

HAUNTED

Written by
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THE INTRO FOR "HAUNTED" PLAYS, INTRODUCING OUR CHARACTERS IN STYLE:

Caleb (Master Detective), John (Apprentice), Becca (Empathic), Austin (Tech-tective), Sarah (Research), Kai (Intern). The "HAUNTED" logo appears with the episode location: MONSTARO MURDER ESTATE. A Victorian house spins onto screen.

CALEB (V.O.)

The Monstaro Murder Estate... 1929 was set to be the best year for the Monstaro family. Until.. Disaster.

Stock video montage of the 1929 Stock Market crash

CALEB (V.O.)

On October 29th, 1929, two days before Halloween, Robert Monstaro returned to his family home in Connecticut after a business trip to New York City. Depressed and unsure of what the future held for him and his family, he entered his home and was greeted by his wife, Dorothy and their two children who heard the news over the radio.

Montage of period photos: Robert, Dorothy, and children.

CALEB (V.O.)

While initially supportive, Dorothy had grown quite accustomed to the life of luxury that Robert provided. Having grown up on a corn farm in Nebraska, she thought she hit the big time when a wealthy stock-mogul swept her off her feet after a family trip to New York City just 8 years earlier and it was not something she was going to surrender willingly...

A family picture: Camera zooms on Dorothy's face, flashes, inverts color.

INT. VICTORIAN HOUSE - NIGHT

We see CALEB walking backwards through the house talking to the camera. He's a modern, handsome man, wearing a button down shirt and jeans, giving off a punchable preppy vibe.

CALEB

What follows is the Haunted team's best guesstimate of the timeline of events.

Caleb walks backwards into the dining room.

CALEB (CONT'D)

5PM...

CUT TO:

Flashback re-enactments of Caleb's voiceovers start.

CALEB (V.O.)

The Monstaro family sits down for their normal Monday night dinner.. But things quickly become heated between Dorothy and Robert as Robert suggests moving the family to Nebraska to be closer to Dorothy's original homestead.

Flashback re-enactment of the family room.

CALEB (V.O.)

9PM, Robert is passed out on the family room's armchair after his evening scotch, with that day's newspaper as a blanket. Dorothy attempts to wake her husband but an advertisement for Life Insurance catches her attention. A large sum of \$100,000. Which when adjusted for inflation, was just shy of \$2,000,000.

SUPER: \$100,000 is shown with the year 2025 under it. Both numbers adjust and change to reflect \$1,894,596 and 1929.

CALEB (V.O.)

Above the mantle in the family room, Dorothy grabs an old hunting axe and... collects the payment.

In the reenactment, Dorothy grabs the axe, and coldly looks at the rusty edge. She runs her thumb over the blade, nicking herself. She walks over to Robert sleeping in the chair and in one large swing, drives the axe into his skull. The axe splits directly down head, stopping at his mouth. As she struggles to pull the axe free from Robert's skull, the handle breaks. She drops the handle and walks away from him.

CUT TO:

INT. VICTORIAN HOUSE - NIGHT

We are back following Caleb walking backwards through the home.

CALEB

After leaving her Husband to
"sleep" off his drink in the chair,
Dorothy quietly makes her way up
the stairs and retires to the
master bedroom.

Loud footsteps can be heard. Caleb over-reacts.

CALEB (CONT'D)

What was that?!? Guys hurry! It
came from this way!

Caleb runs past the camera and rushes towards the staircase

CALEB (CONT'D)

You guys heard that right?!

Caleb looks at his team: JOHN (muscular himbo), AUSTIN (IT
millennial, operating camera), BECCA (Cali-festival flower
child), and SARAH (a grown-up half-goth).

JOHN

Man that was wild! I picked up a
cold-spot right before it happened.

John gestures to his temperature monitor.

BECCA

When you mentioned the life
insurance policy I was overwhelmed
with emotions of fear and rage..
something.. or someone.. doesn't
want us here..

AUSTIN (O.S.)

I totally got something on the EVP!
Here! Listen to this!!

Austin, who is operating the camera, starts an EVP playback.
A woman's voice can be heard saying "GET OUT!". Everyone but
Sarah over-reacts.

