

BEYOND THE DARKNESS

By Tim A. Pullen

Cast in order of appearance 6

Todd Daniels: Thirty-four year old host of a ghost hunting television show. A tragic childhood has left him obsessed with finding proof of an after life.

Layla Grentage: Thirty year old camera woman. She wants a paycheck, and to be left alone. She has a crush on Brad that she will never-ever admit to.

Wendy Palkovich: A large “Medium” Ageless- she has a horrible Russian, Caribbean or Romanian accent (or a blend) I recommend a man in drag in a fat suit-or at least fat pants. This Character should be larger than life, in every possible way.

Brad Crane: Thirty-three year old co-host and friend to Todd. He was once interested in Todd's search, but not anymore. He has a constant desire to understand everything, and prove he does.

Agent Melanie Thompson: Thirty year old rookie FBI agent sent to investigate the string of deaths recently associated with this TV show. She also happens to be a fan of the show.

Jack Castlebay: Thirty-eight year old nationally acclaimed Psychic guru. He doesn't really know what he's doing. He happens to be the owner of the saloon, about to renovate. Although it is not directly mentioned in the script he is homosexual. (His character appears in another play and I like consistency.)

*This play is written with intention of multimedia production, mainly to accentuate the fact that the play is about a television show, however there's an effect at the end that I like. If budget or artistic desire does not comply- I have no problem with the director getting creative with it, and altering the script as needed.

Act One

Saturday, May 15th 2010

(Todd is standing in front of a bar in an old west saloon. Layla Grentage is taping him for the Ghost Hunter TV show called Beyond the Darkness. Beside Layla there is a video audio set up that includes a television screen, that the characters interact with as the monitor and is used to show segments of the “show” to the audience. The action starts off with the stage completely dark. The TV screen comes on showing the image of Todd standing in front of the bar of the saloon in night vision. The bar is set by the front door, another door leads to a back hall, and a thin door leads to a broom closet. Above the bar is a landing that leads to three visible doors, the stairs up to that landing can be placed on either side of the bar or both. At least two tables are scattered in front of the bar, one of them a trick table. Above the dining area and directly above the trick table hangs a large chandelier that appears to be heavy. The rest of the set is based on your taste and budget. This bar is a nineteen fifties recreation of an eighteen eighties saloon.)

Todd: Are you afraid of the dark? Darkness is nothing more than absence of light. It's what we don't see that we fear; the vast unknown. Beyond light, beyond death, beyond the darkness... (Title sequence for the show Beyond the Darkness and music can be inserted here. As the sequence ends the lights come up on stage and the monitor either goes off or shows the live version of what Todd is saying in front of the camera) In this weeks episode we explore a two hundred year old saloon in a small mining town and attempt to discover what exactly lies beyond the stories, beyond the legends, and beyond the darkness.

(Title music plays again then fades. Layla turns the monitor off, if it's still on. Brad is setting up camera equipment. Wendy is sitting in a comfy spot eating something)

Layla: That'll work.

Todd: Was that okay? I didn't sound too creepy did I?

Wendy: It was a bit melon-dramatic.

Brad: It was fine.

Todd: I don't want to look like Vincent Price, this is science.

Layla: You're no Vincent Price.

Wendy: Maybe you could-

Layla: No, he couldn't. I'm not shooting it more than three times. It's good, it's done, we're moving on.

Todd: You really think it was good?

Layla: Enough.

Todd: Now you have me doubting myself, I want us to be seen as earnest scientific investigators.

Layla: Then we have to lose the T-shirts.

Brad: And hats.

Wendy: Dese wooden seats, dey are hard and un comfortable.

Brad: Some of us haven't had time to sit.

Todd: I have a cushion out in the van, I'll be happy to grab it for you.

Layla: Isn't her seat padded enough?

Todd: Layla, please.

Layla: I'm going out for a smoke. (Goes for her cigarettes, but does not walk out yet)

Wendy: Dat reminds me, where is de room of rest?

Brad: How does that remind you?

Todd: Down this hall, third door on the right.

Wendy: I will be in dere, turd door on de right, if anyone requires me (she exits)

Brad: Turd door on the right, appropriate.

Layla: (Turns back into the room, Cigarette still hanging in her lips) When are you going to explain things to Madame Poke-A-Bitch?

Todd: Her name is Palkovich.

Layla: I was stuck in traffic with her for two and a half hours. I know what to call her.

Todd: Don't insult her.

Brad: Todd, she took the words right out of my mouth. We've been very gracious considering-

Layla: She sits around stuffin' her face all night, she won't help us set up or take down, she complains about everything, and that's saying a lot coming from me. Have you ever heard me complain about somebody complaining? No, never - I bitch about everything.

Todd: Is that all?

Brad: I really don't think she can contact any spirits.

Todd: You know mediums aren't easy to come by at the moment; I don't have the luxury of being choosy.

Brad: Are you sure you want to do this?

Todd: Do you have someone better in mind?

Brad: I'm not talking about her- I'm talking about the show. Don't you think it's time we call it quits?

Todd: You are ready to give up, aren't you? Did I miss something? When did we find tangible evidence of life after death?

Brad: The evidence against it mounts up with every-

Todd: I'm talking definite! Un-arguable proof!

Brad: There is no such thing as un-arguable proof! That exists as much as ghosts! People still argue over evolution!

Todd: That may be, but I think we can do better.

Brad: Something's not right with you Todd, I know you. I know you can't be happy.

Todd: With half my crew- half my friends- dead. No, I'm not happy about the situation, but life goes on, and the search for an afterlife. How's that sound? I should use it in the show, life and the search for an afterlife goes on- or maybe continues.

Layla: I'll be outside. (Exits to smoke)

Todd: What do you think? Life and the search for the afterlife, goes on-

Brad: Terrific. Look, the emotional strain is bothering me, and I'm not an emotional person.

Todd: You have a contract.

Brad: Forget the contract I'm not worried about the financial obligations. You know that. I'm still here because you're still here. You're the best friend I've ever had, I'm only continuing with this show because of you, not fear of some damn a contract.

Todd: The show still has a chance; Wendy might work out after all.

Brad: What makes you think that? Aren't our ratings still plummeting? What makes you think she's going to change that?

Todd: She goes into trances, doesn't she?

Brad: That could be mild epilepsy for all we know, and that's all she does! The woman refuses to open her own car door, she won't flip a light switch. Layla and I are doing the work of seven people while she sits around eating until it's time to summon spirits.

Todd: That is technically her only job requirement-

Brad: Todd.

Todd: No one else wants the job.

Brad: If you insist on continuing with the show, we could omit the séance.

Todd: We need the séance, the producers like it. That's what gives us our edge over the other paranormal research shows.

Brad: If you really want to be seen as a scientist-

Todd: There is nothing saying this is un-scientific! She attempts to summon spirits, and we watch the environment for results. The watching for results part is scientific!

Brad: At some point you're going to have to face facts.

Todd: Why don't you face the fact, that Heather is gone, Palkovich is what we have now, let's make it work.

Brad: No one, living or dead likes talking to this woman. I can't understand half of what she's saying through that faked accent of hers. It was a week before I figured out her first name was Wendy not Vendy.

(Layla Re-enters)

Todd: When you can give me another medium I'll fire her, until then she's on the team. I'm not letting this team die!

Layla: Ain't that the problem? The team is dying.

Todd: Poor choice of words. Not many people are willing to work with a-

Brad: Don't say it! Please, I don't want to hear anymore nonsense. There is no such thing.

Todd: Fine! (He heads upstairs) I'll be setting up in room three if you need me, but I'm telling you Brad, there is a curse! You don't want to admit it, because it's entirely your fault!

Brad: What did I just say? There is no such thing as a curse.

Layla: Palkovich is proof, we're cursed.

(Live action freezes, lights on stage dim and the monitor pops on the show an interview with Todd, during the interviews the characters are sitting in a studio with a Beyond the Darkness logo behind them/ if you choose to not use monitors, feel free to get creative.)

(Todd's Interview)

Todd: The trouble started about six months ago, we investigated an Egyptian tomb. It was a two hour special episode for the summer season end. We were warned of a curse, but we thought every thing worked out well. Then a few weeks after we returned, a camera man committed suicide. The week after that, an investigator falls from a church steeple, and after that we lost three of our team with one van accident in the hills of West Virginia. That's why we needed a new medium. Heather was our medium for five years, she died in that crash. The crew hasn't really gotten used to Wendy yet, but I have to believe they will learn to get along.

(Switches to Brad's interview)

Brad: I don't believe in curses, at all. What you've got to take into consideration is the fact that our two month trip in Egypt gave Eddy's girlfriend the time to find a new guy. Eddy was one of our camera crew. I mean no offense, he was a great guy, but he was always a bit unstable. He couldn't take the rejection of being dumped, which sparked his suicide. Then Eddy was a good friend to Goddrey, who was distracted during that church investigation. That's why he mis-stepped and fell off the steeple. And that car crash, everyone attributes to this curse, but that occurred after we had been going for eighteen straight hours between investigating and going to the funerals for the first two. Those winding mountain roads are difficult to maneuver when you're not exhausted. Really, if Heather was a psychic, she would've been riding with me or Todd that night. I probably shouldn't have said that. You can cut that out, right Layla?

Layla: (from behind the camera) Sure.

Brad: Palkovich is just no replacement for Heather. She just doesn't pull her own weight.

Layla: (from behind the camera) Which happens to be a lot.

(Monitor goes off, and lights come up as the live action resumes)

Layla: I just don't like that woman.

Brad: Is there anyone you do like?

Layla: I like people!

Brad: Really?

Layla: Not anyone you know, but yeah, some people. Do you know where Palkovich wants to do her thing?

Brad: She didn't say.

Layla: Good, she's doing it here. Set her up.

Brad: She might not feel it for this table, if you recall last week-

Layla: If she doesn't feel it she doesn't have to be in my shot, I'm taping this table. She can go into convulsions where ever she wants.

Brad: Very well.

Layla: I don't think he should've hired her.

Brad: I agree with you.

(Agent Melanie Thompson enters the front door; she is dressed with dark glasses, a jacket, white shirt and slacks)

Mel: Excuse me; I hate to interrupt-

Layla: Then don't.

Brad: Hello, please don't pay attention to her; she's a reformed axe murderer. (He smiles silently admiring Melanie) FBI or IRS?

Mel: FBI, what gave me away?

Brad: No woman as beautiful as you would dress like that unless the job required it.

Layla: Why are you telling cops I'm an axe murderer?

Brad: I was teasing. I hope.

Mel: It's all right, I've seen you're record, No axes were involved. Miss Grentage, I presume?

Layla: How'd you know who I was? You people tailing me for some reason?

Mel: Layla Grentage is the only surviving camera woman for the television show Beyond the Darkness. You are a woman, and you are holding a camera. Since I've never seen you on the show I assumed you were behind the lens.

Brad: That's beyond the lens.

Mel: Very clever.

Brad: Don't tell Todd, he'll use it in the show.

Mel: You're Brad Crane, television's famous ghost hunter.

Brad: No, not any more.

Mel: No?

Brad: I'm giving up on ghost hunting. I just found an angel.

Mel: I- wow- I don't know how respond to that one.

Layla: Puking comes to mind.

Brad: Since you didn't giggle, I know you must have a brain that matches the beauty.

Layla: So you're a fed? What do you want with us?

Mel: (Flashes badge) Agent Melanie Thompson. I need to speak with-

Layla: Quit drooling on the FBI agent. I'm sure it's a federal offense.

Brad: I wasn't drooling, you interrupted Agent Melanie Thompson. Please, go on.

Mel: I actually need to speak with everyone, preferably at one time. I don't like repeating myself.

Brad: Understandable.

Mel: Is Mr. Daniels nearby?

Brad: I'll get him. (He exits upstairs, to fetch Todd, his eyes don't leave Mel, and his smile doesn't fade)

Mel: And anyone else, camera crew, sound crew, any other investigators.

Layla: I am the camera, lights, and sound crew, wouldn't know it with my paycheck. Wendy Palkovich is our new medium, she doesn't really do anything, should I get her?

Mel: Yes, please.

Layla: Yo! Palkovich! Get out here!

(Todd and Brad re-enter)

Todd: She's in the restroom. What's going on? What's happened officer?

Mel: It's Agent, Agent Thompson. Please call me Melanie. It's nice to meet you, I am a very big fan of the show.

Todd: It's always nice to meet a fan, but we are trying to set up for an investigation.

Mel: I'll be glad to explain why I'm here once the crew is gathered.

Layla: Then she can leave. Palkovich! Ice cream truck just broke down outside! Hurry it's melting!

(Palkovich runs into the room)

(An eerie voice is heard from above: Help Me!)

Wendy: I'm here! I'm here!

Mel: That's disturbing.

Layla: The disembodied voice or the hungry-hungry Hungarian?

Mel: The voice.

Todd: Now you know why we're here.

Layla: So why are you?

Mel: I'm here to inform you -

Wendy: Dere is no ice cream is dere?

Layla: No. You needed the exercise.

Wendy: Dat is not nice teasing on my weight. I have thyroid problem.

Layla: That's one hell of a thyroid, I thought it was your ass.

Todd: Ladies, please.

Brad: You know what they say, if you can't say something nice, you're Layla.

Layla: You know what I say, you're an ass.

Mel: May I?

Brad: I apologize.

Todd: Please. Just ignore them.

Mel: I'm here to inform you that you cannot leave the country, you do have the right to remain silent in my presence or you may have an attorney present for the duration of my stay.

