, dark and sweet
The earth will swing us as she goes
Beneath our coverlid of snows
And the warm leaden sheet.

By this time he is at the front of the stage, before an enthralled audience. No one however is more enthralled than LYDIA, for it becomes apparent that BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH is directing his words solely to her.

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH

Dear and dear is their poisoned note
The little snakes of silver throat
In mossy skulls that nest and lie
Ever singing, "Die, Oh die!"

FRIEND #3

He wants your body.

LYDIA

Shhh!

Like a demonic Bruce Springsteen, BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH pulls LYDIA up onto the stage, and in his own voice, repeats the final chorus directly to her.

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH

Sweet and sweet is their poisoned note
The little snakes of silver throat
In mossy skulls that nest and lie
Ever singing "Die, Oh die!"

When BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH finishes, there's a moment of awed silence. Then as the applause begins, BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH walks off stage, leading LYDIA away.

In the audience, LYDIA's friends watch with astonishment.

FRIEND #1

Wait'll he finds out she
lives in Connecticut.

FRIEND #2 takes out his lighter in order to light his cigarette. When he flicks the light, an enormous jet of BRIGHT BLUE FLAME bursts out. Everyone draws back.

FRIEND #3

Blue flame. That means
there's an evil spirit
present.

All their eyes drift in the direction of BEETLE JUICE / DANNY
DEATH and LYDIA, who have made their way to the bar.

AT THE BAR --

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH has bought LYDIA and himself a Coke.

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH

What are you doing next Saturday
night?

LYDIA

I'm giving a party. (Beat)
Would you like to come?

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH hesitates.

LYDIA

(Sounding like the
sixteen-year-old she is)
We're gonna have real
ghosts.

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH

Wouldn't miss it.

EXT:

It is a brilliant fall day, as the DEETZ's silver BMW turns onto
Main Street.

Main Street is showing evidence of the first incursions of
Manhattan. While it is still charming and unpretentious for the
most part, BEVERLY'S GELOTTO, with its arrogant, high-tech
exterior, bodes ill for the future of this small town Main
Street.

INT:

DELIA driving, LYDIA in the front seat, CATHY in the back,
looking out of the window.

LYDIA

Delia, he was great. I
mean, the audience was
totally silent, and he
had this neon violin,
and he pulled me up on
stage, and we talked
all night long, and he
promised he'd come to

the party, and I have
him directions and
everything, and he said
he might even sing.

DELIA

Well, we don't want to
steal focus from Cathy's
ghosts. But maybe we
could set up something
out in the barn. He
could use my sculptures
and do a kind of
environmental piece.

EXT:

DELIA pulls the BMW into a parking space in front of the DRY
CLEANERS.

INT:

-- A CLOUD OF WHITE STEAM

From the middle of which shine out two YELLOW SNAKE'S EYES.
As the eyes gradually humanize, and the steam dissipates, we see
BEETLE JUICE as an OLD WOMAN, operating a steam press at the back
of the dry cleaning establishment. In tight grey curls, a
flowered dress, and practical shoes, BEETLE JUICE looks like a
old New England shopkeeper.

DELIA comes in the front door, and throws several strange-looking
outfits across the counter, and looks about impatiently.

BEETLE JUICE/OLD WOMAN

Be with in a moment, dear.

DELIA waits two seconds, and then in a voice that is still trying
to be pleasant:

DELIA

I hate to be a nuisance,
but this isn't the only
stop I have to make today.

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN cuts the power on the steam press, and
comes to the front of the shop between two long mechanized racks.
He is walking with a limp and a cane.

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN

I'm sorry -- I don't move
as quickly as I used to.
I lost four toes last
winter. Frostbite. You

never think it can happen
to you till it happens
to you.

DELIA does not want to hear more of this story.

DELIA

I have to have these by
Saturday.

BEETLE JUICE examines the avant-garde outfits.

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN

They are dresses,
aren't they, dear?

DELIA

(Wondering if that was a dig)
You know how to take care
of material like this, don't
you?

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN

I've been running this place
for twenty-six years, ever
since Dad died. Dad was my
second husband. He had a
heart attack on Arbor Day.
He was planting that big
spruce in front of...

DELIA

Do you deliver?

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN

I'll bring them out myself.

EXT:

Piloted by the fuming DELIA, the BMW screeches away from the dry cleaners. Halfway down the block, the BMW scatters an entire troupe of Brownies.

INT:

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN stands behind the counter, his old woman's face a death mask, with YELLOW SNAKE'S EYES embedded in it. Behind him, the DRY CLEANING RACKS spin around wildly with an UNEARTHLY CLATTER.

INT:

Full of steam. CHARLES and OTHO, swathed in towels, sit sweating on benches.

OTHO

What are you in town for?

CHARLES

I'm arranging the catering
for Saturday night.

OTHO

Oh let me go with you.

CHARLES

We're having a sushi room,
and a tapas room, and your old
friend Alfredo is doing a
chocolate construction.

OTHO

Christ, how much is that
going to cost? Chocolate
constructions don't come
cheap, and once you start
taking sushi across state
lines you're talking real
money.

CHARLES

Otho, what difference does
it make? I'm writing this
whole party off my taxes.
And Delia's writing it off
of hers. Our whole goddamn
lives are deductible. Taxes
are just a game that you play
against the IRS and I always
make sure that I win.

OTHO

I wish somebody'd teach me how to
play.

CHARLES

It's easy. You just learn how to
make them play by your rules. (Beat)
Feels like it's getting hot in here.
Let's go.

CHARLES and OTHO get up and leave the steam room.

At the far end of the room is a sudden, agitated billowing of
steam.

BEETLE JUICE, with STARING YELLOW EYES, steps forward. He is
wearing a perfectly pressed, perfectly dry three-piece pin-
striped suit. He's wearing round wire-frame glasses, and a
narrow-brimmed hat. He is carrying a briefcase, with the

initialled monogram IRS.
He walks out of the steam room.

INT:

BEETLE JUICE / IRS, unnoticed, passes the shower room, where CHARLES and OTHO are slowly turning under adjoining taps. He passes a row of lockers, attracting the notice of a deeply tanned YUPPIE jock, who is about to open his locker. As BEETLE JUICE / IRS leaves, the YUPPIE turns back to his now open locker, just in time to be CLOBBERED ON THE CHIN by a boxing glove that shoots out of the locker on a spring. The YUPPIE is smashed against the opposite wall of lockers. The other men in the locker room do double-takes.

EXT:

The day of the party. Caterers vans pulled up. Workmen are putting out table, and erecting a lighting system that wouldn't be out of place in Madison Square Gardens. CATHY rides up to the house on her bicycle. She weaves her way with difficulty through the workmen. She takes the pack off her back, and removes the mail that she's brought from the post office.

INT:

CATHY comes in the front door. Just as much pandemonium inside. Caterers, people rearranging the furniture, DELIA is there with a torch and mask, putting final touches on her water clock.

CATHY

I brought the mail.

DELIA

Have you put out the
guest towels yet?

CATHY

I was going to do it
right now.