CALEB

That's evidence! That's solid
evidence!

Sarah is just standing around unfazed by everything
happening.

CALEB (CONT'D)

We've got to get upstairs! Quick!

As the team runs upstairs, KAI (youngest, Gen Z hipster) comes down the stairs.

KAI

Hey guys can we do that again I think I can make the steps even louder...

Caleb looks at the camera, annoyed.

CALEB

CUT! CUT!!!

The style of shooting changes. We are no longer watching an episode of Haunted and are now looking at the team.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Really Kai? Really?! You couldn't hear us reacting down here? The steps were just a cue we were going to add more oomph in post!

KAI

Oh sorry Boss I was just trying to help and make it more authentic...

Caleb ignores Kai's reasoning and starts shouting directions at other members of the team.

CALEB

Austin when I move TOWARDS the camera, you're supposed to keep me in frame the entire time, people watch this show for me!

Austin looks depressed as he's berated

CALEB (CONT'D)

AND Becca! Really sell that Something or some ONE, put the emphasis on the ONE, if you can't do it I'll just get someone else off of the internet who can ACT. JESUS!

Becca is seen holding back tears.

JOHN

Hey man calm down I thought she did a great job.

CALEB

Oh don't defend your girlfriend
just so you can get something from
her later. This is a work trip not
a little romantic getaway for you
two.

John's anger washes over his face, Becca rubs his arm to
comfort and calm him.

BEAT

Sarah is relieved that she wasn't targeted this time. Caleb
starts moving through the house.

CALEB

Ok, reset the scene. Where was I?
Oh yeah, this GOD AWFUL life
insurance trope. Really Sarah?
That's the best story you could
come up with? You couldn't find us
a real murder house?

Sarah snaps back.

SARAH

Every time I bring up a house where
something real happened you
immediately shoot it down because
it's "Too scary" or "Too boring" or
"Insurance won't cover it" or-

Caleb cuts off Sarah

CALEB

Yeah yeah yeah whatever, you're
lucky we're already filming this
otherwise I'd have some notes to
make this REALLY scary...

SARAH

Oh you want REALLY scary? What
evidence are we going to fake NEXT
time? Native American Burial site
in the basement? Blood dripping
from the walls? Oh maybe we can put
Kai in a sheet with holes cut out
and he can run around like a Scooby-
doo episode!

KAI

Hey yeah I think I saw some sheets
upstairs that would work-

Caleb ignores Kai talking again.

CALEB

Sarah, get the fuck out of here and go wait outside. Did you know every time you're on-screen in an episode the viewership drops? I've got the analytics if you don't believe me.

SARAH

Oh since when did you learn how to check the analytics? Or did you just read anal and clicked it accidentally? Fuck you. I'll be in the van, good luck with this bullshit episode.

Sarah storms out of the house and slams the door behind her. Caleb tries to rally the rest of the team.

CALEB

Alright guys, back to one. We don't need her! She did her part, if she wants to be a wet blanket about this she can freeze her ass off outside all night for all I care.

EXT. VICTORIAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Sarah exits, pulls out her phone, and wipes away a tear.

EMAIL: Subject Line: Hey Haunted team! I've got the perfect house for you to check out!

Sarah rolls her eyes, she gets an email like this every hour, but opens it anyways. The email contains pictures of a house, a backstory of cabinets opening on their own, chairs stacking, lights flickering, and a family who moved out after one night. The email body says the owner is looking to make it a local attraction and wants proof the house is Haunted, offering to pay for their seal of approval. Sarah has a lightbulb moment. She types "We'll be there," hovers over send, then turns her head to the door as yelling comes from inside.

CALEB (O.S.)

For fuck's sake, Kai! Maybe don't fall trying to run up the stairs. Are you an idiot? Do you not know how FEET work?

BEAT

SARAH

You want scary? You got it,
asshole.

Sarah looks back at her phone, hits send, and walks to the production van parked in front of the house. Opening the door she climbs in, wraps herself in a sleeping bag, and pulls up a video on her phone. It's behind-the-scenes footage of HAUNTED featuring an unknown young man(BOBBY).