Brad: Are we under arrest?

Mel: No, not arrest. It's sort of protective custody, It is for your own safety, however you are suspect in a murder investigation.

Layla: Me?

Todd: She was looking at me.

Mel: All of you, actually, that was a blanket "you". Really it's just a formality, but everyone associated with the television show Beyond the Darkness is currently and officially in government custody.

Layla: I'm a murder suspect? Again?

Mel: I'm afraid so. I'm assuming you're all willing to cooperate, if not I am authorized to hold you in the local jail system.

Brad: I'll help in any way I can.

Mel: Thank-you for your cooperation Mr. Crane, may I call you Brad?

Brad: Please. (This is said in earnest flirting)

Layla: Please. (This is said with earnest disgust)

Wendy: I just joined dhem! I am new here, am I suspected?

Todd: What murder are we suspected of?

Mel: Specifically, priority suspects in the deaths of Heather Frans, William Franklin and Margret Hanson.

Layla: William what, Margret who?

Brad: Peggy, Heather and Billy.

Layla: Oh.

Todd: We're suspects in a car accident?

Mel: You're all suspects in that incident. You're also persons of interest in two suspicious deaths. There is also Edward Nelson and George Goddry.

Todd: Five suspicious- I don't believe this. If you're a fan of the show you must know about the curse.

Mel: The FBI cannot declare deaths caused by curses.

Brad: I've been saying that all along, there's no such thing as-

Layla: Shut-up.

Wendy: I just started vorking vith dese people one month ago! No person has died since I been here. I Don't even know of dis curse. I cannot believe no one vas telling me! I can lift curses, did you know dat? I have very reasonable rates on curse lifting.

Layla: Curse lifting? I've known you a month, I'm amazed you can lift a finger.

Wendy: I show you finger I can lift.

Mel: I'm sorry, Miss Palkovich-

Wendy: It's Madame Palkovich.

Mel: Very well, Madame Palkovich, you gained employment from the last death.

Wendy: How did I do dat?

Todd: Our last medium died in that van crash.

Brad: You can't even predict the past.

Wendy: I am not future teller, I speak with de spirit world.

Brad: Then Heather should've told you about the crash that killed her. Agent Thompson, may I call you Melanie?

Mel: You don't have to use the agent, Melanie is fine.

Brad: Yes, you are. I really don't want to question you, but these unfortunate incidents occurred over a three month span, why are they all of a sudden suspicious?

Mel: The family of the apparent suicide is filling a lawsuit against the coroner's office in Rode Island. They don't accept the death as a suicide. Other reasons are-

Todd: That's ridiculous. Why not?

Mel: Edward Nelson attempted suicide sixteen times previously.

Todd: That should confirm it was. What's so suspicious about a suicide when it's been attempted so many times before?

Mel: I'm not at liberty to discuss those details.

Brad: Unless of course there was a striking constancy in the other sixteen that wasn't there for the last one- other than the fact that there were sixteen failures and one success. My guess would be a note of some sort.

Mel: I have always admired your investigator's mind.

Brad: Thank-you. (They pause to stare into each other's eyes)

Layla: I don't think that's her mind you're looking at.

Brad: What?-Excuse me- Okay that explains Eddy, but Godfrey fell off a church, that one should be considered an act of God.

Mel: A bruise to his left arm, splinters on his right that just so happen to match the guard rail on the steeple, those things indicate he may have been pushed.

Layla: The only people with him were me and Todd.

Brad: Todd and I

Layla: No, you were downstairs when it happened.

Todd: And the van crash?

Mel: The brake fluid was gone.

Todd: The van rolled two miles down a mountain side, the line could've been severed at any-

Mel: Yes, but the line was cut, with some type of clippers, and the highest residue of the brake fluid was found in the hotel parking lot, not on the mountain.

Wendy: I have been vorking vith you people for a month now, why is no one telling me of dis curse?

Todd: I didn't want to concern you, there's nothing to be afraid of.

Brad: There is no curse.

Layla: I don't like you. I've never told you nothing about nothing.

Todd: Why would it take so long before you came after us?

Mel: Please don't think of this as "coming after you" This is as much for your protection as in is an investigation.

Brad: Every accident, excuse me incident occurred in a different state. The different jurisdictions would slow them down and get the Federal Government involved. But now which one of us has motive for all five of them? Wendy could've wanted Heather's job-

Wendy: I don't even like dis job!

Brad: You're getting paid three thousand an episode to drool on a table. But you're highly unlikely because; first you didn't know us, second-

Layla: She barely moves, she couldn't plot out five murders.

Brad: Layla is right, I can't picture you plotting out murders from your so frequently sitting position. Plus that van accident- sorry- incident killed three, why would you kill the other two? You would only need Heather dead. Now, Todd hated Billy.

Todd: What?

Brad: You knew he and Peggy had a thing, and you always liked Peggy.

Todd: What? What are you talking about?

Brad: Everyone knows Todd, you two always paired up.

Todd: I don't know what you're talking about. That was professional respect for each other. She was a great investigator.

Brad: Professional respect, when the profession involves lurking around dark corners at all hours of the night. Todd, that's what cost you your last wife.

Mel: We have a witness that claims to have seen a fight in the parking lot between Todd, Peggy and the other two victims.

Todd: That was a debate, it really wasn't a fight.

Mel: The witness claimed there was screaming involved.

Todd: It was a debate over paychecks, and money owed, but it ended happy. I mean before they all died, not that them dying was happy.

Brad: But you didn't have to fix the paycheck issue.

Todd: True it saved me the-wait- no. I was going to.

Mel: Did you hate Billy?

Todd: Well, I wouldn't say hate. I'll admit there was jealousy perhaps a little competition.

Brad: Peggy died in the same crash, there's no way he would hurt Peggy. Now I was angry with Godfrey and Eddy.

Mel: You were?

Brad: I almost walked off the show because of them. I had caught them trying to fake evidence in Egypt. And Layla, she never gets along with anybody, she actually hates us all.

Layla: I do not... Well, I dislike them all, but the pay is good.

Brad: She's just an unhappy person.

Layla: I am not, I'm very happy. I'm the happiest damn person I know.

Todd: Eddy and Godfrey were not trying to fake anything. They were trying to debunk a photograph.

Brad: You really believe that?

Todd: I have to believe the best of them, they're both dead now.

Brad: Liars die too.

Todd: Why do you have to think the worst?

Brad: No one ever saw or heard of this alleged photo they were trying to debunk. They could've told us they were hanging a sheet up to dry, and it would've been more convincing.

Mel: Rumor has it you've been trying to get out of doing this show for the past season.

Brad: That's true, I am sick of it. It's become far too commercial and contrite for me. I will owe fifty-thousand when I walk, but I have the money. Although killing off the crew and sinking the show would be cheaper for me, so there is motive.

Layla: You never heard of the Fifth Amendment have you?

Brad: If I was guilty, I'd worry about it. Or of course, I may be overly indulgent with information in order to make myself appear innocent.

Mel: If you were incredibly clever.

Brad: I am, but I'm innocent. Really, Todd is the only one of us with a good alibi, this show is everything to him. There is still the fact that maybe, it isn't one of us, but a common enemy.

Todd: What if it wasn't one of us?

Mel: You may all be in danger. A very important reason for me to be here.

Brad: It could be the Egyptian government, or an unsatisfied client, even just a crazed stalker. Heather got fan mail from one nut in Wisconsin constantly. You also have to consider that while the brake line may have been cut, the suicide and fall could've still been unrelated coincidences.

Mel: I am aware Mr. Crane. Look, my focus is the van crash. I am taking all of that into consideration, I am grateful for your help, but if you don't mind, this is supposed to be my investigation.

Brad: I'm sorry, of course. Please call me Brad.

Layla: He likes to look smart.

Brad: She doesn't.

Mel: I would like a list of any enemies you can think of.

Todd: I'm sure we can do that.

Mel: I knew about the Wisconsin stalker, but why would the Egyptian government want you dead?

Wendy: Is dis an Egyptian curse?

Layla: Yeah.

Brad: There is no curse.

Todd: Brad called the pharo Ruttan Tuttan by the name Rooten Tooten then stole from his tomb.

Brad: The Pharo didn't know I was teasing him. Even if he was there, I was speaking English, not whatever long gone version of Egyptian he spoke.

Wendy: It's a mommy's curse? Dat's de vorst kind.

Mel: You stole an artifact?

Brad: I stole a vile of dirt. They have this chamber in the tomb where people feel lightheaded, and the room starts spinning. I experienced the sensation myself it was similar to sitting up wind at an Aerosmith concert, so I wanted to check the sand on the floor for trace amounts of hallucinogens. It's a possibility the priests of the time preformed magic with drugs without realizing what the effect was.

Mel: Did you find any?

Brad: No. I never got to test it.

Todd: He got busted at the airport, then the Egyptian government banned us from their country and told us about the curse. Does all this mean we have to stop our investigation?

Mel: Oh, no. Not at all, please go on with business as usual. I would like to review any un-edited tapes or voice recordings you may have.

Brad: Of course, I'll show you where they are.

Layla: I hope the judge ain't hot, he'll send us all up the river.

Wendy: I do not tink I would be liking a trip up de river. What can I do to cooperate? I will help you in any Vay I can.

Layla: Bitchin' and complaining are your strong points, try one of those.

Mel: Thank-you all for your cooperation, I'm not supposed to say this, but I really think you're all innocent victims of either bad luck or some psychotic killer.

Brad: Odd, but that does make me feel better.

Layla: Takes a load off my mind.

Wendy: It does not take off my load.

Layla: We can't turn off gravity.

Todd: Layla. Don't worry; I'm sure this will all work out. If you don't mind officer-

Mel: Agent.

Todd: Of course, agent Thompson. Could we please not explain these circumstances to the owner of this place? It's bad enough we're hunting ghosts here, if she had to worry about the FBI and the accusations-

Mel: Say no more. I've been a fan of this show for years, I do think I've seen every episode. We'll get to the bottom of this and clear all your good names. Just tell the owner I'm a new investigator on the team, which is kind of true.

Todd: Why not? Why don't you join us? For the actual investigation, if you're a true fan you must want to, and we are very short staffed with all the deaths, or would that be unethical considering the circumstances?

Mel: I don't see a conflict, it might be better for my investigation, and it would be fun. That is if you don't mind.

Todd: Not at all. It would be sort of a duel action investigation.

Brad: It will be fun, I mean professionally speaking. Would you like to review those tapes?

Mel: Sure, I can start anytime.

Todd: Casanova, I'm sorry but could Layla help her find those? I need you to finish setting up.

Brad: Fine then, I'll leave you in Layla's callus hands.

Layla: Most of the tapes are right here, but there are a few in my van, now I'm gonna warn ya, you will find my fingerprints on file, but I wasn't convicted of nothing.

Brad: Anything. I need this cord plugged in to this box. (he pulls on a cord that is under Palkovich)

Wendy: I do not deal with electronics, that is not my contract. I am only here to summon the spirit world.

Brad: Okay, but could you get off the cord?

(Action on stage freezes once more. Monitor comes on for Melanie's interview, the stage light dims)

Mel: I'm thrilled to get the chance to work with the beyond the darkness team. It's been sort of a fantasy of mine for years now. Don't get me wrong, I love my day job, but I'm sure this is going to be a nice break from the expected. I always like to watch the show in the dark with a big bowl of popcorn; it's going to be really neat to watch a whole episode being taped, and be a part of the investigation. Confidentially I've always had a little crush on Brad, and now that I've met him, he seems to like me too.

(Monitor off, lights back up, action on stage resumes)

Wendy: Are we going to eat something before this séance tonight? It has been four and one half hours since lunch.

Brad: Are you setting up any equipment with us?

Wendy: How many people was it that wanted my job?

Todd: We've got everything set up, and yes I brought you chicken.

(Jack Castlebay enters and stands by the door)

Wendy: Fried?

Todd: Of course.

Brad: Do you see what you're doing? You pamper her. How many people want my job?

Jack: I'll take it.

Brad: You.

Todd: Well, well. Look what the cat puked up. If it isn't Jack Castlebay.

Wendy: De, Jack Castlebay? Mr. Castlebay, I am you're biggest fan.

Layla: I don't doubt that.

Brad: You know him?

Wendy: He is my idol. Oh my gods, it is you. I have every one of your books. I have been idolizing you for many years now. My name is Vendy Palkovich. Madam Palkovich, I too have been gifted from the other side.

Jack: I see.

Mel: He's that ghost whisperer right?

Jack: I don't exactly whisper-

Brad: Or talk to ghosts.

Jack: I sense emotions of the spirits on the other side through Astral projection and-

Layla: Jack Castlebay is the Richard Simmons of the paranormal world.

Brad: That's not a fair statement. Richard Simmons isn't a fraud.

Jack: Layla, how've you been?

Mel: It's obvious you all know each other. Melanie Thompson. Nice to meet you.

Jack: Please, call me Jack.

Layla: I call him Jack ass,

Brad: Use his last name, hole.

Mel: Why such hard feelings here?

Jack: I don't blame them for having reservations about me. We have conflicting professional opinions in the paranormal field. We met at a seminar I held in Nevada while I was unveiling my second book: *Touching the other side of me*, and we had a misunderstanding.

Brad: Misunderstanding? He suckered us out to his little book gathering, then looked up the info on Todd's tragic childhood.

Mel: Tragic childhood?