DELIA is looking through the mail as CATHY starts up the stairs.

DELIA

Remember, folded in quarters,
creases to the left.

DELIA comes across a letter that puts the fear of God in her.

DELIA

CHARLES!

CHARLES is at that moment coming out of the kitchen, through the

dining room.

DELIA hands the letter to him.

DELIA

It's from the IRS.

Without a word, CHARLES tears into the letter.

DELIA

It's an audit, isn't it?

CHARLES

Yes.

DELIA

Call the accountant on
Monday. He'll take care
of it.

DELIA leaves.

CHARLES

(To himself) No. I'll call
him right now. This is --

An insinuating voice sounds behind CHARLES.

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

It's a little late for
that, Mr. Deetz.

BEETLE JUICE is standing there, in the guise of the IRS man we
saw in the steam room.

CHARLES

Who are you?

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

My name is Irving Roger Smith.

He points the monogram on his briefcase: IRS.

CHARLES

(With misgiving) But what
are you doing here?

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

Look at your notice, Mr.
Deetz. Our appointment is
for today.

CHARLES

But you have to give warning
for an audit.

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

Look at the envelope. That
notice was mailed four weeks
ago. Because we didn't hear
from you, we concluded that
the appointment was confirmed.

CHARLES

But I just got the notice
today.

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

That's between you and the USPS,
Mr. Deetz.

CHARLES

In case you haven't noticed,
we're giving a little party
tonight, Mr. Smith.

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

The first think I need to see
is every bank statement and
deposit receipt for the past
three years.

INT:

CATHY and BARBARA are folding towels.

BARBARA

This is going to be some
party isn't it? Is it going
to be a cookout?

CATHY

No, but there's going to
be twenty-seven different
kinds of raw fish.
(Diffidently) Have you
decided what you're going to
do tonight? Mom wants you to
make sure it's something
really special.

BARBARA

(Uncomfortable) Adam and
I have figured out a few
things.

CATHY

I'm really glad you're doing
this. I think it will help.
Also, it'll be nice to have
some of my friends at the
party.

BARBARA

(Too quickly) Why don't stay
upstairs with us tonight? We'll

have our own little party.

CATHY

I can't really. Besides,
you guys --

A CHAIN SAW --

interrupts their conversation. BARBARA and CATHY exchange
glances and go to the window.

THEIR POV --

WORKMEN are hewing down ADAM's orchard in order to erect a
massive striped tent.

INT:

CHARLES is leading BEETLE JUICE / IRS down the hill, towards his
study. CHARLES moves like a convict going to execution.

CATHY hurtles out of her room and throws herself on CHARLES.

CATHY

Daddy! Daddy! They're
cutting down the orchard.

CHARLES

Not now, Cathy.

CATHY

It has to be now. They're --

CHARLES

NOT NOW!

He and BEETLE JUICE / IRS move on. At the door of the study
BEETLE JUICE / IRS turns and smiles at CATHY.

INT:

ADAM is lying on the floor, looking out a window. He is weeping
at the loss of his orchard.

He gets up, looks at BARBARA.

ADAM

I don't care what he
does to those people
tonight.

INT:

CATHY and DELIA are in the middle of a heated argument.

DELIA

Cathy, we've got a
hundred and thirty-five
people coming to this
house in a matter of
hours. Don't come at

me with this bullshit
about trees.

CATHY

But --

DELIA

They were going anyway.
Otho and I are putting
in a Japanese meditation
garden.

CATHY stares at her mother for a moment, and then runs out
through the dining room.

INT:

BEETLE JUICE / IRS is seated in front of a table that is stacked
high with CHARLES's financial records.

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

Some people, Mr. Deetz,
think that taxes are just
a game to be played against
the IRS.

CHARLES starts to sweat.

BEETLE JUICE / IRS (cont)

Mr. Deetz, the IRS plays
hardball.

CHARLES

Ah, can I get you something
from downstairs. A little plate
of octopus or something?

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

(Smiling) I'm afraid not,
Mr. Deetz. That would con-
stitute bribery. I know
you have a party to give,
so why don't you just leave
me alone for a while? If I
need you, I know where to find
you.

Humbly, CHARLES walks out of the study.

INT:

CHARLES leans against the door, deflated. He thinks of one more
bit of excuse-making and starts to open the door again.

The door is locked.

He backs away in distress.

INT:

BEETLE JUICE / IRS gets up from the table, and goes to the window.
HIS POV --

The orchard is almost levelled, but the trees nearest the house remain standing. CATHY is watching, grief-stricken.

EXT:

CATHY looks up at the house, having sensed that someone was watching her.

No one appears in the study window. CATHY looks back to the enormous truck that is eating up and shredding the toppled fruit trees at an amazing clip.

OUT OF THE OPEN STUDY WINDOW --

A FUZZY-TAILED SQUIRREL makes a nearly supernatural leap into the branches of the last remaining fruit tree.

A WORKMAN applies the chain saw to the trunk of this tree, and in a brief moment it topples to the ground.

The SQUIRREL is flung free, and lands stunned -- if not dead -- at CATHY's feet.

CATHY tenderly lifts the SQUIRREL and listens to its heart-beat. It shudders in her hands, and weakly raises a GASHED PAW.

CATHY

You're bleeding.

She clutches the SQUIRREL to her breast and runs towards the house.

INT:

The SQUIRREL is lying in on a fluffed up towel in a wooden box. Its paw is bandaged, and CATHY is feeding it water from a eye dropped. It drinks the water eagerly, but still has not opened its eyes.

CATHY

I'd feel a lot better
if you'd just open your
eyes.

From outside, we heard DELIA's frantic voice.

DELIA (v.o.)

Cathy, where are the
guest towels?

CATHY

Coming!

She closes the hinged lid of the box, and pushes it under her bed.

CATHY

I'll check on you in
a little smile.

CATHY hurries out of the room, with the towels.

INSIDE THE BOX --

The SQUIRREL opens his eyes. They're COLD AND YELLOW, SNAKE'S EYES.

INT:

OTHO has arrived, and is carrying a small suitcase. He is wearing an enormous fur coat, complete with hood, Norfolk belt, and contrasting pockets. Whole forests of cute animals perished to make this tent.

DELIA

Thank God you're here.
We've got the IRS upstairs,
Cathy pouting in corners,
I can't find Lydia, Charles
is sloshing his way through
a second pitcher of Long
Island Iced Tea, and the dress
I'm supposed to wear tonight
has not arrived from the
cleaners.

OTHO

Take me to my room, you poor
creature. I brought a suitcase
full of calm.

They start up the stairs.

INT:

It's empty. The door of CATHY's room slowly opens. Out steps BEETLE JUICE as the OLD WOMAN from the cleaners. He is carrying DELIA's clothes in plastic bags.

He steps directly across the hallway, and enters the MASTER BEDROOM.

INT:

OTHO has spread out a pharmacopeia of legal and illegal substances on DELIA's dressing table, and is allowing her to sort through.

OTHO

The pink now, the blue
in fifteen minutes, let

those take effect and then
take a couple of reds
with a glass of apple
juice. That's what
I'd do.

