

10. The House

(An empty house. The CLIENT is looking around while the REALTOR checks some notes.)

REALTOR: Well, it seems that this house has everything you're looking for.

CLIENT: Yes, it does. I love that oak paneled den. It'll make a great home office.

REALTOR: One of the former owners used it for the same thing.

CLIENT: What can I say. The place is perfect.

REALTOR: Then why don't we go back to the office and start on the paperwork.

CLIENT: Fine. *(The REALTOR pulls out some papers for the CLIENT to sign.)* I still can't believe this place is going so cheap. I thought it would be at least 25 percent more.

REALTOR: Well...it is a very soft market right now. The owners aren't looking to make a big profit.

CLIENT: Tell me, what's the history of this house?

REALTOR: Didn't you get the information sheet when we came by the first time?

CLIENT: No, I didn't.

REALTOR: Oh.

CLIENT: I know that I was supposed to. Can you fill me in now?

REALTOR: Sure. Let me see if I have that information. *(Looks through some files.)* OK...uh...here we are. *(Starts to read.)* Let's see. The house was built in 1939. All the foundation has been checked over the years and it's as solid as ever. There was some earthquake damage in the basement in 1953 and that was fixed. In 1961, the new owners added on

the back part of the house. In 1973 a triple murder/suicide was committed here. In 1979 all the wiring was replaced and the plumbing was redone in '85. In...

CLIENT: Wait...wait...you wanna back up and repeat that for me.

REALTOR: The plumbing was redone in 1985. It was old and really in need of...

CLIENT: No. Before that.

REALTOR: The wiring was redone in '79.

CLIENT: I think you know which one I'm talking about.

REALTOR: The triple murder/suicide?

CLIENT: Bingo! Tell me, were you planning on just sliding that one by me?

REALTOR: No, not at all. It's just that...with a house this old, it's hard...uh...to remember everything that's happened here. Especially an...unfortunate little...mishap.

CLIENT: "An unfortunate little mishap"?! And how do you refer to the Titanic? An unfortunate little hole with some water damage?

REALTOR: Please don't get carried away. When the Marstons lived here...

CLIENT: The Marstons?! This is where the Marston murder took place?

REALTOR: So you know about it.

CLIENT: After a book, two miniseries, a feature film, a Broadway play and an opera, it's kinda hard not to. That was the kid who chopped up his mother, father, and grandmother, switched all their limbs, then killed himself.

REALTOR: See, people are always exaggerating. *(Pause)* He only switched two arms.

CLIENT: That makes me feel so much better. No wonder this place is going so cheap.

REALTOR: It's still a great house.
CLIENT: And just how many owners has this great house had since "the little mishap"?
REALTOR: (Pause) Twelve.
CLIENT: Twelve!?
REALTOR: OK, thirteen, but the last one didn't count since escrow never officially closed.
CLIENT: And they all left because of the Marston murder.
REALTOR: No. They knew about it when they bought the house.
CLIENT: So why leave?
REALTOR: There were several reasons.
CLIENT: Oh, just pick your favorite.
REALTOR: OK...do you believe in the supernatural?
CLIENT: I think I hate this. Why do you ask?
REALTOR: There have been some reports of...occurrences.
CLIENT: What kind of occurrences? Are you saying that this place is haunted, too?
REALTOR: Haunted is such a generic word. Let's just say that...things have happened.
CLIENT: What kind of things?
REALTOR: Well, objects being moved...
CLIENT: You mean like a lamp floating across the room or something?
REALTOR: No, more like the entire house being redecorated overnight. But quite tastefully from what I understand.
CLIENT: Terrific. Anything else?
REALTOR: A few sightings and...
(All the lights go out.)
CLIENT: Don't tell me, let me guess. An illumination problem?
REALTOR: We thought it was the wiring, but it was all replaced.
(The lights come back on.)

REALTOR: See, it doesn't last very long.
CLIENT: Very reassuring. So who is doing the haunting...
(SFX: wind, screams, running down the stairs, etc.)
REALTOR: We think it's the Marstons.
CLIENT: That should about do it!
(We hear a voice.)
VOICE: GET OUT!
CLIENT: And apparently he agrees with me. Bye. (Starts to exit.)
REALTOR: What about the house?
CLIENT: What?! I really hope you don't think I'm going to buy it now!
REALTOR: Well, you did leave a non-refundable deposit.
CLIENT: That's because you didn't tell me about any of this.
REALTOR: Well how would you have had us list it? As a "beautiful three bedroom, two-and-a-half bath, complete with den, built-ins, lurid past and highly disturbed ghost"?
CLIENT: You know, that's not my problem. Just get me my money back. (Goes to the door, but it's locked.) You want to unlock the door? Please.
REALTOR: It's not locked.
CLIENT: Then why won't it open?
VOICE: BECAUSE I DON'T WANT YOU TO LEAVE.
CLIENT: But you said....
VOICE: SHUT UP. I'VE CHANGED MY MIND. DO YOU LIKE MY HOUSE?
CLIENT: Well...I...
VOICE: ANSWER ME!
REALTOR: I wouldn't antagonize him if I were you.
CLIENT: Yes, I like the house.
VOICE: THEN BUY IT OR I'LL FIND YOU WHEREVER YOU ARE!
CLIENT: But...

VOICE: **BUY IT! SIGN THE PAPERS NOW!**
(The REALTOR opens the folder and the CLIENT signs.)

CLIENT: **OK?**

VOICE: **NOW – GO!**
(The CLIENT opens the door and runs. The REALTOR looks around and smiles.)

REALTOR: **Thanks, Mr. M.**

VOICE: **MY PLEASURE.**
(The REALTOR puts the folder away and exits.)

11. The Job

(Scene in an office. Seated behind the desk is JUDITH. She is an office manager for a large company. JUDITH is, to say the least, a strong woman. She is no-nonsense and the kind of person who isn't afraid to say what is on her mind. At present, she is on the phone.)

JUDITH: No, you listen to me. You are the ones who call yourselves an employment agency. You have sent me fifteen incompetents to interview for my assistant. I have one more of your people to interview and if this one is no better than the rest of the dweebs you've sent me, I'm going to come down there and rip out what you laughingly refer to as your heart. Do I make myself clear? *(Pause)* Thank you. Have a nice day. *(She puts down the phone and pushes the intercom.)* Brandon, send in the next one. *(Goes back to some work on her desk as GLENN enters. GLENN is a nice, pleasant man in his late 20s. He walks up to the desk and stands there. JUDITH doesn't look up. There is a pause.)*

GLENN: Ah-hem.

JUDITH: Do you need instructions on how to sit?

GLENN: No.

JUDITH: Then do it.

(GLENN sits. JUDITH still doesn't look at him. GLENN waits a few seconds.)

GLENN: Well, hi there. I'm Glenn.

JUDITH: *(Finally looks up.)* Do you have a last name or are you going for that Fabian, Liberace kind of thing?

GLENN: It's Keller and you are...

JUDITH: God...as far as this office is concerned.

GLENN: I see. It's nice to meet you. *(Pause)* How's your son?