Brad: His mother was killed in a car crash when he was six, she was on the way to pick him up from a sleep over; so he blames himself. That's one of the main reasons he wants to know about life after death. The event gave him nightmares for years.

Todd: It was horrible and traumatizing - I don't like it brought up.

Brad: I apologize.

Todd: If you're going to tell strangers about my personal life, at least finish the story. Three days later, after the funeral. My father and I walk into the house, and get hit with the strong smell of her perfume, and baking cookies; she always loved to bake. It was so realistic I ran into the kitchen to see her. No one was there but the oven was on, and no one had used the oven since her death.

Wendy: Was there cookies?

Todd: No. At any rate Jack knew that much, but he didn't bother watching the show closely enough to know which one of us was Todd and which one was Brad. So he pinned the thing on the wrong one.

Brad: (Imitating Jack) Now I sense a woman with you, she's trying to tell you something, maybe she's your sister, grandmother, second cousin twice removed, mother? Yes yes, strong since of mother, and something about travel, a trip, a bike ride, a car ride? Okay, I'm getting something. She wants you to know it's not your fault.

Jack: That is not what I sound like.

Layla: No, that's it, but you need to touch more, he's very touchy.

Jack: I am not touchy. I am merely establishing myself in the physical plane of the universe.

Brad: When I called him on it he back peddled, and did it badly.

Jack: You went beyond calling me on it. You destroyed every reading I gave for the rest of the night.

Brad: I merely explained how you were observing behavior from their reactions to get the illusion you wanted. I gave my own *readings* on a few of them, it worked beautifully.

Jack: You were trying to destroy my career! I lost my television show after that!

Brad: When your career is based on lies it needs to be destroyed.

Jack: Then why don't you go after congress?

Todd: The whole thing blew up in a fist fight between these two, which then sparked a soccer-like brawl in the crowd and we were all banned by the Las Vegas gambling commissioner.

Mel: So you've been banned from Vegas and Egypt?

Layla: Three bars in Detroit and one dairy farm in Wisconsin.

Brad: That's where Heather got her stalker.

Wendy: Where was a haunted dairy farm?

Brad: Someone heard moo, thought it was boo, we were hauled out there.

Todd: This is all beside the point. Castlebay, what are you doing here?

Jack: I own here.

Brad: You what? Did you know this place was his?

Todd: Of course not. I spoke with a woman, Mrs. Fandish she called, and she let me in.

Brad: You tricked us?

Jack: My secretary. I may not have been entirely forthcoming with my identity, but I need your expertise. I really am having trouble with this place, and it's beyond my realm, and when it's beyond the normal realm you call Beyond the Darkness.

Todd: I like that, Layla keep that in the show.

Brad: Todd.

Todd: We heard the cry for help.

Brad: That could be a recording, now that he's involved you've got to keep that possibility open.

Jack: I'm not faking anything. I swear there is something here.

Todd: I don't know.

Brad: His touch myself from the other side book must not be selling, now he's opening up a haunted resort, and wants us to advertise it for him!

Jack: I heard the curse took your popularity down a bit, how much advertising could I get on a show that no one watches? I swear, my life would be much easier if this place wasn't haunted. Do you really have that many other places to be?

Todd: You know about that?

Jack: I follow the blogs, I found out back when it happened, I have a friend that works with the Cairo airport that told me all about the trouble you got into.

Todd: So you decided to trick us into working with you.

Jack: I knew you wouldn't come out here if you knew the place was mine. Come on, this could be very beneficial for both of us. Maybe if things work out, and your ratings go up I could have a place on your team.

Mel: You would like a place on the team?

Jack: I've been trying for years to get on this show. That's why Brad and Todd came out to my seminar; I was applying for a job with them. Now that they have no crew, and so few are willing to work with them because of this curse, why not give me a chance?

Brad: There is no curse.

Mel: I'm going to have to re-introduce myself. Agent Melanie Thompson FBI.

Todd: I thought we were going to keep that on the down low.

Mel: Sorry, now he's required by law to know why I'm here.

Todd: Why?

Brad: He's a suspect.

Mel: Try to remember I'm the FBI Agent, Brad. Mr. Castlebay, you are currently in government custody, you have the right to remain silent if you wish-

Jack: Does that mean I'm under arrest?

Mel: Not officially, but you can't go anywhere without my permission, and of course no leaving the country.

Jack: Don't you have to press charges before you can stop a person from going as they please.

Brad: Not since nine eleven.

Mel: Mr. Castlebay, you are a suspect in a federal case.

Todd: Really?

Layla: I bet he did it.

Jack: Suspect for what?

Mel: Murder.

Jack: Murder?

Mel: Every death that has been attributed to this so called curse has been suspicious, and you've just pointed out how much you've benefited from this unfortunate series of events. Layla if anything comes of this I may need to confiscate that tape, I don't recommend you recording this.

Layla: Whatever. I bet he'll like jail.

Jack: What is that suppose to mean?

Brad: He knew about the curse before any of the deaths.

Mel: I am going to need confirmation on your where a bouts for several dates.

Jack: Look, Three months ago I bought a two hundred year old saloon, and I was going to convert it into a health spa. A saloon salon, I thought it would be catchy. Once the workmen started renovating they started hearing strange things. One man said he saw a woman standing up in room six in a burlesque costume, he yelled downstairs to tell the others and when he looked back she was gone. You can hear a voice screaming help me, and the doors to each of these rooms slam closed when no one is around. I know Brad and Todd hate me so I had to have my secretary call, really I just need their help.

Mel: Still you admit you want to be a part of this show?

Jack: Of course I want in the show I always have, but not enough to kill anyone over it. Come on guys, you all know I'm not a murderer. I know we've had our differences in the past, but what if this place is the real deal? What if we find the mother load of paranormal evidence here?

Todd: We did have two places cancel last week. Brad? I'm going to let you make this call. You've done the research. Is it worth it?

Brad: He's wrong about it being a two hundred year old saloon, but unfortunately yes it is worth it.

Jack: What do you mean wrong? I've got the deed right here. Built by Jebidiah Hills in 1808.

Brad: The original saloon was built in 1808, yes. There were five buildings around what they thought was a gold mine. Hotel, a church, the saloon, a bank, a post office, a nice little town, but it never got any bigger. They discovered it was a mine full of pyrite, or fool's gold-

Jack: We all know what pyrite is.

Wendy: Dose are de mean sailors dat say Arrg.

Brad: Yes Wendy. In 1809 they figured out the gold wasn't gold and that ended Virginia's rush. The town held it's own with prostitution, booze and gambling until the whole thing burnt down in 1853. The original founder, Mr. Jabadia Hills left the state and his family to head out to California right after that. He was too late to lay any good claims on that rush as well, so he died a lonely alcoholic somewhere out west. His great grandson, Edgar Hills decided on the one hundredth anniversary of the fire in 1953 to re build the town his grandfather had built as a historic site. He built the saloon, the trading post, the gas station, then he went bankrupt in 55' and the project was forgotten.

Jack: You mean this isn't really a two hundred year old saloon?

Brad: It's just a gimmick. That's why you tricked us out here.

Jack: Really! I didn't know. I was duped.

Brad: You knew they didn't have gas stations in 1808.

Jack: I didn't think that was two hundred- Wait a second, then how can this place be haunted?

Brad: Because twenty-eight men were lost in a cave in when they first opened that mine. Good old Jebidiah dug a new entrance with a new crew, not telling anyone about the first crew. That's twenty-eight un marked graves.

Wendy: Why Would he not tell of dat?

Mel: To avoid the insurance.

Brad: Worse, he was saving the money from the paychecks too- he never told the next of kin or anyone for that matter. He just pretended it never happened. That's according to testimony from a hearing in 188- something

Layla: How does anyone know that?

Brad: Apparently Mr. Hills confessed to a priest on his death bed. They went looking for the original entrance to bury the men properly, but no one ever found it. Then, sixty some died the night of the fire that burnt down the town. Not to mention all the murders over crooked card games and affairs that took place here in the meantime. Some from newspapers of the day, some could just be urban legends. Here's the interesting part, the fire that destroyed the town started in the saloon.

Jack: Not this saloon.

Brad: No.

Todd: Does the replica look like the original?

Brad: Edgar Hills thought so. I don't know where he got his blueprints fifty-some years ago, but they aren't around now, so I couldn't say for certain. I did find a map of the town from 1850. It seems to be the right location.

Jack: I feel so stupid.

Brad: Good, it's bad enough you didn't look it up. You don't even pay attention to the building. I noticed the two by fours, while we were setting up.

Jack: What about the two by fours?

Brad: They tell you the place isn't two hundred years old. They didn't have uniform two by fours in 1808, they became standardized after world war one.

Layla: Who pays attention to that shit?

Brad: Not you.

Todd: You do your research well Brad, a little too well.

Jack: Can we leave this part out of the show?

Todd: I must agree with him on that. This information makes the whole investigation seem a little lack luster.

Brad: So you want to lie?

Layla: I've already fixed it.

(Interview pops up on the screen)

Brad: The original founder Mr. Jabadia Hills / died a lonely alcoholic/ His great grandson, Edgar Hills/ went bankrupt in 55' and /died a lonely alcoholic/ Twenty-eight men were lost in a cave in when they first opened that mine/ Twenty-eight un-marked graves/ Not to mention all the murders over crooked card games and affairs that took place here./ They didn't have uniform two by fours in 1808, they became standardized after world war one.

Todd: You do your research well Brad, a little too well.

(TV screen off)

Brad: You made me look like an idiot!

Layla: Yeah. It was easy.

Brad: You're fixing that for the episode.

Layla: Sure.

Brad: Do you often edit the tapes to make me look ignorant?

Layla: Only when you talk.

Brad: I'm never saying another word in front of that camera.

Layla: Then I just saved the show.

Jack: So you will do it? Will you investigate the saloon?

Todd: We're here, so we're staying, but you owe us.

Jack: I brought cupcakes and marshmallow cereal treats.

Wendy: You are suck a great man. (Layla opens her mouth, Brad puts his hand over it) Did you bring drinks?

Jack: No, sorry.

Wendy: Why bring pastries with no drink?

(Lights dim and the monitor comes on for Jacks Interview)

Jack: I'm so grateful that the Beyond the darkness team could come out here. We've had our differences in the past, but that is to be expected when you have different methods of working in the same field. I've been looking forward to working with them for years now. I of course feel the turmoil and despair within these walls, but I need the expertise of a crew like Beyond the Darkness, to validate my feelings and document the evidence. They are the most respected in the field.

(Interview off, lights back up)

Todd: The most respected in the field?

Layla: How much respect do you need to be the most respected in this field?

Brad: She's got a point.

Jack: (He's talking to Layla's camera) We are deep in secluded woodland, but still no more than forty-five minutes away from the nation's capital. I thought it was the perfect place for a health spa. For reservations call-

Layla: It's not a commercial.

Mel: There's no cell phone reception here.

Jack: Yes, I know; you have to drive a mile down the main road before you can get it. I've put in a call to have a tower put in, but I'm on a waiting list.

Todd: What have you experienced here yourself?

Jack: Frequently I've felt-

Brad: This better not be about your vibes.

Jack: I've heard the cry for help and I witnessed the doors close on their own, but that's it. I really haven't spent a lot of time here. It's kind of creepy.

Brad: That's what I don't understand, why would a ghost, with no physical restriction hang out in the dumps we investigate? If I were dead and was still free to roam the earth, I could think of a million places I'd rather be.

Mel: Really? Where?

Brad: The shower of some beautiful woman comes to mind, perhaps yours. Why wouldn't the dead take advantage of their invisibility?

Mel: Thanks, now I've got to start showering with my clothes on.

Todd: Okay Castlebay we've got to get to work.

Jack: I'd love to join you. You know if you need an extra hand-

Brad: No! No way! If he's staying I'm going.

Todd: The owners of the property have never stayed for the investigation.

Jack: But with my training on the subject I could be of a great advantage to you.

Layla: Your training?

Brad: You're more artificial than cheese spray, and you know it.

Wendy: Dere's cheese spray? Where is dis?

Layla: Right behind you.

Jack: I hardly think it's appropriate to kick me off my own property -

Mel: Todd, Brad. Excuse us please Mr. Castlebay.

Layla: No the other side (she's having fun with Wendy)

Todd: Yes?

Mel: I would appreciate it if you let him stay, it would make my life easier.

Todd: I'm game if you can handle it.

Brad: For her.

Todd: Layla! Focus. Wendy, there is no cheese. Most of the time the owners don't want to sit in the place with the lights out, but join us. It is very possible your natural gifts could aid us in catching whatever this is.

Jack: Thank you, do you really think my gifts could help?

Todd: No, Agent Thompson wants you here.

Wendy: What flavor cups of cakes did you bring? Don't tell me! Yellow cake with a chocolate frosting.

Jack: Wow, you're right,

Brad: Are you showing off your psychic powers?

Wendy: I do not claim to have any ESPN. I am merely an empty vessel to be filled up by the spirit world.

Layla: And cupcakes.

Todd: Layla.

Wendy: Shall we get down to why we are here? Shall we make contact with the goats.

Jack: With the what?

Wendy: With the goats.

Mel: Goats?

Brad: She's saying ghosts.

Jack: That's a very interesting accent, where are you from?

Wendy: New Jersey. But my parents were immigrants, neither one spoke English.

Brad: I knew it.

Layla: I hate it when you're right, (She hands Brad a five dollar bill) I would've bet Wendy's ass you were wrong.