DELIA looks up at BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN standing in the doorway.

DELIA

What are you doing up here?

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN

I knocked and knocked, and
nobody came, so I just
walked on in, and your
daughter told me to bring
these on up here, so here
I am, and you must have a
terrible cold.

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN is eyeing the drugs, which OTHO has swept back into his enormous plastic Baggie.

OTHO

Delia, I think I'm going
to unpack.

DELIA

I'll come with you. (To
BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN) Just
hang the clothes on the door.

DELIA gets up and goes out after OTHO.

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN goes to DELIA's closet door and opens it. It is jammed with expensive clothes.

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN

My, my. Such a wardrobe.

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN's eyes dehumanize. They're COLD and YELLOW.

EXT:

The six o'clock train from New York is pulling in. Half a dozen native Winter Riverites get off the train, carrying shopping bags bearing the logos of Manhattan stores. After them come four of LYDIA's DEATH ROCKER friends. We saw them at RAPTURE.

LYDIA gives them hasty greetings, but it's apparent she is looking for and hoping to see someone else.

She leads them over to the car, which she is driving. She walks apart with her best friend in the group, TRIXIE. (It's her real name.)

LYDIA

Oh God, I feel like a jerk. I met every single train from New York and he's not here yet.

TRIXIE

You are a jerk. He's not coming.

LYDIA

He promised. And Delia's going to kill me, because I haven't been at the house all day.

As they're all piling into the car:

TRIXIE

Maybe he died and that's why he couldn't come.

EXT:

No more WORKMEN, no more VANS. Everything's ready, and apparently calm. The strings of party lights on on, illuminating the tent behind.

It would all be very pretty if we didn't know that ADAM's orchard had been razed for this.

INT:

DELIA is at the mirror, with a towel wrapped around her. She is drying her hair.

CHARLES lies in the bathtub, nearly comatose, with the shower running full blast onto his face.

CHARLES

That man is still locked in my study.

DELIA

(Totally unsympathetic)
We've got fifteen minutes to get dressed.

DELIA walks out of the bedroom.

INT:

DELIA walks in, and to her astonishment, finds

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN

calmly sitting on the corner of the bed.

DELIA

What the hell are you still
doing here?

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN

I was waiting for my money.
That's fifteen seventy.

DELIA

Oh God. Look, wait out in
the hall. I'll get it in
a minute.

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN

I hope you don't mind, but
I rearranged your closet a
little. It was in such a
mess.

DELIA

What? Oh, just get out --

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN leaves the room, as DELIA is opening the
closet door.

INT:

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN stands demurely at the door, waiting.
He's waiting for --

DELIA'S BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAMS

When they come, he smiles an old lady's smile of satisfaction.

INT:

CHARLES runs in from the bathroom, with (or without) towel, and
finds DELIA ripping through her closet like a woman possessed.
Great piles of the ugliest and cheapest and gaudiest polyester
blend clothing imaginable have been strewn on the floor.
DELIA turns to her husband savagely.

DELIA

There is not one article
of clothing in that closet
which does not bear the
label K-Mart.

She holds up a muu-muu.

DELIA

That old woman is going
to die.

DELIA flies out of the bedroom, leaving CHARLES reaching for the
pitcher of New England iced tea.

INT:

DELIA confronts BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN.

DELIA

Get ready to die!

And by George, she does.

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN's face blanches instantly. Her eyes bulge and roll crazily. Her blackened tongue unrolls from her mouth. Her heart palpitates visibly through her dress.

DELIA's rage turns to horror.

DELIA

Oh god, don't die.

Pulling herself up from the depths, BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN manages to croak out reassurance.

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN

I'll be all right. I just need my pills, and I have to lie down for a few minutes.

BEETLE JUICE/ OLD WOMAN staggers into OTHO's room, and collapses on the bed, with DELIA following.

INT. OTHO'S ROOM -- DUSK

DELIA

Right. Don't die. Just lie down. We've got plenty of pills. (Calling) Otho!

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN seems to recover a little.

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN

I'll be all right. Just leave me alone for a little while. And when I'm feeling a little better, I'll get up and leave. I don't want to disturb your party.

DELIA

What about my clothes?

BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN starts to hyperventilate.

DELIA

No, no, don't do that.

DELIA backs out of the room.

INT:

DELIA comes out of OTHO's room, just as LYDIA is coming up the stairs from the first floor.

DELIA

Lydia, find Otho, and tell him I need five of the red

ones, and I need them right
now.

LYDIA

Listen, I'm sorry I was
gone --

DELIA doesn't care. She flings open the door of the master
bedroom, and disappears inside.

The door of OTHO's room opens again, and out steps BEETLE JUICE /
DANNY DEATH.

LYDIA melts.

LYDIA

Oh God. You came.
You really came.

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH

I told you. I wouldn't
miss it.

EXT:

ADAM's orchard is now covered with a wooden platform, on which
half a dozen groaning tables have been laid out.

The DEETZ's party is comprised of three distinct groups: the
literary world (CHARLES), the art world (DELIA), and the DEATH
ROCKERS (LYDIA). These three groups mix rather better than one
would imagine. Certainly they're jostling one another to get at
the food.

CHARLES sits morosely alone near the corner of the tent, with a
pitcher of Long Island Iced Tea between his legs. A couple of
book types stand near him, exchanging glances over his head. As
CHARLES talks in his drunkenness, he stares up at the lighted
window of his study.

CHARLES

If I put it in a book
nobody'd believe it.
The IRS shows up, no
warning, he's in there
for seven hours, hasn't
even come out to take
a piss, God knows what
he's looking for, God
knows what he's gonna
find.

BOOKY #1

They never throw you in

jail unless they're able
to prove fraud.

CHARLES half-laughs, half-moans, and sinks back in his chair.
BEETLE JUICE / IRS suddenly appears in the lighted window, and
waves to CHARLES.

INT:

DELIA's sculptures, entirely too many of them, have been arranged
for maximum effect.

Two CRITICS stand in front of one of the more characteristic of
DELIA's pieces. They seem to be examining it intently. They
walk around it together. They come back to their original place.

CRITIC #1

Truly magnificent.

CRITIC #2

I know. I have never seen
such a pair of tits on a
sixteen-year-old.

Directly in their sight-line is LYDIA's friend TRIXIE.

TRIXIE gives a disgusted look to the CRITICS, knowing what
they're critiquing. She slouches towards LYDIA.

LYDIA is holding forth to a group of her friends.

LYDIA

He is totally amazing. All
the time I was down at the
train station waiting for him,
he was out here with Delia's
creations. Danny Death said
they were realer than real
life.

DEATH ROCKER #1, who was probably LYDIA's boyfriend before she
came across DANNY DEATH, just looks disgusted.

DEATH ROCKER #1

(Sarcastic) God, he's smart.
They look like total pre-
tentious crap to me.

LYDIA

Danny Death says that Delia
is working from a base of
total alienation.

TRIXIE

So where is he now?

LYDIA

Well, he's got this whole inner

life, and it's the true
reality, and sometimes it's
too much for him to deal
with. So he went to lie
down for a minute.