SARAH (CONT'D)

Goodnight, Bobby. I miss you.

Sarah closes her eyes and dozes off as the video plays.

EXT. VICTORIAN HOUSE - DAY

Austin walks backward from the front door, camera on Caleb as he exits.

CALEB

And so... after spending a night in the Monstaro Murder Estate, we can officially declare it... HAUNTED! What was your favorite piece of evidence? Comment down below to let us know! Have a place for us to investigate? Ghost-write us an email and maybe you'll see us in your town soon! Stay vigilant, haunters!

Caleb gives an awkward thumbs up and smile

AUSTIN

...and we're clear!

CALEB

Christ, somebody get me a fucking latte.

Kai runs out, wearing a bedsheet with holes.

KAI

Hey so I was thinking if we had time for one more scene to cut in we could do the...

Caleb rips the sheet off of Kai.

CALEB

What the fuck is this? You know we AirBNB'd this place right? You can't just cut holes in other people's linens. First night on the job and you're already costing me money. Go to the store right now and replace this! And bring me a latte!

KAI

Oh.. Right. Sorry Boss, I'll be right back.

Kai walks to the van, gets in, drives away. John and Becca exit the house. Becca gives John a kiss and briskly walks towards another vehicle.

JOHN

Hey man, we need to talk.

Caleb spins his head around to meet eyes with John.

CALEB

Fine, meet me in the tent.

INT. VAN - DAY

Kai is seen driving the van talking to himself.

KAI

Stupid. Stupid. God I'm so stupid. I can't believe I did that to the sheets. Wait, what kind of latte does he want? Do I call? Oh god...

Sarah emerges from the back of the van. Kai doesn't notice.

SARAH

He doesn't actually like lattes; he wants an americano with sugar and steamed milk. He's just an idiot so I told him that's what a latte is.

Kai is startled and swerves the van.

KAI

JESUS! Where did you come from? Did you sleep in here last night?!

SARAH

Uhh. Yeah. It's not a big deal. I prefer it.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

Caleb's ego makes wherever we stay feel smaller than it is and the van feels more like home.

Kai assesses, and carefully crafts his next sentence.

KAI

...You've been on the team for awhile right? I used to watch you guys in high school, and I remember you being a lot more hands-on with this stuff.

SARAH

Well.. yeah. It used to be fun. It used to be real haunts, real places, real people. Then viewership stopped growing and our great overlord freaked out and decided to fake a knocking on an episode. Then that went viral and started this whole new era.

KAI

That was back when Bobby was on the team right? I fell off watching a few years ago, but I remember him and Caleb being basically brothers. Where is that guy? Was he secretly an asshole too?

Sarah smirks, thinking of Bobby.

SARAH

Oh no, Bobby? Sweetest guy on the planet. We started this whole thing in College together. Caleb was the "brains", set up the channel, got his Dad to loan us money for the equipment. But Bobby, he didn't do this for the views or the money, he just loved it...

Sarah's smirk grows wider.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I remember one-time I felt sick on a case, got the spins, started sweating, and he just sat with me until I could see straight and then he demanded he carry me to the van... This is actually his van. Well, was his van.

Sarah's smirk turns sad.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Then we did a haunt and things kind of went sideways, Bobby protected me, Caleb ran, and I think he's just been running ever since.

KAI

Protected you? From what?

SARAH

Spirit-box session gone wrong. Caleb thought it'd be fun to recite some ancient rituals he found on Google to egg a ghost for the views and...

Sarah points at a stop sign out the windshield.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Stop sign.

Distracted, Kai slams the brakes to avoid the stop sign.

KAI

No way. That radio signal gimmick? It's just static and TOYOTATHON commercials. I know this was my first job with you guys but I saw all the tricks. You're just trying to scare me, I'm not a kid watching the show anymore.

Kai pulls through, continues driving.

SARAH

What's wrong? Don't like a little bit of static?

Sarah fidgets with the radio, causing static and bleed.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I think I heard something!

Kai looks panicked.

SARAH (CONT'D)

(Caleb impression)

"Kai make sure to match the thread count on the sheets you idiot"

KAI

Hey! That's not funny!

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