Mel: Aren't you supposed to bet your own?

Layla: I was using hers for emphasis.

Wendy: Watch it, your behind is not that far behind mine.

Brad: Have you noticed an increase in the word ass? That seems to be Layla's new favorite word.

Todd: Ever since Wendy started working with us.

Brad: Maybe she's secretly attracted to Wendy's hind quarters.

Layla: Maybe it's been blocking every camera shot I get for the past month.

Todd: Layla! What is wrong with you?

Wendy: I think she has Tetris Syndrome.

Mel: What?

Wendy: You know; Where you cannot control what you say?

Brad: It's Tourette syndrome.

Wendy: That is what I said.

Mel: Could I use the restroom before we begin?

Todd: Yes, of course. It's down this hall, third door on the right.

Wendy: I need my candles that have been ointmented, day are in that suck.

Brad: Suck?

Wendy: Suck.

Mel: Sack. Excuse me. (She exits)

Wendy: Dat is vhat I said. Now take dose candles, and put dem out on dis circle table. You pretend it's a pizza. Use de candles as de pepperoni and put dem about. Five around de edge to form de pentagon. No, over dere, and one over dere, be sure to leave de space for de board in de center.

Jack: If you're so particular, why don't you place the candles?

Wendy: My contract is very specific. I agree to talk vith spirits, dat is vhat I do. And a glass of vater dere. Now I place de o-wedgie board here, facing to de north.

Jack: O-wedgie board?

Brad: That's how she pronounces Ouija.

Jack: Have you ever tried using tarot cards?

Wendy: De what? I have not heard of these tings you speak.

Layla: You were playing with them on the car ride here.

Wendy: Ah, de tarot cards! (She pronounces it like carrot)

Jack: Yes, I think, but the T at the end is silent.

Wendy: I had no idea I vas not to be saying de T. English is very difficult language. Vhat of de orange vegetables in de phallic shape?

Brad: Those are carrots.

Wendy: I have much to learn yet. Dese are very acceptable cakes of de cup. Are they made of you're home?

Jack: Homemade? Why yes, thank-you for noticing. They were my late great aunt Gertrude's recipe.

Layla: She give you the recipe before or after she died?

Wendy: (Todd, brings her water) No, no. I need another glass of vater dere too.

Todd: Please. (Brad gives Todd a disapproving look then fetches the water)

Jack: Is this based on the theory that spirit presence can draw energy from water?

Wendy: No, dis is based on I might get thirsty vhile ve sit here. De cup of cake is little bit dry. You should get drink too. And I need another cake of cup. Dis is for energy.

Jack: The odd sensations of the other world can be quite draining. I myself-

Brad: I don't want to hear it Castlebay.

Jack: I'll get her a cupcake (The eerie "help me" is heard from above, just as before)

Wendy: I feel heavy spirit presence here.

Layla: I'm sure they feel your heavy presence too.

Wendy: Vhat Vas dat?

Todd: Please ignore her.

Jack: Yes, in these seats especially. I feel the energy. (Melanie re-enters)

Wendy: I heard cry for help.

Brad: We all heard that.

Mel: Okay, I do not like that voice.

Wendy: Allow me. (Talking up into the air) Are you de spirit dat is living in dis building?

Brad: Ghosts don't live any where, that's a definition.

Wendy: I know what goas do! I figured dhat speech! Are you de goas dat resides in dis building? Is dat making you happy?

Brad: Better.

Wendy: Vait, vait! I sense some ting.

Jack: Me too. I feel this energy, this wild tingling moving up my spine, then through my arms.

Brad: Could be a pinched nerve or a minor stroke.

Wendy: Am I contacting de other side or is you? I idolize you Mr. Castlebay, dat does not mean you can have my job.

Brad: See? She does like her job.

Todd: Jack you interrupt her again and I'll let Brad beat you up.

Jack: Could I use the restroom?

Todd: She just got started.

Wendy: Everyone must have happy bladder before contacting the next vorld. When ve make contact, ve vant no one vetting de pants.

Todd: Fine, hurry. (he does) My plan is the girls and Jack will conduct the séance while you and I monitor the room for E.M.F.'s and thermal irregularities. And Layla tapes us all.

Brad: Okay.

Mel: Now we are teaming up right? I don't want to be left alone in this place, with that weird help me voice.

Brad: Don't worry, I'll stay close.

Todd: Let's review the shots while we're waiting, Brad show me the camera angles.

Brad: You set the shots up, why do I –

Todd: The viewers don't know that, we always do it this way, please humor me.

Brad: Fine, (you may wish to show these scenes or cheat the monitor away from the audience) what we have here is a wide angle of room six. That's where they've scene the apparition of the show girl. This is a shot of the upstairs landing, where the doors randomly slam.

Todd: Good.

Brad: This is a wide angle of what looks like the basement.

Todd: I see.

Brad: I didn't know anything happened in the basement.

Todd: It's dark, and creepy.

Brad: This is the back hall and a low angle of the kitchen. And this appears to be the bathroom? (If you do it with a monitor, they see Jack sitting on a toilet; I don't think I'd use the monitor, but whatever. Please nothing nasty visible)

Layla: Jeeze Todd! That's the scariest thing I've ever taped on this show.

Brad: At least Palkovich wasn't in there. Why do you have a camera over a toilet?

Todd: Had a spare, thought I'd mess with Layla.

Brad: Okay.

Layla: You see why I hate these people.

Todd: Then we have the handhelds, and I have the full spectrum.

Brad: Yes sir.

Todd: Looks like we're ready to go beyond the darkness.

Brad: You don't want to sound cheesy.

Todd: That's not cheesy, that's my thing, I was hoping to hit the basement first.

Brad: Sounds fine, but nothing happens in the basement

Todd: If there was a mine with trapped workers, the basement would be closest to it. ("help me" is heard again)

Wendy: De spirits are calling us.

Mel: That's really freaking me out.

Brad: Then allow me to be your hero.

Jack: Have you started already? Everyone heard that right?

Brad: Yes, we all hear it. It's not a ghost; you just left the rest room. The last time we heard that voice, Melanie had just left the rest room, before that Madam Palkovich.

Wendy: I did no faking of noting, there is no-

Brad: I'm not accusing you of faking that. I don't think you're smart enough to do anything like that.

Wendy: Tank you- wait a minute.

Brad: You were in there the first time, then Melanie then Castlebay.

Layla: A phantom turd?

Brad: No. You all flushed?

Wendy: Of course I flushed. Not like dat would matter, dat room of rest vas so dirty. What kind of-

Brad: That voice screams help me after anyone uses the bathroom, do you know what that means?

Todd: That's not true, Layla went in there as soon as we got here, we heard no voice. Maybe we caught something on the potty cam.

Brad: I'm sure we did. Nothing I want to find. Did you flush?

Layla: Yeah.

Todd: And if it was the plumbing, why didn't we hear it when we filled up the water glasses?

Brad: Did you all wash your hands?

Mel Jack Wendy: Yes.

Brad: (He flips on the sink behind the bar, and then turns it off.) Then that means somewhere in the hot water line there's a bent pipe that makes a noise when the water shuts off. (Help me is heard again)

Mel: You're amazing.

Brad: That also means Layla doesn't wash her hands, which is slightly scarier than the voice, because she was touching the cupcakes.

Todd: Makes sense.

Brad: You sound so disappointed. This is the best part.

Todd: I'd rather find things we can't figure out.

Wendy: Den shall ve make contact vith de other side? Could someone be lighting de candles?

Layla: Let's get this over with. (Layla takes out a lighter and lights the candles)

Todd: It's time team. Let's go, beyond the darkness.

Jack: That's so cool when you do that on tv!

Brad: How many times do you have to say it?

Todd: Layla edits a few.

Brad: That's our cue to turn off the lights.

Mel: Of course.

Todd: Tonight, there's only one switch.

Brad: Be my guest. (As Todd turns out the lights the soft glow of "candle light" lights the stage- probably just dimmed lights, but all on stage light sources should go out.)

Wendy: Silence please! Gather around de table (they do, except for Brad and Todd monitoring equipment and Layla who is taping this) Join vith me de hands. I vill now attempt to make de contact, vith de other vorld (she makes odd noises and goes into a trance of some sort)

Todd: I'm picking up an emf spike-

Wendy: Quiet! I tink I hear breathing.

Mel: That may have been me.

Brad: It could've been any one of us.

Wendy: It could have been a goas.

Brad: Why would a ghost breathe? Does she know what we're looking for?

Wendy: Yes I know vhat ve're- (Three loud bangs are heard from above them) I told you. (three more bangs with increased speed) I feel de cold chill.

Mel: I feel it too.

(One more loud bang, then the candles blow out.)

Jack, Mel and Wendy: (scream. Brad turns on a flashlight)

Wendy: (looking up toward the spirit) I'm sorry for disturbing you, dey made me!

Brad: Calm down.

Todd: You were recording right? Keep it rolling, this may be the evidence I've been searching for!

Layla: It's at least a good teaser to cut to commercial. (Brad turns on the light)

Todd: What the hell are you doing?

Brad: Please Todd, remember the “what the-” rule.

Jack: I knew I felt a presence.

Mel: What's a “what the-” rule?

Brad: Last season we averaged 36 “what the-” and then what ever profanity you want to insert, per show. It always broadcasts as “what the beep”.

Todd: Brad asked that we avoid using the phrase "what the-" this season, but really Brad, what the hell are you doing? The lights are supposed to stay off.

Brad: Layla, on me please. If you were searching for evidence of a very old central air system. (He points to a small grate above the bar, yet behind the table) Then yes, I think you've found it. (He finds a thermostat on the wall) Excuse me (He turns the thermostat and duplicates the bangs) And Bang and then, get that cold chill with every contact? Or just when there's air conditioner directly behind you?

Jack: I've never heard it do that before.

Brad: It's set on a thermostat, it goes off when the room gets to eighty.

Mel: You're a genius.

Brad: Thank-you for noticing.

Jack: He's so humble too.

Todd: Yeah, fantastic.

Brad: That seemed sarcastic.

Todd: You're logic is impeccable.

Brad: We're searching for truth, it's our job to explain not to-

Todd: You're explaining away the audience.

Brad: Why am I here? You want me to lie to an audience? Why don't you partner up with Jack!

Jack: I'm open. If-

Todd: If you want a paycheck I need the producers.

Brad: Keep your damn check!

Layla: I want the check! That's all I've ever been here for.

Todd: Maybe you should stick to the protocol.

Wendy: I like de check too.

Brad: Maybe you should remember you're a scientist!

Todd: Maybe you could remember you're not! Which one of us was working at a hardware store before this?

Brad: Which one of us is the genius?

Todd: I always thought I was.

Brad: That may be proof that you're not!

Todd: You can't expect the producers to keep paying for this show when you can explain away everything!

Brad: Who needs the producers? Didn't you have fun when this was just a hobby on the weekend? When there was nothing but the science. You sold out.

Todd: For a purpose. Do you see all this crap? Infer red camera, full spectrum lenses, E.M.F. detectors, thermal variation detectors, then there's this thing. (He holds up an odd handheld device)

Jack: What is that?

Todd: I have no clue! There's a needle on it, with a little gauge. I imagine if I ever get it near a ghost, it moves.

Brad: It's never moved.

Jack: Maybe it needs batteries.

Todd: Point is this stuff is expensive. Without the show and the backers I've got no idea how I would pay for it. I sold out so I could continue my research. At least that's how I justify it. I know it's hard to be taken seriously with the show but without the show we may never find the truth!

Brad: You don't want the truth! So why bother finding it?

Todd: There's talk about the station dropping us!

Mel: I didn't know things were that bad. (She write in her notebook)

Layla: Guess I could go back to that cooking show-

Todd: Why are you writing? Don't write that down. And don't get another job. I'm not too worried, there is a bid from another station, I just hope it doesn't come to that, it would destroy our credibility.

Brad: We're on a science fiction channel, how would we lose credibility?

Todd: Affiliates of fox news.

Brad: Oh.

Todd: The blog fans are all saying the curse of King Rutan Tutan is killing us all off. Some people stopped watching the show, saying watching it could bring on the curse.

Jack: That was me, I blogged that, sorry. I'll take it back first thing tomorrow.

Todd: You?

Wendy: I do perform curse lifting ceremony. For small fee, for you, I make half.

Brad: There is no curse!

Todd: You can't keep denying the curse! One of the camera men actually did get a case of the crabs while we were there.

Layla: And? I got that from the truck stop in Hoboken last year.

Brad: See, even Layla is too smart to buy into this curse crap. Now I see why- (he stops himself)

Layla: No, I believe in the curse. I've been cursed since I took this job.

Todd: Now you see what?

Brad: Nothing, can we move on with the investigation?

Todd: Are you still with us?

Brad: I don't have anywhere else to be at the moment.

Mel: Are you okay?

Brad: Fine. Light the candles and let me get the lights. Did you want to say let's go beyond the darkness again? Maybe you can say it more scientific!

Todd: No! I'm good. Leave the damn lights on for now! I'll get 'em in a minute! Wendy are you ready?

Wendy: Vat? Am I just supposed to turn on and off like dat? This is de other vorld not cable, I cannot just turn it on and-

Layla: Come on woman! I've got the cupcakes here, you can't have another until I see a ghost!

Wendy: Everyone clear your minds.

Brad: I'm investigating with Melanie.

Todd: Fine by me. I'd rather be alone.

Jack: I'll team up with you.