INT:

It's the room where all the guests have thrown their coats, which are now heaped in a very substantial pile on OTHO's bed. OTHO comes into the darkened room, and flicks on the light. He's half-seas over already, and is brushing crumbs from his vest.

OTHO

Oh God, I know it's at
the very bottom of the
pile.

Without regard for any of the other guests, he starts shoving the other coats on the floor. After a few moments, he own coat is revealed in all its peculiar splendor.

OTHO tries to lift his coat, but it won't come up from the bed. OTHO pulls harder, and then sees that two rictored hands have a vice-grip on the coat. The hood falls back and reveals the stark, staring, and very deceased face of BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN.

OTHO falls back, but BEETLE JUICE / OLD WOMAN remains in a sitting position on the bed.

OTHO is now sober.

INT:

DELIA is greeting late-arriving guests at the door. She is wearing the muu-muu she found in her closet, tarted up with jewelry and belts and other accessories. It is still, however, a polyester blend muu-muu.

A richly-gowned MATRON is kissing DELIA on either cheek. As DELIA pulls back, she says:

DELIA

Just put your coat in
the room at the top of
the stairs.

MATRON

I love your house. I
try to tell everybody
that Connecticut is not
the end of the world.

OTHO comes pounding down the stairs.

OTHO

Delia, we have a little
problem.

INT:

Several GUESTS go out through the back door, past one of DELIA's fellow artists, an anorexic chain-smoking action painter. She leans against the stove, nearly crushed by a tweedy-looking PUBLISHER.

PUBLISHER

I have incredible respect
for the avant garde in
every field.

ARTIST

Ever get planked in a
laundry room?

The PUBLISHER looks around the kitchen.

PUBLISHER

Which door?

The ARTIST points to the laundry room door. As the two of them sidle inside, CATHY enters the kitchen from the dining room.

CATHY

I was looking for you
guys.

The ARTIST and the PUBLISHER stare at CATHY, as if they'd never seen her before.

CATHY

Oh, not you.

The ARTIST and the PUBLISHER look around the otherwise empty kitchen, shrug, and disappear into the laundry room.

CATHY'S POV --

ADAM and BARBARA are perched on the counter.

BARBARA

Are all these people friends
of your parents?

CATHY

Maybe not friends exactly.
But part of their networks.

OBVIOUS SEXUAL GROANS --

come out from behind the laundry room door. CATHY looks curiously in that direction.

ADAM

Why don't we go up to the
attic for a while? You can

try to teach us how to play
gin rummy again.

CATHY

Okay, but I can't stay too
long.

The laundry room door starts to bang on its hinges. The GROANS
are more pronounced.

ADAM pulls CATHY out through the dining room. BARBARA stays
behind a moment, staring at the laundry room door.

INT:

The PUBLISHER and the ARTIST are in a heavy embrace against the
door. They're obviously up to something, but whatever it is has
not prevented the ARTIST from chain-smoking.

Suddenly, there's a powerful kick against the door, which sends
the entwined couple toppling into a basket of dirty laundry.

INT:

Dusting her hands for a job well done, BARBARA follows ADAM and
CATHY into the dining room.

INT:

DELIA and OTHO are trying to flatten out the rictored of BEETLE
JUICE / OLD WOMAN. They finally manage to do so, but their
stomachs turn at the sound of the CRACKING BONES.

OTHO

Do you want to call the
police? Or an ambulance?

DELIA

I'm not having a dead woman
carted out of my party.
Tomorrow's good enough.
For right now, let's just
get her in the closet.

OTHO gives DELIA a look, as if to say, "Are you sure?"

DELIA (cont)

She wasn't even invited.

They heave to.

INT:

Two extraordinarily weird-looking ARTIST sorts perform the
tradition of gossiping viciously about the hosts.

ARTIST #1

Did you believe that weirdness

on the invitation about ghosts?
I mean, Delia is really reaching
this time, isn't she?

ARTIST #2

I think the whole family's
weird.

ADAM, BARBARA, and CATHY approach the bottom of the stairs.

ARTISTS' POV --

CATHY trips on the bottom step. But instead of falling, she is
lofted by invisible hands half a dozen steps higher. She regains
her balance, and continues up the stairs.

ARTIST #2

Exhibit A.

INT:

ADAM, BARBARA, AND CATHY pass OTHO and DELIA, coming out of
OTHO's bedroom. OTHO and DELIA look like two people who have
just hidden a corpse in the closet.

DELIA

(To Cathy) It's a wonderful
party, isn't it darling?

CATHY

Yes, it is.

ADAM shoots DELIA a hateful look -- after all, she cut down his
orchard. DELIA shivers.

DELIA

(To OTHO) Brrr.

OTHO

I felt it too.

DELIA and OTHO go downstairs. CATHY, ADAM, and BARBARA go up the
stairs to the attic. The hallway is temporarily empty. Then
BEETLE JUICE as the IRS agent creeps out of OTHO's bedroom, and
goes back into CHARLES's STUDY.

EXT:

We get the first indication that the party has been winding down.
Most of the food has been eaten (or dropped on the ground).
Everything looks unappetizing. There are only a few people out,
and the air is a little chill.

CHARLES still sits at the corner of the tent, staring up at the
lighted window of his study, working on yet another pitcher of
Long Island Iced Tea.

He grabs the arm of a GUEST passing just then.

CHARLES

(Slurred) What time is
it?

GUEST

Eleven o'clock. You don't
suppose you could bump up
the ghosts a little, do you?
I'm playing racketball at
six in the morning.

CHARLES

Ten hours. That's how long
he's been up there.

The GUEST, realizing CHARLES has not even heard his question,
moves on.

CHARLES POV --

BEETLE JUICE / IRS appears in the windows, and calls down to
CHARLES.

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

Mr. Deetz, I'm reading for you
now.

INT:

Sitting at a long make-up table are LYDIA and a very upper-class
matronly WOMAN. Expressionlessly, the MATRON watches LYDIA as
she revamps her DEATH ROCKER make-up, primping for DANNY DEATH.

MATRON

What color is that, dear?

LYDIA

It's called Agent Orange.

MATRON

Mind if I try it?

LYDIA passes it over.

MATRON

Is it true about the ghosts,
or is Lydia having on with
us again?

LYDIA

Well, I can't see them.
But my sister can. They're
supposed to come down at
midnight and move ashtrays
or something.

INT:

CHARLES is standing at the opened door of his study. BEETLE

JUICE / IRS is standing just inside the room, as if barring the entrance.

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

Well, it looks like I'm going to be working on this one through the night.

CHARLES

Oh God.

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

But I thought I'd give you a progress report. I found a \$58,000 discrepancy between your bank deposits and your reported income, and so far I've come across approximately \$160,000 in unallowable deductions. I telephoned my superior, and we've decided to widen the audit to include the previous three years.

CHARLES is speechless with horror.

BEETLE JUICE / IRS

And Mr. Deetz, this is what I think of your Schedule W.

He sends a PILE-DRIVING FIST into CHARLES's stomach, doubling him over, then slams the door in CHARLES's face.

CHARLES

Oh God...

Still doubled over, with the Long Island teas churning ominously in his bellow, CHARLES lurches down the hallway.

At that moment, EVELYN comes up the stairs, with a very distinguished looking elderly gentleman.

EVELYN

Oh here you are, Charles. I'd like you to meet the editor-in-chief of Ballantine Books. He's very interested in your ghosts.

CHARLES makes a feeble attempt to straighten up. It is too much for his stomach.

By the WRETCHING SOUNDS and shocked expression on the publisher's face, it is obvious that CHARLES has just thrown up on the publisher.

INT:

LYDIA is just about finished with her make-up when CHARLES staggers in, looking like a man who's just lost both his lunch and his meal-ticket. From the way LYDIA's nose crinkles, it's obvious he smells like five pitchers of half-digested Long Island iced teas.

LYDIA

Eeeeeoooouuu. Gross.

She gets up and goes out.

INT:

LYDIA exits the bathroom just as BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH pulls the door of CHARLES's study shut behind him.

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH

I've been looking for you.

LYDIA

You have to meet my family.

I've told them all about you.

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH

There's plenty of time for that later.

He pulls LYDIA into her own bedroom and slams the door.

INT:

DELIA and EVELYN are having words.

EVELYN

I don't know if I can pull this one out of the fire. Why did you let Charles start drinking like that?

DELIA

The reason he started drinking today is that he was worried about the IRS man upstairs. And the reason he's worried about him is because of those tax scams you're always talking him into.

EVELYN

Those tax shelters allowed him to afford this white elephant of a house you talked him into buying.

DELIA

It was our idea to move
to Connecticut. And we love
living here, and we love
this house. And we both
love being a hundred miles
away from you.

We pull back to see a group of about twenty guests, with glasses and plates of food, standing in a circle around the two women, not at all trying to disguise their interest and enjoyment in the fight.

OTHO breaks through the circle of spectators, and speaks to DELIA.

OTHO

Everyone is enjoying this
immeasurably, Delia, but
you've only got half an hour
to get ready for your ghosts.
I think you'd better make an
announcement.

EVELYN

Your friends in the attic
better make this good, or
no one will ever accept one
of your invitations again.

DELIA

Eat my shorts, Evelyn.

OTHO and DELIA go off in close conference.

INT:

LYDIA is showing BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH the photographs on her wall. They include the photographs of the ghosts, and also other macabre subjects. As they move around the room, BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH keeps touching LYDIA knowingly, and despite the sophistication of LYDIA's photographs, she is a very nervous sixteen-year-old girl.

LYDIA points out a photograph of a mummified corpse.

LYDIA

I took this series in the
catacombs in Guanajuato.
Delia wouldn't even go
inside, but I'm not afraid
of stuff like that.

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH leans over and gives her a kiss on her

neck. At the same time, he's pushing her down against her desk.

BEEBLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH

What are you afraid of?

Just as she's about to be pushed all the way back, LYDIA suddenly wriggles out of his grasp, and grabs a large photograph album.

LYDIA

And these are great, too.

INT:

ADAM, CATHY, and BARBARA have been playing cards. ADAM is now putting up the decks.

CATHY

I really do have to go downstairs now.

BARBARA

Stay just a little longer.

CATHY

I can't. Anyway, you have to get ready to get down, too. What are you going to do for the guests?

ADAM

(Vaguely) Ah, we thought we'd move some furniture. Knock off people's hats. You know, that kind of thing.

CATHY

That sounds great. We were so lucky to move into this house.

She leaves. ADAM and BARBARA are not very happy.

ADAM

What do you think Beetle Juice has in mind?

BARBARA

I don't know, but he promised not to hurt Cathy. He's just going to scare them enough to drive them out.

ADAM and BARBARA look at each other. Both come to the same conclusion.

BARBARA (cont)

That means Cathy will go
too. (Beat) Are you
thinking what I'm thinking?

ADAM

You know I am. It's been
like having a child of our
own. I think we better find
Beetle Juice.

BARBARA

To keep Cathy, I would
even put up with Delia
Deetz.

ADAM

I think it'll be fine.
All we have to do is tell
him we've changed our minds,
and that he should go back
wherever it was he came
from.

A that moment, though the windows are closed, a CHILL WIND begins
to blow though the attic.

BARBARA and ADAM look at one another with misgiving. Behind
them, the pages of the manual begin to flutter wildly.

INT:

The album of photographs lies open on the bed, displaying some
grotesque image.

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH has LYDIA in a firm embrace and is
dancing her towards the bed. LYDIA doesn't want to go.
She hears the NOISE OF THE WIND in the attic above.

LYDIA

What's that noise?

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH

It's just the wind.

LYDIA

We have to go downstairs
now. It's almost time for
the ghosts.

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH

But I have a little friend
I want you to meet first.

LYDIA is shocked.

LYDIA

Danny!

BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH releases LYDIA and steps back. He opens his fur coat, smiling. His shirt buttons pop, one by one. Through this opening wiggles a small, very much deformed version of BEETLE JUICE / DANNY DEATH himself, attached at the trunk to Danny's chest. This parasitic monstrosity flops backwards, and hanging upside down, leers and grabs for LYDIA. Screaming, LYDIA stumbles for the door.

EXT:

It's Before the Storm in the model town. The mechanical clouds swing crazily across the sky. One of them comes loose and crashes (in a way that clouds don't usually crash) into the city hall. The wind blows mighty and whistling through the town. BARBARA and ADAM are tied to a park bench. They are wrestling uselessly with their bonds.

ADAM

I know he's going to
do something awful.

BARBARA

We've got to get loose
and find a way to stop
him.

ADAM

I wish we'd never dug
up that grave.

Suddenly, they hear the CLICK OF NUMEROUS HIGH HEELS on pavement, and in a moment they are surrounded by Horned Whores of BEETLE JUICE's brothel. The Whores are wearing cloth coats drawn against the wind, and they're carrying small cardboard suitcases. They surround the park bench, and stare at ADAM and BARBARA.

EXT:

The wind, blowing hard against the material of the tent, has driven the guests inside the house. Inside, the employees of the catering service are clearing up.

CATHY is walking among the plundered tables with a small plate. She speaks to one of the workers.

CATHY

What kind of food do
squirrels like to eat?

EXT:

The HALF DOZEN WHORES have released ADAM and BARBARA. ADAM and BARBARA are massaging their wrists.

WHORE #1

We're getting out of here,
and you better come with us.
This whole town's gonna
blow. At midnight.

BARBARA

Beetle Juice. I knew it.

ADAM

What do you mean, this town
is going to blow?

WHORE #2

Beetle Juice is gonna destroy
your house, and everything and
everybody that's in it -- and
that includes Hicksville here.

ADAM

How do you know this?

WHORE #3

That's what he always does.
He's cute, but he's the most
malevolent spirit in the
universe.

BARBARA

But he came here to help
us. We got him through the
manual.

The WHORES roll their eyes at BARBARA and ADAM's naive.