Todd: I'd rather be alone.

(Lighting strikes outside)

Brad: Perfect timing.

Wendy: De spirits do not like dis bickering

Mel: Sounds like a regular old thunderstorm.

Todd: Terrific!

Jack: I don't think the roof leaks.

Brad: He's mad because an approaching electrical storm explains the EMF readings he was getting.

Mel: Really?

Brad: Sometimes even the batteries on the EMF meters can explain the readings.

Todd: Do you have to destroy everything?

Brad: Shall I? You know how they say water, limestone and copper can help ghosts channel to this side?

Todd: Brad!

Mel: Yeah.

Brad: Those things happen to generate and disturb natural magnetic fields, so all of this equipment reacts to all of it.

Todd: Layla, edit out everything he just said!

Layla: I stopped recording when you two started fighting. This isn't that kind of show.

(A door slams shut upstairs.)

Todd: Start tapping again!

Wendy: De spirits are un-easy vith dis arguing.

Jack: I'm a little uneasy with the door slamming itself shut.

Mel: I'm with you.

Brad: Excuse me. (he goes and grabs a level from a back or tool box nearby)

Todd: Do you see what I mean! You're not looking for ghosts you're looking for reasons not to believe! (Brad takes level measurements of the doors and wall upstairs?)

Brad: When there aren't any reasons not to believe, I'll believe! Well- well, what do you know.

Todd: The doors not level.

Brad: The door is set perfectly level.

Todd: So it is supernatural?

Brad: No, the entire wall tilts back at an eighty-five degree angle.

Jack: What does that mean?

Brad: It means all three doors will randomly slam shut if you don't prop them open.

Todd: Damn.

Brad: You don't need to call ghost busters, you need to call a carpenter. There is usually a rational scientific explanation for everything.

Mel: What about the shadow men? I saw an episode where you guys caught that figure looking down at you from the catwalk at that old theatre.

Brad: I bought into that too. That was evidence I couldn't explain, that's what kept my interest for four years, but it always happened for the un-manned cameras, very late in the investigation.

Mel: They still gave me the chills.

Brad: That was when Goddry and Eddy were trying to duplicate their photo. They were hanging a white sheet across a line and waving it across the dessert, and they happened to do that in front of one of those stationary cameras late in the investigation, when they thought no one else was around.

Mel: So the good stuff was faked?

Brad: Yes-

Todd: No! You don't know that. They denied it while they were alive, and now that they're dead no one will ever know for sure.

Brad: That's true.

Wendy: De spirits vant to speak with us.

Jack: (closes his eyes and grabs Wendy's arm) I am sensing a presence, a male. It's dark, confined, he's afraid, maybe claustrophobic. (Brad goes and stands beside Jack.) Anger, hate, physical rage- someone wants to punch me. (he opens his eyes and cowers)

Brad: You're actually better at that than I thought.

Wendy: I am de one conducting dis contact, you baked de cupcakes, for which I am grateful, but now you must zip it, and let me do my ting. Can I get some darkness here?

(Lighting, thunder, the lights go out)

Wendy: I told you de spirits vish to speak vith us. Tank-you, spirits.

Brad: More like the power company needs to speak with us.

Todd: Damn!

Brad: This really shouldn't affect us. We turn off all the lights anyway, and now that air-conditioner won't kick on and scare anyone.

Todd: That's it we're going to do this investigation! Light more candles! Do we still have batteries for the handhelds?

Layla: Yeah, we're good.

Todd: Good! We're going into the darkness!

Jack: Don't you mean beyond the darkness?

Wendy: Ve're already in de darkness.

Todd: You know what I mean!

(Lights out.) Or flashlights in this case.
(Intermission)

Act Two

(One candle at the table is lit so you can see Wendy and Jack each holding onto either end of a planchette on the Ouija board. We see Mel and Brad in a different part of the room by flashlight Layla is taping the Ouija board event. Layla Todd, and Brad should all have walkie-talkies for the second act.)

Brad: Four hours and they're still playing board games. Why are you still taping them?

Layla: I'm waiting for her to pick a wedgie. I wanna watch a circus clown run out of that tent she's wearing.

Mel: I take it you don't believe in the Ouija board either.

Brad: As much as I believe in chutes and ladders.

Mel: You never know they are very creepy.

Brad: Jack and Wendy? I am aware.

Mel: That wasn't what I meant.

Brad: I don't understand the logic. Are they just faking each other out? There's only one candle burning and their eyes are closed. Even if the thing moved they wouldn't know what it was saying.

Mel: No, I guess not.

Brad: Maybe they're both sleeping.

Layla: That would make them the smart ones.

Mel: Layla, you didn't list your ex-husband on this list.

Brad: You were married?

Layla: You don't get this bitter without men in your life. I was young, he was dumb. It didn't work out.

Mel: Todd listed every one of his ex-wives, Brad listed blood relatives,

Brad: My Father's a jerk. Why haven't you ever mentioned an ex-husband?

Layla: If it was your business you'd know.

Mel: Jack listed- well- it looks like a phone book. I can't quite make out Wendy's handwriting but I think Dairy Queen is on here.

Layla: She must've eaten one.

Mel: I take it you left your husband on good terms.

Brad: He was probably glad to get away.

Layla: I'll have you know he was very broken up, I heard he attempted suicide after wards.

Brad: I'm sorry, that must've been tough for you.

Layla: Nah, he's safe. That nit wit couldn't do anything right. If he ever tried to kill me he'd miss. Wait a minute, maybe that's why I'm still alive. Let me put him on my list.

Mel: Do you ever fear for your life during these investigations?

Brad: Since you've shown up? Yeah, a little.

Mel: Not from murderers, from ghosts.

Brad: Ghosts? No.

Layla: Waitresses at truck stop diners.

Mel: He has her on here. (She's referring to the list)

Brad: Egyptian TSA agents, and now maybe some crazed killer, but dead people? No.

Mel: Why no fear of the dead?

Brad: Really? They don't have a pulse.

Mel: Yes but, they have an advantage.

Brad: Exactly why they wouldn't want me dead. Presuming there is such thing as a ghost, which is a wild presumption; they would have a certain advantage over the living with invisibility, walking through walls, and that sort of thing.

Mel: Right.

Brad: Okay, if they killed me then I'd be a ghost too, so they lose the advantage and my spirit would want revenge, I could go after them on an equal playing field. I don't think anyone would be dumb enough to do that. I also have a Nazi theory.

Layla: Don't ask him about one of his theories.

Mel: Sorry. What is your Nazi theory?

Brad: Adolph Hitler killed thousands upon thousands of Jewish people. Now if those spirits could do anything to affect the world we live in, they would've taken that bastard down.

Mel: How do you know they didn't help the allies win? I've forgotten her name, but the wife of the guy that invented the Winchester rifle-

Brad: I know. Her name was Sarah the house that goes on forever to confuse the spirits of the Indians that were killed by the rifle. We've been there. I had a crazy aunt Alice too, she used to take dolls on picnics. That doesn't mean anyone was haunting her.

Mel: Doesn't mean they're not.

Brad: That's why we're here.

Layla: I wouldn't mess with me as a ghost, I'd kick ass if they killed me.

Brad: I'm going to start smacking you every time you use the word ass.

Layla: Then I'll sue for sexual harassment.

Brad: Why?

Layla: For trying to smack my ass. What if you get the ghost of a psycho? That might want to kill you.

Mel: I'm sure mentally ill people have mentally ill spirits, how would that work?

Brad: According to Todd, mental illness is in the mind not the spirit. I sort of doubt that, but when I find a ghost I'll ask.

Mel: Do you believe in ghosts Layla?

Layla: Sure.

Brad: With no proof to support it.

Layla: I got a theory of my own, you wanna hear it?

Mel: Yes, I'd like to.

Layla: You ever take a good shit?

Mel: Ah- yes.

Layla: Then after you flush, the smell still lingers.

Mel: Yes, I suppose.

Layla: That's what I think a ghost is, it's kinda that lingering smell of a person's soul after they've been flushed.

Brad: That theory is actually just as good as any other.

Mel: Brad, is there anything that scares you?

Layla: He's afraid of spiders.

Brad: I'm not afraid of them, I just avoid contact with them. A black widow or a brown recluse could be deadly.

Layla: Big bad ghost hunter afraid of a bug.

Brad: Spider's exist, and they're not bugs. Come on; let's see if we can find something worth watching.

Layla: No funny business, you're being watched.

(They exit. This next scene can be done by flashlight, where Mel and Brad walk to another area of the stage or they can go into another room of the building and the audience can see the scene from the monitor as they record their explorations. It really is the director's preference)

Mel: Do you mind if I ask you a personal question?

Brad: Haven't you been asking personal questions all night?

Mel: I guess, but this one doesn't have anything to do with my investigation.

Brad: Okay.

Mel: Why do you do this if you don't believe in ghosts?

Brad: I never said I don't believe. I said I've never found proof. I'd love to find proof, I want to believe. I want to believe again, so badly, in magic, the Easter bunny, God. I want desperately to believe that life is more than face value. This particular line of investigation isn't providing many opportunities to shed my doubt.

Mel: In some cases you just have to have faith, don't be afraid to believe.

Brad: I respect the sentiment, however if you ever spell out the word believe on a piece of paper it's quite easy to see there's a lie in the middle of it.

Mel: You can't explain everything, can you? Everything that's happened on this show?

Brad: Yes I can. I can even explain the shots of big foot and the Lochness monster.

Mel: What about those voices? The things you pick up on recorders. EVPs you can't explain those.

(Jack starts Snoring)

Brad: I can, and I have. I've argued over it many times. Layla apparently edits out over half of what I say every show-

Mel: What do you mean apparently? Don't you watch your own show?

Brad: Not much, I'm not a TV person.

Mel: So how do you explain the voices?

Brad: Indigestion.

Mel: What?

Brad: We're working with highly sensitive recording devices. The crew is on the road nine months out of the year. We all eat fast food, we don't sleep well. Have you ever just laid in bed at night listening to your stomach complain about that burrito you had for lunch?

Mel: Yes, of course.

Brad: Okay, take the slightest little upset, the almost unnoticeable gurgle, and put one of these recorders next to it, and every now and then you can hear all sorts of words in all sorts of languages.

Mel: So you're telling me that episode in the castle where you hear *get out*, that was your stomach?

Brad: No, that particular instance was a camera man's pants. I think it was Eddy.

Mel: His pants told him to get out?

Brad: He was wearing corduroy pants. I'll let you hear the tape again, I'm sure Layla has it, if you listen one way you can hear "get out" but, if you're listening for a man scratching himself while wearing corduroy pants, you can hear that too.

Mel: I would like to hear that again.

Brad: Not to mention, none of those voices we catch ever says the one thing I would say if I was a ghost.

Mel: What would you say?

Brad: Boo. I've never been original. You claim to be a fan of the show, could you answer a question for me?

Mel: Of course.

Brad: Why do you keep watching?

Mel: What do you mean? It's an interesting show. It's not like everyone doesn't want to know if there's life after death. You're trying to solve one of life's greatest mysteries.

Brad: But it's the same show every week, we find the same evidence, which is always sketchy at best. Todd always says "Time to go into the darkness" or "beyond the darkness" then we all flip off the lights and sit in the dark talking to our lower intestines for eight to ten hours. The only thing that ever changes is the location, which is one creepy place or another. (During Brad's line Melanie notices movement from outside, through a window)

Mel: What was that? Did you see that?

Brad: No, what did it look like?

Mel: Looked like a dark figure moving out by the cars.

Brad: (On walkie-talkie) Brad to Todd.

Todd: (He's outside, however you want to stage it, or just have his voice) Todd here.

Brad: Are you out by the van?

Todd: Yeah, needed an extension cord, why?

Brad: Nothing, I'm just explaining everything. Thanks.

Mel: So everything has a rational explanation.

Brad: I don't know about rational. Todd went to fetch an extension cord when the powers out, but there is an explanation.

Mel: You do hate your own show, don't you?

Brad: Its Todd's show not mine, and yes. Not enough to kill over it. Believe it or not, it was a lot more fun when we did this as a hobby. Each place we investigated would be different. We would try different techniques, usually got similar results. And it was a lot more thrilling without a camera crew, being in a pack takes the scary out of it.

Mel: So you like your numbers depleting?

Brad: Yes, but I'd rather be leaving then have the crew die off. You know I've been doing this stuff for ten years now. I'll be a ghost before I talk to one.

Mel: Where would you go? Back to the hardware store Todd mentioned? I can't picture you happy working at a hardware store.

Brad: Todd left out a few details. It is my father's hardware store, he owns five of them and I was managing one for him at the time Todd roped me into this life of luxury. Really, I'm rich, I can pay that stupid contract fine and leave. I'd just hate doing that to Todd.

Mel: Are you real? Or some figment of my imagination?

Brad: What do you mean?

Mel: I had given up hope on finding a single, good looking, intelligent man. I didn't think they existed. Add to that you're rich, and I really would not be shocked if you can find a ghost or bigfoot for me.

Brad: I didn't think there was a beautiful woman on planet earth that would put up with my ego. You should be warned, I hate being wrong.

Mel: Really? I wouldn't know if I hate being wrong, I've never tried it.

Brad: So maybe we could find a ghost tonight.

Mel: Do you believe in love at first sight?

Brad: I'm searching for indications.

Mel: Funny, me too. I'm not giving up until I find some hard evidence.

Brad: Is that so? How hard?