WHORE #4

He tricks you. You were
supposed to get Swallowtail.

A HONKING HORN sounds, and a delapidated Greyhound bus pulls up
in front of the park.

WHORE #1

That's our bus. Are you
guys coming or not?

ADAM and BARBARA look at one another.

ADAM

No. We have to stay and pro-
tect that family downstairs.

The WHORES pile onto the bus. They lean out of the windows and
wave to ADAM and BARBARA.

WHORES

Good-bye. Good luck.
etc.

The bus takes in a cloud of diesel fumes, turns a corner, and is lost to sight.

ADAM

I don't know how we're
going to fight him.
We don't even know to get
out of the model.

BARBARA thinks a moment, then looks up the hill to their house.

BARBARA

I think I know. Come
on.

She gets up and walks briskly across the grass, in the direction of their home.

INT:

It looks wrecked. The ARTIST from earlier staggers into the kitchen, with another victim in tow. The victim is drunk, and knocks over a glass on the counter. It smashes it on the floor. The ARTIST heads for the laundry room, but when she tries to open the door, it's slammed shut again, and from inside comes CHARLES's voice.

CHARLES (o.s.)

It's occupied.

INT:

Family conference. DELIA, CHARLES, OTHO, and LYDIA. DELIA is comforting a weeping LYDIA.

LYDIA

It was horrible. Oh God,
it was the worst thing
I've ever seen in my life.

CHARLES

IRS agents do not punch
people in the stomach. I
just know it.

OTHO

Delia, I looked in the closet
upstairs. It's empty, but
there was a gray wig and a
flowered dress on the floor.

DELIA

But I know that woman
was dead.

The family simultaneously come to the same conclusion.

LYDIA
It's the ghosts.

INT:

CATHY is kneeling on the floor at the side of her bed. Beside her is a plate heaped with fancily-cut raw vegetables. She reaches beneath the bed, and pulls out the box with the squirrel inside.

CATHY

Please be all right.

She opens the lid of the box.

INSIDE THE BOX --

is the SQUIRREL FROM HELL. It is a snarling, foaming beast with BEETLE JUICE's COLD YELLOW EYES.

Before CATHY even has the chance to scream, IT LEAPS.

CUT:

INT:

DELIA

Oh God, you don't they'd hurt Cathy, do you?

LYDIA

But they like her!

CHARLES

She's a little girl.

LYDIA

I'll go look for her.

DELIA

Are you all right?

LYDIA

I'm okay. We have to find Cathy.

LYDIA leaves.

DELIA

(To Otho) How are you on exorcisms?

OTHO

I know a few things we could try. But I'd suggest that you get the guests out of here before midnight.

INT:

Framed in the attic, we see the model town bathed in artificial moonlight. The tiny figures of ADAM and BARBARA are silhouetted as they cross the bridge.

CLOSER --

ADAM and BARBARA race across the bridge, and up the hill that leads them to their house. The wind is blowing in their faces.

ADAM

Even if we get there on
time, we have no idea how
to fight him.

INT:

CU:

CHARLES is herding guests into the living room. DELIA has taken up a space on the stairs.

DELIA

Listen people, I have an
announcement to make.

It's difficult for DELIA to get anyone's attention.

DELIA

LISTEN! I'm sorry, but
Charles and I are going to
have to ask you all to
leave. As quickly as
possible. Believe me, it's
for your own good.

GUEST #1

Delia, this is a very cheap
way to build suspense. Where
are the ghosts?

EXT:

BARBARA and ADAM mount the steps. The house appears completely dark. ADAM peers in one of the windows.

ADAM

It's completely dark inside.
I don't think this is going
to work.

BARBARA

There's nothing else to do.
She pulls open the front door, and they step inside.

INT:

ADAM and BARBARA enter at the back of the crowd of guests, while DELIA continues to try to persuade them all to leave.

DELIA

See, the two ghosts love this house as much as we do, and they'll do anything to drive us out.

Groans from incredulity from the crowd.

DELIA

Somebody might get hurt. Really.

BARBARA

They don't know about Beetle Juice. They think it's us.

SCREAMS from upstairs.

DELIA and CHARLES look up in fear.

CHARLES

That's Lydia.

GUEST #2

This is getting hokier and hokier.

LYDIA, full of terror, appears at the top of the stairs.

LYDIA

Oh God, Delia. Hurry. It's Cathy.

CHARLES #3

Is this cheap or what?

DELIA and CHARLES run upstairs, leaving the grumbling guests.

ADAM

What has he done to Cathy?

NEW ANGLE ON THE CROWD OF GUESTS --

They are parted like the Red Sea as an unseen ADAM and BARBARA push through them in order to get upstairs. For the guests, this is the first ominous indication that something may actually be very wrong.

INT:

CATHY lies on the floor, torn and bloody, as if attacked by an animal several times her own size. The wooden box that held the Squirrel lies in splinters around her. DELIA kneels at CATHY's side, applying first aid. LYDIA runs in with more bandages.

CHARLES

Cathy! Cathy! Wake up.

Speak to us. Tell us what happened.

DELIA

We know what happened.
It was the ghosts.

CATHY opens her eyes a little. She makes a feeble motion of shaking her head no.

Unnoticed by anyone in the room, the bedroom door is pushed open.

CATHY

They're here.

DELIA

We know they're here,
darling. And don't worry.
Otho's going to tell us
how to get rid of them
for good.

INT:

Dark and quiet. The door is pushed slowly open, and OTHO's round fat fearful face appears.

OTHO

Yoo-hoo.

Getting no response, OTHO enters the room. He's brought along a bottle of wine for courage.

He sees the model town in the moonlight, and his curiosity is peaked for a moment.

OTHO

How quaint. An exact
replica of the dullest
town on earth.

He continues his search of the room. Circling the model, he trips on something, leans down, and retrieves the HANDBOOK FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED.

OTHO

Well, this is interesting.
I wish there were moon light
in here.

As if in answer to his wish, the whorehouse in the model town bursts into lurid flame. OTHO stares at it a moment, and then douses the flames with the wine.

INT:

CATHY has been moved to the bed, and looks a little stronger, ADAM and BARBARA stand on the opposite side of the bed from the

DEETZs. (In this scene the DEETZs cannot see or hear ADAM and BARBARA.)

BARBARA

You know we'd never do anything
that would hurt you.

CATHY

I know.

CHARLES

What, honey?

CATHY

I know it wasn't Barbara and
Adam. It was an evil spirit.

ADAM

His name is Beetle Juice.

CATHY

His name is Beetle Juice.
And he's here.

The clock on her mantle begins to chime midnight.

INT:

DELIA'S water clock continues to chime the hour.

GUEST #4

Thank God it's midnight.
Now we can go.

GUEST #5

If Delia has a brain in her
head, she'll stay upstairs.

GUEST #6

It'll be a cold day in hell
before I come back to
Connecticut.

The first guests start for the door. At this moment, the clock stops chiming. BEETLE JUICE slides down the banister. He's wearing a magician's top hat and tails, looking like he last worked the Catskills.

BEETLE JUICE

Pick a card.

He fans the TAROT DECK. No one takes the bait. He turns over the deck. Every one of the cards is DEATH. The GUESTS nearest the door turn away in disgust.

GUEST #7

Christ, this is what we've
been waiting for?

GUEST #7 pulls open the front door.

BEETLE JUICE --

points at the door. It slams shut. GUEST #7, with his hand still on the knob, is hurtled against the door, and slumps unconscious to the floor.

BEETLE JUICE smiles at the crowd.

BEETLE JUICE

Show time.

EXT:

The wind is picking up, blowing the trees, pulling the tent pegs from the ground. The tent whips high into the air. The barn door is slammed shut by the force of the gale.

INT:

TRIXIE and ART CRITIC #2 are making out in the shadow of one of DELIA's monumental sculptures in steel and feathers. The whole barn structure creaks with the force of the wind.

TRIXIE

Hey, it's midnight. I want to see Lydia's ghosts. Let's go inside.

CRITIC #2

Oh, let's stay out here. Delia probably just hired some third-rate magician who's going to --

AN UNNATURAL GROANING OF METAL --

interrupts the critic. He and TRIXIE look around the dimly-lighted barn.

TRIXIE

What was that?

CRITIC #2

The wind.

AN OMINOUS DARK SHADOW --

crosses the faces of TRIXIE and CRITIC #2. They stare at SOMETHING in disbelief.

TRIXIE

Have you got a car? A fast car?

EXT:

TRIXIE and CRITIC #2 bolt from the barn door. The wind outside is even higher than before, nearly knocking them off their feet. We hear that OMINOUS METALLIC CREAK again. Then --

ONE OF DELIA'S STEEL AND FEATHER SCULPTURES

crashes through the barn door, lumbering forward on its sawhorse-like legs.

Another SCULPTURE follows immediately in its wake.

INT:

The crowd is warily watching as BEETLE JUICE performs a series of cheap MAGICIAN's tricks. He produces a bunch of garishly-colored paper flowers from his sleeve, and then pulls a SMALL SINGING CANARY out of his mouth.

The WELL-DRESSED MATRON (from earlier) is manifestly anxious to leave.

MATRON

I really do have to leave.

BEETLE JUICE smiles at her. The CANARY perched on his finger is suddenly transformed into a small, flying dragon.

THE DRAGON leaps at the MATRON, knocking her out of her chair, and claws at her exposed face until it is kicked off by another GUEST.

The DRAGON flies back to BEETLE JUICE, perching on his top hat, and begins to TWITTER.

BEETLE JUICE

You'll leave when I tell
you to.

Behind BEETLE JUICE, we see LYDIA, crouching almost out of sight at the top of the stairs leading the second floor. Her eyes are wide, and after a moment, she silently retreats.

INT:

OTHO, carrying the HANDBOOK, half runs, half rolls down the stairs from the attic. LYDIA flies down the hall from the opposite direction. The two collide at the door of CATHY's room, and do a fat man's dance trying to squeeze through the door.

INT:

LYDIA and OTHO pop through the door together.

OTHO

Party's over, people. There's
a demon loose in this house.

LYDIA

We've got to get out of here.

DELIA

This is my house. I'm not
leaving.

CHARLES is standing at the window. He glances out.

CHARLES

Holy shit...

DELIA

What is it?

CHARLES POV --

DELIA's sculptures are arranged in a circle around the house. They rock back and forth impatiently on their sawhorse legs. The high wind blows their feathers frantically.

BACK TO SCENE --

OTHO

Delia, darling, it's all in here. (Indicates the Handbook). His name is Swallowtail.

CATHY

No, it's Beetle juice.

LYDIA

I don't know what his name is, but he's downstairs right now. And he just turned a canary into a dragon.

DELIA

But what does this Bottle Juice want with us?

CATHY listens a moment to the invisible BARBARA and ADAM.

CATHY

He's going to destroy this house and kill everybody's who in it.

DELIA

Like hell he is. We're gonna fight. We paid cash for this house.

OTHO

I think you've figured out something you can do. But Cathy is going to have to convince her ghosts to help us.

CHARLES

Why should they help us? They've been trying to get rid of us since the day we moved in.

CATHY listens a moment to the invisible ADAM and BARBARA.

CATHY

They'll help. Otho, tell us
what to do.

INT:

The GUESTS are fearful, and some of the women are weeping. BEETLE JUICE is still performing his tricks. He reaches over to a woman, on the verge of hysteria, and from her ear pulls the world's biggest and ugliest caterpillar. He drops it into her drink.

BEETLE JUICE

Hey, this is a party. Why
isn't anybody having fun?
I know. Let's dance.

He looks at the DEETZs sound system. LOUD ROCK MUSIC comes on instantly.

For a moment, everyone is still.

BEETLE JUICE

Dance, I said.

In the far corner of the room, two guests begin a spasmodic, frantic dancing. This continues in a wave across the room, until all the guests are participating in this physical insanity -- crashing off one another, smashing against the walls, some of them flying up to the ceiling and hitting their heads, nose-diving along the carpets. BEETLE JUICE, with a wicked laugh and cackle, dances amongst them all.

On the stairway appear, in this order, LYDIA, DELIA, CHARLES carrying CATHY, and OTHO bringing up the rear.

BEETLE JUICE looks up at them. A wicked smile crosses his face.

BEETLE JUICE

Party's over.

The MUSIC stops. The dancers collapse like puppets whose strings have been severed.

BEETLE JUICE

Everybody leave.

The windows all shoot up in their frames, smashing frames and glass.

The doors of the house fly open with crashes.

EXT:

One beat, and then from every door and open window, frantic GUESTS pour out of the house.

They scatter in all directions in the yard, and chased by DELIA's lumbering sculptures, they race towards their cars.

It is pandemonium.

INT:

A deadly silence seems to have overtaken the house.
BEETLE JUICE stands in the middle of the empty living room.

BEETLE JUICE

I tell you, you guys sure
know how to throw a party.

The DEETZs just look at him.

BEETLE JUICE

Come closer. I won't bite.

CHARLES looks at OTHO. OTHO gives him the go-ahead. CHARLES cautiously comes closer, and puts CATHY in a chair immediately in front of, and facing BEETLE JUICE.

CHARLES

You don't have to do this.

CATHY

I do have to. This house
belongs to us. All of us.

CHARLES retreats. BEETLE JUICE grins. He sprouts an enormous pair of LEATHER WINGS. His face alters -- and become a truly malicious mirror of his twisted soul.

BEETLE JUICE

Who are you, little girl?
And what do you have to
say to me?

CATHY doesn't answer.

BEETLE JUICE

Where are your friends?
Hiding out in the attic, I
suppose. Don't worry about
them. Once I've done with
you, I've got a few surprises
in store for our ghosts.

CATHY

As sudden thunder / Pierces night;
As magic wonder / Mad affright
Rives asunder / Men's delight:
Our ghost, our corpse, and we
Rise to be.

CATHY holds out her left hand.

BARBARA suddenly materializes, holding CATHY's hand.