Wendy: Come back. (She's dreaming)

Layla: (over the walkie) Palkovich is talking in her sleep, should I wake her?

Todd: (over the walkie) No, I'm getting more done while she's sleeping. Hey Brad, how big was the entrance to the mine?

Brad: (over the walkie) How should I know?

Todd: (over the walkie) Just wondered if they had standardized entrances to mines in the eighteen hundreds.

Brad: Not that I know of.

Wendy: Quack.

Layla: (over the walkie) She just quacked.

Brad: (over the walkie) Toss her a piece of bread, she'll be fine (back to Mel) So what leads a girl like you to the life of an FBI agent?

Mel: The excitement. The intrigue, the search for truth.

Brad: So you must be fairly new to the game.

Mel: What makes you say that?

Brad: A romantic ideal about your job.

Mel: I'd hope I never lose it, but yes, fairly new. Out of curiosity-

Brad: That's why I do almost every thing

Mel: Out of curiosity?

Brad: No better reason.

Mel: You said girl like me. What type of girl, pray tell do you deduce me to be?

Brad: Oh, you want me to read you? Like I was Castlebay?

Mel: No, like you were Brad.

Brad: Then a good job? Okay. First off, I think you're hiding something-

Mel: Me?

Brad: Nothing too bad but you've got an edge that doesn't seem to be the real you, more of a defense. Your nails are manicured, very nice but short. Which tells me you take the time to care about your appearance but you still actually work, you just said pray tell, which means you probably like Shakespeare, and played princess a lot as a child.

Mel: Most women get manicures, do we all play princess?

Brad: No, some play hooker. Your nails have class. Let's see, your hair is natural color, which tells me that you're proud of who you are. You're also adamant that people get your title correct *Agent* Thompson, which tells me you are used to having more respect than the world is actually giving you.

Mel: I had no Idea I was so easy to read.

Brad: You're not, I know there's more than meets my eye. And you're single which tells me you have very high standards especially in men.

Mel: Are my standards that high?

Brad: No man has measured up to them so far, or you wouldn't be flirting with me. I'm guessing you had a wonderful childhood and two near perfect parents, one of which, I think your father worked for the FBI and you always looked up to him.

Mel: You may be able to put Jack out of business, but I'm sorry to inform you, you're wrong on a few points.

Brad: I prefer the term incorrect.

Mel: All right, you're incorrect on a few points. My mom was the FBI agent, the childhood was pretty perfect. You're a fascinating man Mr. Crane. (The Table where Wendy and Jack are sitting suddenly begins to rise) Now, how is it you and Todd-

Layla: Brad! Todd! (Over her walkie talkie)

Brad: Please hold that thought. What do you want?

Todd: I'm here.

Layla: The table is floating.

Todd: A levitating table? Keep taping I'm on my way.

Brad: You're kidding. Come on.

(They all meet up with flashlights back at the main room. The table falls as they enter)

Wendy: What was dat?!

Jack: Are you okay? What happened?

Wendy: I saw de image of a small boy.

Layla: That table just flew two feet in the air and stayed there.

Jack: My trance must have been too deep to realize-

Layla: You were asleep.

Jack: I was in a meditative-

Layla: You were snoring.

Wendy: I was vatching a little boy, chasing a duck through a field of grass.

Layla: That explains the quack.

Todd: Can we see the tape?

Brad: I'm going to examine this table.

Layla: Do you want to see this or not? (Layla, Mel, Todd, Jack and Wendy all gather around the monitor to watch this evidence, while Brad goes to the table) Just let me cue it up. I swear you can't see either of these two move, so if they faked it they did a great job.

Wendy: I would do no suck ting.

Mel: Don't you mean such, no such thing?

Wendy: Dat is What I said.

Brad: (Who is trying to move the table) This thing is heavy.

Mel: (she goes to help Brad) It is. I didn't get to ask you Brad, how did you and Todd start this? I know why he wants to know about the other side, but why do you?

Todd: It was a Halloween party in, what was it? Tenth grade? Maybe eleventh. I just got my learners permit.

Brad: I think we were both seniors.

Todd: Did you figure out how Castlebay did it?

Brad: No, I don't think he did.

Jack: I resent that, what makes you think I would go to the trouble of making a table levitate?

Todd: Any way, a girl there had a Ojai board, much like this one.

Brad: Parker Brothers makes them all a like Todd.

Todd: Brad's Grandfather had just passed away-

Brad: Why do you insist on telling this part of the story? I admitted I faked it, I moved the damn thing!

Todd: I know, I know.

Mel: You faked evidence?

Brad: I moved the planchette.

Jack: The what?

Wendy: It's de ting dhat moves in de middle.

Jack: I didn't know it had a name.

Mel: Brad the debunker faked it?

Brad: I was seventeen, we were at a Halloween party with girls dressed up like sexy vampires and playboy bunnies. This table isn't level. There I am, stuck holding a board game staring at him. I wanted to be done so I started moving the thing to answer his questions.

Todd: I asked if we could speak to Brad's grandfather, because he had just expired, it said yes-

Brad: I said yes! It was me moving the thing! And stop saying expired! Milk expires, he died!

Todd: Okay, Okay! The point is we were discussing his dead grandfather, and no one else in the room, then out of nowhere the lid flies off a jar of mayonnaise, and hits Brad in the head. That table is floating I can see Jack's feet, and Wendy's knees are in position; her foot comes down right before it happens.

Brad: It's the table. It's rigged like a barber's chair. You can barely tell, but there's a pedal.

Todd: Castlebay, if you-

Brad: No, don't hit him yet, this wasn't him. The floor is faded around the base it's been here way more than a few months.

Todd: It was rigged back in the fifties?

Brad: The table looks older than that, and it's cast iron. No one makes anything this sturdy any more. I see a pedal. I can't get the pressure I need, it's stuck or rusted.

Layla: When Palkovich feel asleep her pudgy foot hit it.

Brad: That's ridiculous, you're assuming her foot weighs more than- (pause) Madam Palkovich, can you come here a minute?

Wendy: What is it you need from me? Is it in my job description?

Brad: I'd like you to sit and put your foot up.

Wendy: For you I can do dat.

Brad: Could you put your foot here? Please? (as she does the table pops up) Yep, that did it.

Wendy: Did What? How did my foot do dat?

Todd: As Wendy fell asleep-

Wendy: I vas in a trance-

Todd: Okay while she slipped deeper into her trance-

Brad: Dreaming about a boy and his duck-

Todd: She relaxed, shifted her foot and accidentally hit the secret pedal to bring up the table up.

Layla: Another perfectly creepy moment ruined.

Todd: The viewers' would've caught that on tape. You can see the tables' base. But why would anyone have a trick haunted table?

Brad: Fakers where a trend at the turn of the century, this could've been made for a staged séance. Someone in the fifties probably bought it because it was from the old west period, not even knowing it did this. Really it's quite fitting that Palkovich and Castlebay were seated at an antique faker's table.

Mel: Okay, so Brad got hit in the head with a mayonnaise lid and decided to join you in the search for life after death?

Brad: The Mayo lid was symbolic for me at the time, in retrospect it was probably just coincidence.

Todd: You even belittle your own experience?

Brad: My grandfather had an infatuation with mayo sandwiches.

Jack: Just mayo?

Wendy: Dat sounds discussing.

Brad: The last few years of his life the arthritis in his hands was so bad, he always had me open his jars of mayo. I thought it was his spirit letting me know those crippled hands weren't bothering him anymore.

Mel: That's sweet, and you're sure no one tossed the mayo lid at you?

Todd: Oh, no we watched it explode. The top just popped off, like a rocket.

Brad: Like pressure was building up behind it because of faulty seals or rapid temperature changes, I haven't figured out how yet, but I'm sure it was a freak accident.

Todd: You just don't want to believe, you're scared of what might-

Brad: I'm not scared of anything.

Mel: Aren't you scared? You've been wandering this place alone all night.

Todd: You've never met any of my ex-wives, have you? I'd rather be alone. (He exits)

Mel: How does someone start eating mayonnaise sandwiches?

Brad: My grandfather always put so much mayonnaise on a sandwich that was all you could taste anyway, so one day he decided why bother pretending it's some other kind of sandwich.

Wendy: He sounds like very wise man.

Jack: How long did he live eating mayo sandwiches? (Melanie begins sifting through tapes)

Brad: Died at eighty-six. After two triple by-passes and a handful of heart attacks. It takes longer than you think to clog every artery.

Layla: You two going back to sleep?

Wendy: I was not sleeping vith Mr. Castlebay!

Jack: She doesn't understand the finer details of meditation. Perhaps we should try a different method, what do you think Madame Palkovich? scrying? Pendulum?

Brad: Getting honest jobs and moving on with your lives.

Wendy: Grab dat suck. (she refers to a bowling bag)

Jack: Suck?

Mel: Sack!

Wendy: Dat is what I said, would you people stop correcting me when I am saying what I said!

Brad: Are we bowling?

Wendy: Dis is my crystal ball, help me set it right here Mr. Castlebay. Careful, it is heavy. Only de densest crystal can be used to speak vith de spirits.

Layla: So that's why they speak through Castlebay? They need something dense.

Mel: Layla, excuse me. You seem to be missing a tape.

Layla: That's impossible; I keep track of all that.

Mel: Then what happened to the tape between the 21st and the 23rd of July? That was a weekend you were on the road, right?

Brad: That was the weekend Eddy killed himself, wasn't it?

Mel: Precisely the day that's missing.

Layla: Let me look, Brad, hold this (She hands him the camera, so she can go check the tapes)

Brad: Are you going to try to validate the use of a chunk of glass? Todd? Any one see where Todd went?

Layla: He's probably off investigating.

Wendy: De storm has past.

Brad: Yeah, about two hours ago. It's just raining now. I know why she's not a meteorologist.

Wendy: Why is it you keep trying to pretend dat dhose who talk to spirits are de same as those dat predict de future?

Brad: Because you're all fakes.

Jack: How dare you.

Wendy: Dat is not true! I knew woman once, she had de turd eye.

Brad: She could see bowel movements before they happened?

Wendy: She knew everyting dat vas destined to be. She even knew dat her and I would become great friends, but she did not vish to have my friendship because she vas destined to take my true love from me.

Layla: She was gonna steal your big mac?

Wendy: She vas going to take my husband.

Brad: I didn't know you were married.

Layla: Blind guys gotta do something.

Brad: I suppose so. If you were both married. Was your guy deaf too?

Wendy: I could kill you. Not literally of course, don't take dat as a threat, agent Thompson. I am not married. Nor vas I ever, de man dhat I thought I vould marry. I broke it off vith him on de second date.

Jack: Why?

Layla: He tried to take her big mac.

Wendy: He vas going to run off vith my best friend! I did not need dat man in my life.

Brad: The best friend you never had.

Wendy: Dat is correct.

Brad: Did it ever occur to you, this lady just didn't want to talk to you?

Wendy: You could not understand, your mind is too narrow.

Brad: So she's rich now, from her lottery winnings?

Jack: True physics have their gifts for a reason, they are here to serve a higher calling, not use the power for financial gain.

Brad: Really?

Jack: I said true physics. I'm just a feeler of energy, and stuff.

Wendy: When you have been granted a gift of prophecy, you have suck power dhat you simply know, dhere are tings much bigger dhan yourself.

Layla: Jupiter?

Brad: Then where was this woman on September tenth two-thousand and one?

Wendy: Probably getting laughed at by some FBI agent like her, dhat had de narrow mind like you!

Brad: I've seen commercials asking me to call psychics. Why don't they call me?

Jack: That's actually a great idea. I wonder if I could start a service like that.

Layla: Todd, must have the damn thing. That was on the full spectrum. Those things are too expensive to lose. I'll ask him.

Wendy: Now silence so I can concentrate.

Jack: How can I help?

Wendy: Joined vith me my hands, and hand me marshmallow treat.

Layla: While these two old dogs keep doing the same trick, I'm gonna go see if Todd found anything worth taping.

Mel: And ask him about the missing tape?

Layla: Yeah, yeah.

Mel: Do we just sit here watching the psychic friends sleep? Or should we do an EVP session or something?

Brad: If you want to talk to your stomach, sure, we can do an EVP.

Mel: Now, I'm nervous. That cupcake I ate is sitting a little strange.

Brad: So, once you prove I'm not a murderer, do I have a shot at going out to dinner vith you?

Mel: Of course, you're a highly intelligent, hot television personality.

Brad: This is where I question my intelligence. The hot part is going through my brain.

Mel: You can't help being a man. I'll re phrase my complement. You're highly intelligent for a man. Now what do I say?

Brad: About what?

Mel: How do I start an EVP session?

Jack: Go over that way, you're interfering with the vibes of the table.

Brad: And their snoring will be too loud.

Wendy: We have no plans to snore.

Mel: I've watched this show enough, I should remember how to start this.

Brad: How do you start when you interrogate a witness?

Mel: I have no clue, I've never interrogated a witness.

Brad: Really?

Mel: I shouldn't be telling you this, but this is my first case. They always give rookies low priority cases, I have a supervising partner you'll meet tomorrow. He was going to fly out tonight, but his kid's birthday party-

Brad: Wait a second. My life is in danger and it's a low priority?

Mel: On a national level, yes. Who ever is killing off the people involved in this show is only interested in this show. There are only three original members left.

Brad: So if you screw up, it's just three more deaths, no big deal.

Mel: I'm not going to screw up, but yes that's the way my supervisor sees it. You've got to think on a national level. We've got Taliban and copy cat crazies trying to take out train stations and airports. If three ghost hunters get neglected, well-

Brad: The government must know who I vote for.

Mel: You're being paranoid, now how do we start this?

Brad: First we state our names, the time and where we are in the house. Really, you've never done this before?

Mel: An EVP? No.

Brad: I mean a case.

Mel: Maybe that's what you thought I was hiding. Look, am I any less attractive to you just because I'm pretending to know what I'm doing?

Brad: No, I'm still incredibly attracted to you, that's not an issue. I must admit you are doing a good job at faking it. It's kind of bothersome how good you are at faking it.

Mel: Melanie and Brad in the main entrance to the saloon it's 4:18 in the morning, whoa. It's late.

Brad: Or early. Okay now we say something stupid like, we're not here to hurt you.

Mel: Why is that stupid? They could be scared.

Brad: It was funny to me when Heather started working with us. For the first few shows you could see her shaking like a leaf, and saying don't be scared, we're not here to harm you. How can we hurt them when they're already dead?

Mel: Maybe they don't know that.

Brad: Then let them run, I don't want to speak with an idiot ghost.

Mel: What if we are the ghosts for the other side?

Brad: Then all we have to do is find the flip side of our team, looking for proof of the living.

Mel: I don't know that it works like that.

(A scream and running is heard)

Mel: Please explain that.

Brad: Let's check... (Or) Sounds like... (He goes over and flips on the monitor, where we see the camera as if Layla is running down a hall or we just hear Layla screaming and running. Director's choice again.) Layla is scared shitless and running from something. (The screen goes off, the candle blows out, and the stage is in complete darkness)

Mel: What the-

Brad: Please don't say that.

Jack: What is that? Vendy? Hello?

Brad: (to the Walkie) Layla? Where are you?! What's wrong? Todd? We have a situation!
(Layla's blood curdling scream then a loud crash is heard)

Todd: What's going on? (Brad Melanie and Todd turn on flashlights)

Jack: Holy moly what was that?

Brad: Over here! It's Layla! Someone call an ambulance! (Brad finds a lifeless Layla.) Can we get anymore light?

Jack: I'll light the candles. (He lights one candle then drops the matches) Ouch!

Brad: Layla! Layla? Can you? (pause) Layla? I think she's dead.

Todd: Are you sure?

Mel: Careful! Her neck might be broken- (Brad rolls her over to show she was impaled by the railing) okay, that doesn't matter.

Brad: She's got no pulse, she's gone.

Todd: Can you move to the left?

Brad: Are you taping her death?

Todd: I was standing here with the inferred-I-

Mel: That's sick!

Todd: Look, it stands to reason that if a spirit leaves a body at the time of death, and this camera is supposed to pick up the visual of spirits, that if-

Brad: You've worked with this woman for eight years! We went to highschool with her! She dies in front of you and you want to take pictures?!

Todd: The camera was in my hand!

Brad: This investigations over, we need to get out of here.

Todd: It's not your call to end an investigation!

Mel: Then I'll end it!

Jack: My phone is worthless.

Mel: Don't you have a landline?

Jack: Next week I will! Something's wrong with Vendy.

Brad: I know.

Mel: No Brad. Unusually wrong. She's chanting something and her eyes are rolling into the back of her head. She's going all shinning on us.

Todd: I've never seen her-

Brad: Put the camera down Todd.

Todd: For the sake of documenting-

Brad: We've just lost another crew member Todd! The show is done!

Todd: We lost Peggy, the show went on. (Todd waves a long device over Wendy)

Brad: We were driving! Not in the middle of a show. Would you quit it!

Todd: Quit what?

Brad: You're taking pictures of a friend that just died, and poking a comatose woman with a stick.

Todd: It's not a stick, it's an electromag-

Brad: I know what it is! It's just wrong! This time is different.

Todd: Yes, this time we have the chance to document the paranormal activity if there is any at the time of death. Layla would've wanted proof!

Brad: No you want proof, she would've wanted a cigarette.

Todd: A chance is a chance.

Mel: We've got to get in touch with the local authorities.

Jack: Vendy did threaten to kill her.

Brad: She's in a coma.

Mel: She's chanting, that's not a coma. I wish we had more flashlights.

(Todd exits in the dark)

Jack: I should've had that cell tower put in first. But no, I was worried about the hard wood floors. It was on my list! Along with WIFI, you can't really run a resort without basic-

Brad: Jack! Get a hold of yourself.

Jack: I'll go get help.

Mel: Wait! You shouldn't leave my sight!

Brad: I know where he was, he didn't have time to do it! If one of us is the killer it's- it's- Todd. Todd? Todd? - That's the only reasonable explanation.

Mel: Where were you when Layla went looking for you? Todd?

Brad: Todd is gone. That says something.

Mel: Jack, drive till you get service and call this number. Tell them to send back up for agent Thompson.

Brad: Why don't you go?

Mel: I'm not leaving you and Wendy here alone.

Brad: Okay, I'll go with that. Hurry. (Jack runs out) Todd? Where are you? Did you do this? (Brad begins lighting candles.)

Mel: This doesn't make any sense, Todd has suffered the greatest loss from these deaths, he's going to lose his show.

Brad: That's what I thought, But if he knew the show was about to be dropped anyway. Do you know what a diabetic coma looks like? Could she be in one?

Mel: I don't really know.

Brad: She had a lot of cupcakes.

Mel: What are you doing?

Brad: Getting as much light as possible, if you have to shoot my best friend to save my life, I don't want you to miss.

Mel: No body is shooting anyone.

Brad: Nice sentiment, but better to be prepared.

Mel: I didn't bring a gun.

Brad: You didn't bring a-

Mel: You and I are the only ones that know that, let's keep that information to ourselves. We don't know Todd's guilty. He was already at the bottom step when I saw him.

Brad: You're right, and he didn't seem out of breath. Maybe there is someone else here. But we still should have a gun. What kind of agent are you?

Mel: I normally work a desk job.

Brad: And they don't give you a gun?

Mel: They gave me one; it's back at the hotel. I don't like guns.

Brad: You wanted to be an FBI agent and you don't like guns?

Mel: A gun is not an investigative tool.

Jack: (Re-entering) I can't go any where! My tires are flat.

Brad: Use my car!

Jack: Can't I checked, every tire has been slashed.

Brad: Who the hell had time to do that? Todd, Todd had that time. He was on his own for a few hours -we saw him out by the cars.

Mel: Or someone that's here, that we don't know is here. We just saw shadows outside and assumed.

Brad: Okay, that's worse. Then Todd could be in trouble. Or dead.

Jack: Wouldn't being dead be in trouble?

Brad: Or that's when all your troubles are over, but I really don't think we should be debating this right now.

Mel: Maybe there is a curse.

Brad: There is no such thing as a curse.

Jack: I just dropped the last cupcake.

Brad: Okay, now I believe in the curse.

Jack: Really?

Brad: No, not really. Are all of the tires slashed? Or just a few?

Jack: I didn't take a complete inventory, why?

Brad: Because we can put all the good tires on one vehicle and get the hell out of here. If someone slashed the tires to keep us here, they would still want a get a way plan for themselves.

Mel: What about Todd?

Brad: I'm going to have to go find him.

Mel: That's very brave of you, but you should stay here. I'll go find him.

Brad: He's my friend.

Mel: You don't know that he's not tied up by whoever did this.

Brad: We don't know that he's not dead, and we don't know that he's not a psychotic killer. There's a hell of a lot we don't know right now.

Jack: (Throwing water on Wendy) Snap out of it Vendy!

Brad: Her name is Wendy, and now we have a wet comatose medium to drag out the door. How the hell are we going to get her out of here? How did she get her ass through the door?

Mel: Now you and the ass word?

Brad: That was in memory of Layla.

(Three bangs are heard from the air-conditioner)

Mel: What was-

Jack: What the-

Brad: Please, can we stop that! (one louder bang) The AC, remember? That must mean the powers back on (The candles all blow out, leaving the stage dark.) I just have to flip the breakers. Jack? (Brad turns his flashlight back on)

Jack: Yeah?

Brad: Mel?

Mel: I'm here; do you know where the breakers are?

Brad: Yeah, I flipped them on when we got here. Where are your flashlights?

Jack: Don't know.

Mel: It's got to be close by. I'll find it.

Brad: I'll be right back, you two stay here.

Jack: I'm too scared to move. (As Brad leaves he takes the only light source with him, leaving the stage dark once more.)

Mel: Be careful.

Jack: Agent Melanie? Where are you?

Mel: Hold on, I'm getting a lighter.

Jack: Okay.

Mel: Oh, man.

Jack: What is it? What are you doing?

Mel: Pick pocketing a corpse, how about you?

Jack: I think I just peed myself.

(Whack! The sound of the chandelier falling on Wendy. Jack and Mel Scream. The light should be braced by Wendy's butt and the cast iron table)

Mel: What the hell! (She flicks the lighter, then burns herself) Wendy? Madam Palkovich? (The lights come back on, however much dimmer without the main chandelier. Jack is gone) Jack? Wendy! Wendy? Oh shit. (She runs to Wendy) I can't move this light. Oh come on, don't die on me. This was a bad idea.

(Todd enters from behind her)

Todd: Let me help (He flings a rope or extension cord around her to tie her hands, she struggles but can't break free. After an attempt at fighting she calms down.)

Mel: Okay, so you're the killer.

Todd: Why aren't you screaming for Brad?

Mel: Because, he could be my last hope, or he could be dead. Either way screaming won't help.

Todd: He would like that logic. He could be the master mind. We could've plotted this together to finally collect the proof we need that there is life after death. (He takes a camera points it at Wendy)

Mel: Screaming still won't help. What did you do with Jack?

Todd: Nothing, I assumed he ran.

Mel: Okay.

Todd: Damn.

Mel: Still can't watch the soul exit the body of your victim? Too dark for your camera?

Todd: Of course not, this is a thermal imager. But Palkovich is alive. Chandelier weights a ton it should've squashed her like a bug.

Brad: (Sneaking up behind Todd and putting him in a choke hold) That cast iron table, probably saved her-

Todd: Get Off me-

Brad: No-

Todd: Yes!

Brad: No!

Todd: I've got a knife!

Brad: Not playing fair.

(They fight, rolling and wrestling until Brad Screams as he's stabbed in the shoulder. Brad knocks the knife away, but is then punched and tied up by whatever Todd has handy.)

Brad: How could you?

Todd: Stab you? I wasn't going to, you kind of made me.

Brad: Our friends! Your crew, why would you?

Todd: Look, I didn't set out for it to be like this. Our ratings were dropping, I wasn't allowed to get new equipment.

Brad: So you start killing camera men?

Todd: No! I did not kill Eddy, that was a suicide. All I did was set up the camera to tape it. He said his goodbyes on tape, that's why the family was missing it. I wasn't in the room with him or anything.

Brad: You knew? You didn't try to talk him out of it? You didn't call anyone?

Todd: He really wanted to do it. He had for a very long time. Who was I to argue? I did suggest it was a bad idea at first, but then I couldn't talk him out of it. So I took the opportunity to research the phenomenon of death. I taped him on the full spectrum. By the way, if you noticed the missing tape that was it. I didn't want anyone to know I had taped it, I didn't think people would understand.

Brad: That you were nuts? Sure they'd understand that. But Godfrey found the tape, didn't he? Layla put down the camera for a smoke and he confronted you with it.

Todd: Yeah, she was on the other side of the bell tower. You know his allergies to smoke.

Brad: And you pushed him off a church?

Todd: It wasn't that simple, we were fighting. He almost pushed me off too. The guard rail just happened to break in my favor.

Brad: Then- Oh, the van- you had the equipment running in the van didn't you?

Todd: Yes, but that was only suppose to be Billy. I tried desperately to get Heather and Peggy to ride with me. That was the fight your witness, witnessed.

Brad: What'd you see?

Todd: What do you mean?

Brad: You must have seen something in the full spectrum tape of Eddy's death that made you want more.

Todd: Heat vapor. A definite release of some sort of hot energy field as he died.

Brad: The body releases everything as it dies Todd, that's not a big surprise. It was probably methane gas from his stomach. The full spectrum camera gets every bit of visual possible, what more can you gain from this?

Todd: In the van I had the EMF recorders, the voice recorders, the camera's –everything running. I was hoping to get the equipment back. You know, the stuff that survived the crash. I really didn't expect that to be tied up as evidence. Now that I'm down to do or die. Pardon my choice of words.

Brad: How did you plan to gather any evidence from Layla's death?

Todd: I had nothing to do with that.

Brad: You didn't kill her because she asked you about the missing tape?

Todd: No, I was downstairs when I heard her screaming. She never asked me about the tape, I just know she was missing one. I did take one. After you made such a stink about my taping

her body, I knew you weren't going to see things my way, then I snuck up stairs to see what she was running from, and I over heard you two pinning the whole thing on me.

Mel: Then was it you that slashed the tires?

Todd: Oh, yeah that was me. I also dropped the chandelier on Palkovich. Though I had a clear shot at Castlebay too.- little buggers faster than he looks. As soon as I saw the FBI was involved I knew I had to get my proof tonight, even if it meant killing you all. Actually I was hoping I could get you, then Castlebay, then Palkovich. This all happened out of order for me. Really I wanted Layla around much longer, having a camera woman is helpful. (He pats down Mel) I was trying to kill you first, but Brad wouldn't stop flirting.