DELIA, CHARLES, OTHO, and LYDIA's eyes widen to the fullest possible extent.

OTHO

This is it, Delia.

OTHO pushes DELIA forward, and BARBARA reaches out her hand. After a tiny moment's hesitation, DELIA takes it. She shudders.

CATHY

As flies the lizard / Serpent fell;
As goblin vizard / At the spell
Of pale wizard / Sinks to hell;
The buried, dead, and slain
Rise again.

CATHY holds out her right hand. ADAM materializes, holding it. CHARLES is already there, and grasps ADAM's hand, after giving him a quick, appraising glance in the face. Immediately OTHO and LYDIA complete the circle around BEETLE JUICE.

BEETLE JUICE

Clever people. Who's been
reading the manual? You,
fat boy? I could make you
rich and thin.

OTHO quivers a moment with hesitation, then he stands up staunchly.

OTHO

Delia, I'd better be in
your will.

BEETLE JUICE flaps his wings, and a wind begins to blow inside the house, in a clockwise direction. His seven opponents have to strain to keep the circle together.

EXT:

All the guests have fled. The sculptures lie in ruin. The wind blows ever harder, in a counter-clockwise direction, around the house.

INT:

The wind is even stronger inside the room. The wind is breaking up the furniture, and spinning around crazily and dangerously. But the circle remains as if at the eye of a hurricane.

BEETLE JUICE, in an uncustomary moment of panic, throws himself at the perimeter of the circle, but is hurled back by a bolt of colored electricity. He's burned.

BEETLE JUICE

I know more tricks than you.
Here, girlie, want to see
what your friends really
look like?

He grins.

ADAM and BARBARA shudder in pain, and at once begin to transform into mouldering corpses. Their clothing rots, their skin discolors and peels, mould encrusts their features.

At the same time, the lighting in the center of the circle continues, and BEETLE JUICE does a spastic dance trying to avoid the charges. He is burned repeatedly.

DELIA and CHARLES, finding that they are holding hands with corpses, pull away repulsed and horrified.

CATHY

Don't break the circle.

CHARLES and DELIA screw up their courage, and maintain their grips on the corpses' hands.

The lightning intensifies inside the circle. Outside the circle, the wind is like a hurricane, and the rest of the living room is only a blur.

CATHY, growing weak, starts to faint.

BARBARA CORPSE

(Groaning) Nowwwwww .

Having said this, BARBARA's jaw falls off.

CATHY

Today is a thought
A fear is tomorrow
And yesterday is our sin
And our sorrow
And life is a death.
Dear ghosts, so to die
Is to live --
And like is a worthless lie,
Then we weep for ourselves,
and wish you goodbye.

ADAM and BARBARA's corpses turn a last, lingering glance on CATHY.

BEETLE JUICE screams in frustration and pain. One last terrific bolt of colored lightning envelops him, and causes his wings to burst into lurid flame. He leaps high into the air, smashing through the ceiling.

ON THE SECOND FLOOR --

BEETLE JUICE, howling, crashes through the floor, and then through the ceiling here as well.

IN THE ATTIC --

he crashes through the attic floor, and then out through the roof.

EXT:

BEETLE JUICE is A BALL OF FIRE at the top of the whirlwind surrounding the house. He explodes like a massive display of fireworks.

Almost instantly, the wind calms down.

INT:

The downstairs walls of the house have been completely obliterated, leaving only the frame. There is nothing whatever left of the furnishings. Moonlight shines down through the vertical holes BEETLE JUICE blasted through the house.

CHARLES

Is everybody all right?

Cathy?

CATHY has collapsed between two small piles of dust and bones and scraps of cloth, all that is left of ADAM and BARBARA. DELIA raises a limp CATHY, and after a tense moment, CATHY's eyes struggle open.

OTHO

There are doors man is not meant to open. There are places man is not meant to tread. I guess Connecticut is one of them.

LYDIA

They gave up their lives to save us and the house.

DELIA

They were already dead.
(Beat) But you're right, they did sacrifice themselves.

CATHY

They can't be dead!

She runs for the stairs.

OTHO is standing beneath the holes in the ceiling, looking up at the moon.

OTHO

We could think about a skylight.

But the DEETZs have already started up the stairs, after CATHY.

INT:

In shadows, CATHY stands over the model. Some of it survives, some it was sheered off in BEETLE JUICE's ascension.

LYDIA, CHARLES, and DELIA come silently into the room, and stand together, looking at the miniature version of their own home.

CHARLES

We have two choices.
We can stay and try to
put this house together
again. Or we can move
back to New York.

SLOW FADE OUT

SLOW FADE IN:

EXT:

We hear a CHEERLEADER's voice:

LYDIA

Two Four Six Eight
Winter River's Really Great

LYDIA DEETZ is on the front lawn of the house -- now rempaired, but with a huge skylight in the middle of the roof. LYDIA is wearing the WINTER RIVER BADGERS cheerleader uniform, and carries two pompoms. But she still bears remnants of her DEATH ROCKER make-up, and wears her finger bone necklace.

In the BACK YARD of the house, CHARLES DEETZ is tending the replanted orchard. At the same time, he is dictating the fifth in a series of occult novels, into a Walkman-like dictaphone.

CHARLES

Aghast, I turned to look into
his face. His features had
begun to melt. He was turning
into a corpse before my stunned
but courageous eyes...

INT:

Repaired, and now decorated by someone with much more taste than OTHO. But the water clock, in an improved and expanded version, still holds forth.

CATHY's on her way upstairs carrying a glass of iced tea.

INT:

The 80's equivalent of BARBARA's sewing room. DELIA is at a work bench, hard at work on some extremely small object, using a magnifying glass, and a mini-acetylene torch.

CATHY comes in with the iced tea.

CATHY

You wanted lemon in your

tea, didn't you?

DELIA

Yes. Thank you dear.

Voila. It's done. You
can take it upstairs.

CATHY

(A little uncertainly)

Great.

INT:

The model town is in the process of being repaired. It is
apparent that this is now CATHY's bedroom.

CATHY takes the small object that DELIA gave her, and takes it
over to the model. With a pair of jewelry pliers she very
carefully sets it on the front porch of the MAITLAND's home.

We get a look at it now, and it's a miniature version of DELIA's
water clock.

EXT:

ADAM and BARBARA come out of the front door, and stare at the
water clock. They look up at CATHY.

CATHY

Mom made it for you.

BARBARA starts to say something, but ADAM interrupts her.

ADAM

Tell Delia thank you. What
a wonderful surprise.

CATHY

She wants to know if you'll
need any help placing it.

BARBARA

Tell her we know just what
to do with it.

ADAM and BARBARA go inside the house.

INT:

It's just like ADAM and BARBARA's house was in the first scene.

ADAM

I know it's just a model
house, and I know we're
ghosts, and we're never
going anywhere else for a
hundred and thirty-two
years -- but I still think

it's heaven.

He closes the door, and after a moment, there is an ominous vibration. The WATER CLOCK smashes through the window.

BARBARA

Well, it'll have to do until something better comes along.

END