Mel: That can be considered harassment.

Todd: Will I go to jail for that? You don't have a weapon on you, do you?

Mel: No.

Todd: What kind of FBI agent are you?

Brad: That's what I said.

Mel: One naïve enough to think the people she watches on TV every week are going to be innocent.

Brad: Don't be too hard on yourself. I am sorry the rescue thing didn't work out.

Mel: We've still got Jack.

Todd: Yeah, him I won't mind killing. Now, how in the hell am I gonna kill Wendy? I've got no gun, Guess I could bash her head in with something. Or my knife, do you know where I put it?

Brad: These things must be done delicately.

Todd: I know.

Brad: I was quoting the wicked witch from the wizard of Oz Todd, you've lost it.

Todd: Could run over her with a car. That tool chest from the van should have wrenches.

Brad: Todd, just give it up. You'll find out what happens when you die, we all will, we have no choice. When you die, you'll know for certain.

Todd: How can you live not having that answered? How can you just go about your daily life and not know whether or not it just ends?

Brad: Because whatever happens there is absolutely nothing I can do about it.

Todd: But if there is another side, if there is a world beyond this one then- then-

Brad: Then you want to go there? Don't you? That's what this obsession is about. You want to see your mother again. You want perfume and cookies.

Todd: You always did understand me. I miss her so much. Do you know what it's like to lose your mommy? Do you have any idea?

Brad: No, I can't say I do. My father's been married four times, I've always had spares.

Todd: I was six years old. Just six.

Mel: My father was killed when I was sixteen, I had to watch him die.

Brad: Really?

Mel: My mother was an agent with the FBI. One of the dirt-bags she caught escaped prison, and he decided he needed revenge. Explosives were his thing, he assumed my mother drove the mini-van. Just like Brad assumed my father was the agent.

Brad: How did you happen to see it?

Mel: It was February, he went out to start the car and warm it up. He was going to take me to the DMV for my driving test. That mini van was going to be mine in a few hours. I was at the door looking at his face when it went up in flames.

Brad: That's horrible, I'm so sorry.

Todd: Man, sixteen and you had to watch your car blow up.

Mel: It was a ten year old caravan, I got over that part.

Brad: So much for my happy childhood theory.

Mel: No, it was very happy till that point. My father was a stay at home dad, and yes he always called me princess.

Todd: So you want to know what's on the other side too. Now you get to help find out. Don't think of it as dying, think of it as reuniting with your father.

Brad: Did they ever catch him? The guy that killed him?

Mel: No, mom spent the rest of her career looking, she was ultimately fired over the obsession.

Brad: That's why you're an agent and why you keep watching this show.

Todd: Does she need a reason to watch? It's a good show. She still had ten more years with her dad, I was six! In first grade. I deserved more time with her than that, didn't I?

Brad: Yes Todd, it's a very sad story, but death is coming for us all, you can just wait, live your life, and if you do get to see her again, you will.

Todd: I don't want to wait! I don't want to wait another second! I want my mommy back now!

Brad: Todd, you are way more fucked up than I thought you were. So why be such a chicken? Just kill yourself and find out what happens next.

Todd: What if the Catholics have it right? What if suicide condemns you to hell? That won't be where my mommy is.

Brad: Catholics just tell people that because they don't want to lose numbers, if all those Catholics thought it was okay to kill themselves they couldn't multiply as fast. It's a world domination thing, even the Pope will tell you so.

Todd: Really? That explains the birth control thing.

Mel: That's not true.

Todd: No, it's not. Of course not, I'm not listening to you anymore; you're just messing with my mind.

Brad: Thanks Mel.

Mel: Sorry, reflex, I'm Catholic.

Todd: Really? A good one?

Mel: I can't say good, I go to Mass every Christmas, and I give something up for lent every year.

Todd: Great. Now I can watch for the differences in deaths between the good Christian and the atheist.

Brad: You'll never get away with this.

Todd: What's stopping me?

Brad: Nothing that I can see, but it seemed like the appropriate thing to say. Question is do you want to do this?

Todd: At this point, yeah I'm pretty much stuck with it.

Brad: You'll spend the rest of your life in jail, whether you get your proof or not. You know someone will catch you.

Todd: If I don't kill the FBI agent then I'm already caught. You'll try to get me psychiatric help, so I've got to kill you. I could pin the whole thing on Jack, he was a suspect. Then claim his death was in self defense. He did lead us here under false pretenses. It could work. This was all an elaborate trap by Jack.

Brad: Okay that's plausible.

Mel: I've got to check in with the office by 6am or they'll send agents looking for me.

Todd: That's good to know, but still gives me plenty of time.

Brad: How can you make a get a way? You flattened all the tires.

Todd: Nope, There were five cars, and I left four good tires out there, just not on the same car. I have learned a lot from your logic.

Brad: Damn. I guessed that but if you frame Castlebay, and find your proof how are you going to explain your findings?

Todd: He committed his grisly murders in a place we had wired for a show. The cameras were already there.

Brad: Yeah, I guess that may actually work.

Todd: Not like it would matter.

Brad: Why not?

Todd: My friend, once I find proof there is another side, I'll be joining you.

Mel: If the Catholics are right murder sends you to hell too.

Todd: I got that covered. I'll be going to confession and asking for forgiveness first. If it was that big of a deal explain the crusades. That was an awful lot of good Christians slaughtering people.

Mel: They had a cause.

Todd: As do I.

Mel: Their cause was noble.

Brad: Actually he has you on that, they were pretty much raving lunatics too.

Mel: I thought you were trying to talk him out of this.

Brad: I wasn't going to lie.

Todd: He really is a very honest guy, you two would've made a cute couple. Excuse me. I've got to get the tool box so I can kill Palkovich before she wakes up. (He exits)

Brad: Mel, I can't see from here. Where did that light fixture hit her?

Mel: I think most of it's force hit the table.

Brad: Lucky it's a cast iron table. Maybe there's a reason Layla set her up there.

Mel: I thought you weren't superstitious.

Brad: I'm not. Do you know where Jack is?

Mel: No clue.

Jack: (The broom closet door opens) I'm in here.

Brad: In a closet? Why am I not surprised?

Mel: Great! He's gone, come untie us.

Jack: What if he comes back?

Brad: He will, that's why you hurry.

Jack: I'm too scared to move.

Mel: You can do it.

Brad: Come on, feel it from your other side.

Jack: I wet my other side.

Brad: If you don't save us I'll tell him where you are!

Jack: You wouldn't. (He closes the door)

(Todd re-enters whistling with a large tool box.)

Brad: You seem content.

Todd: If you're looking for remorse over killing you, yes I do feel bad about that. You've been my best friend since middle school. Really if I let you live the emotional strain would be un bearable.

Brad: That's comforting, but I'm not really an emotional person, you know that.

Todd: You're very emotional. You've just been treated badly by so many people you hide your emotions. In fact you're method of dealing with your uncontrollable emotions is to detach yourself and think logically through your feelings. That's what makes you seem unemotional.

Brad: That's a fairly good theory. Because my father ignored me, my biological mother never tried to contact me after the divorce.

Todd: And all your stepmothers resented you.

Brad: You do know me well. Now my best friend is going to kill me.

Mel: You poor thing.

Todd: That's why I've got to kill him, it would be too hard on him if I didn't.

Brad: Fine, kill me first.

Todd: Palkovich is ready and waiting.

Brad: I all ready had to watch Layla die, I don't want to see you play piñata with Palkovich or destroy Melanie's perfect body.

Mel: I wouldn't say perfect.

Todd: Aw, okay you first, just because you're my friend. The axe or the wrench?

Brad: I'm not sure, which one would hurt the least?

Todd: I think as long as I strike hard and fast in the center of your head it will be quick no matter which one it is.

Brad: In the center? How about at the base of my neck where my spine meets the skull? That should sever the nerves faster.

Todd: But there's a chance you'll remain conscious past the first blow.

Mel: I don't believe I'm listening to this conversation.

Todd: I could try it on her first and then see which one works best.

Brad: No, just the center, whatever you think.

Todd: But if you really think your way would be more humane.

Brad: If it hurts, I'm sure it won't for long. But can I scream out a few last words?

Todd: Why not? We are in the middle of nowhere, if it makes you feel better, go ahead.

Brad: Jack! Wherever you are! If you make it through this and I end up dead, I'm coming back to kick the shit out of your other side!

Todd: He's probably running in circles in the woods. Don't worry I'm sure I'll find him before he gets too far. He's really not that bright. Bye buddy, it was nice knowing you. (He raises the wrench to strike Brad, and as he does Jack bursts out of the closet screaming and runs to tackle Todd around his waist)

Brad: It's about time you came out of the closet.

(As the two men struggle on the floor Melanie stands up freed from her binding and goes over to untie Brad)

Brad: How did you do that?

Mel: I just needed the time, thanks for stalling.

Brad: Can you take an end? (Handing her the rope or cord they were tied up with)

Mel: Clothes line?

Brad: Worth a shot, I've got one arm. (They get the cord around Todd and pull, however you want or can stage it, Todd ends up being flung behind the bar in a loud crash while Jack Mel and Brad are in front of the bar)

Mel: Is it over?

Brad: Todd? Are you awake? Todd?

Jack: Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god.

Mel: Calm down! I'll go see what happened to him.

Brad: you did good Jack, you did good.

Jack: Oh my god, oh my god-

Brad: Wait, Melanie. He could have that knife. He could be sitting back there waiting to strike. I'll look.

Jack: I got the wrench.

Mel: I'm trained to handle this.

Brad: You weren't trained very well, you didn't even bring your gun.

Mel: Excuse me, do you remember who freed you? Todd doesn't have a gun either I've told you I don't-

Todd: (Standing up from behind the bar with an old riffle) Like guns? (He laughs) You don't like guns agent Thompson?

Brad: I don't like them much either, especially big ones.

Todd: Lucky for me this was a bar in the fifties. Smart bar keeps always have one of these somewhere. And now that Jack's finger prints are all over the wrench, (Jack drops the wrench) and I have several cracked ribs -that will make my story so much more believable. (Madam Palkovich re-gains consciousness during this monologue and picks up the something heavy, wrench or crystal ball. Todd is walking the three into a corner and doesn't notice this going on behind him.)

The story is so simple. Jack killed off those crew members to get a spot on the team then he lured us to his trap, we refused to let him in and in a blind fury of rejection he started slaughtering us all, I'll say he was in love with Layla or Brad or both! First he dropped the chandelier on Madam Palkovich, he really wanted to be the medium for the show himself. We didn't know it at the time, Layla was running for help he impaled her with a piece of broken railing.

Jack: My fingerprints aren't on that.

Todd: No, but Brad's are, He thought Layla was the murderer! Yeah, because Layla and Palkovich always hated each other, there is proof of that. She fought him when confronted then-

Brad: I really don't think that story will work; I'm not dumb enough to fight Layla.

Todd: Layla wouldn't really hurt you she always had a crush on you.

Brad: You're kidding.

Todd: You notice every little detail, and you missed that? She's been in love with you since seventh grade.

Brad: I obviously have trouble with subjects I'm close to, I missed the fact my best friend was a psychotic killer-

Todd: Oh whatever- I'll work out the details after you're dead. I tried to save you but this was his territory and he had us cornered- I barely made it alive but when he tossed me behind the bar I found the rifle that saved my life.

Wendy: Mr. Daniels?

Todd: Wendy?

Wendy: I quit! (with that she smacks his head with the object and he falls to the floor dead)

Mel: Wendy! Thank you.

Jack: Wendy!

Brad: (checking Todd's pulse) He's dead. Did you aim at the back of his head or the base of the neck?

Wendy: My eyes were closed, I have no idea what I was doing.

Jack: Saving our lives, that's what you were doing, saving our lives.

Wendy: Now I have no job.

Jack: Could I interest you in joining me on my next tour?

Wendy: I would be loving that. Will you be making de cups of de cakes?

Jack: All you want.

Brad: Looks like you do have the power to lift curses after all Madam Palkovich. You've made a believer out of me. Shall we go change some tires in the rain?

Wendy: I am not mechanic.

Mel: Could you just hold the umbrella while we change the tires?

Wendy: Dat I do for you.

Jack: What happened? Did you slip into a trance? Astral projection? Did you make contact?

Wendy: I think I was dreaming, a miner and a show girl were telling me to relax, I was in great danger, but they would be helping me.

Brad: Kind of counterintuitive, let's get out of here and relax somewhere else.

Jack: What about your equipment?

Brad: That's Todd's junk not mine, I'm quitting with Palkovich.

Mel: Jack grab the Rice Krispies would you?

(They exit and turn off the lights, the stage goes dim but the monitor comes on showing the torn down room with Todd's body on the floor. Then in the monitor but not in the room thanks to a pre-taped scene, we see Todd stand up and look around)

Todd: Guys? Hey Brad? Where did everybody go? What happened?

Layla: (Suddenly stands next to him, she's smoking a cigarette) You're dead Todd, you got what you wanted, but I haven't seen you're mother anywhere. And I don't smell no damn cookies. (From where ever in the room they are standing we see the light flashing on the ghost detector he held up early/ it should also be flashing on the actual stage)

Todd: Layla look! This thing does work.

Layla: I'm happy for you.

Todd: Layla, what was it you were running from when you died?

Layla: Them. (Coal miners with pick axes and a woman in a burlesque dress come into the frame, Todd gulps in fear. Monitor goes off, blackout.)

The End.

(Don't be scared, it's over)

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