

A HAUNTED HOUSE

Written by

Sara Wagner

Based on A Haunted House

By Virginia Wolf

INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT

MARY, 82, frail and pale, lies in bed. A candle flickers on the windowsill, a storm raging outside. GEORGE, 83, stoic yet rundown, sits beside her in a chair, holding her hand. The room is filled with old-fashioned wood furniture, and the couple is dressed in early Victorian era clothing.

EXT. GRAVEYARD- DAY

The sky is grey, covered by one never-ending cloud. George stands above a stone reading MARY ELIZABETH ELLIS MAY 13, 1749- NOVEMBER 18, 1831. He places a rose on the fresh grave and walks away.

EXT. HOUSE- DAY

A tall victorian house stands out against the colorless sky, pigeons perch on the roof. A horse-drawn carriage is off to one side.

George comes out of the front door with a suitcase, locking the house behind himself. He walks down the front porch steps and turns around to face the house once again before climbing into the carriage and pulling away.

EXT. HOUSE- DAY

PRESENT DAY

The same victorian house, surrounded by sunshine and lush grass. A FOR SALE BY OWNER sign is staked into the front yard, the home looks newly painted.

A black car pulls up, parks in a cemented driveway. ANNA, 32, passionate and energized, gets out of the passenger side, SQUEALS with excitement.

RYAN, 35, quiet and easy going, emerges as well. He walks onto the lawn and pulls the sign out of the grass. Anna jumps into his arms, and they share a kiss.

ANNA

It's perfect.

INT. KITCHEN-DAY

Anna is putting dishes away in the cabinets, her hair pulled back behind a bandana. Open boxes riddle the kitchen floor and countertops.

As she reaches down to grab another box from the floor, Anna looks out the window. Mary is hunched over in a small garden, actively searching the ground for something.

ANNA

Who?

Anna leaves the kitchen.

EXT. GARDEN- DAY

Anna walks from the house out to the garden, stopping where Mary had been. In the grass near the bench is an old book, tattered and worn. Anna picks up the book, and turns it over in her hands.

Anna looks around, then back towards the house, finding nobody in sight.

INT. KITCHEN-DAY

Anna walks back into the kitchen, tossing the book onto a small round table. A door SLAMMS upstairs, startling Anna.

ANNA

Hello?

Nobody answers. Anna creeps out of the kitchen, her movements laced with hesitation.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY- DAY

Anna tiptoes down the hallway, her eyes on the stairway at the end. She speaks, her voice quiet, nearly a whisper.

ANNA

Hello?

A draft fills the hallway, the boards under Anna's feet CREAK. Ever so lightly, words whisper past Anna's ear.

DISEMBODIED VOICE

Safe, safe, safe.

The walls GROAN, the subtle sound of a HEARTBEAT pulses within them.

INT. BEDROOM- DAY

Silver rain falls gently against the windows, Anna lays above the covers on the bed napping, still in her clothes.

George appears, stands behind Anna, opening a drawer on a nightstand. Mary whispers to him.

MARY (O.S.)  
Quietly, or we shall wake her.

Mary fades in next to George, who is peering into the nightstand.

GEORGE  
Where have we left it?

MARY  
Shhhhh.

Mary and George leave the room as Anna wakes, the door shutting just as she opens her eyes. FOOTSTEPS fall outside the door, another SHUTS down the hallway.

EXT. HOUSE- NIGHT

Ryan pulls up in his car, parking it in the driveway. He pops the trunk, gets his briefcase. The lights on the bottom floor of the house are on, as well as a single, dim light glowing from a room upstairs.

Ryan begins to walk to the front door, then pauses as the upstairs light catches his eye. A flickering candle is held by a pale hand, visible only for a moment before the curtain drops, extinguishing the flame.

INT. LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Anna sits beside the fireplace, warm flames light the room. She is sorting through a record collection, and has some quiet MUSIC playing from a record player.

Ryan enters, sets down his briefcase and coat.

ANNA  
Hey sweetie, how was work?

RYAN  
It was good, you know, the usual.

Anna gets up and gives Ryan a kiss on the cheek.

RYAN  
Are you here alone?

ANNA  
Of course I am.

RYAN  
Oh. I just thought I might've seen  
someone upstairs in the window.

They sit on the couch together. Anna puts her feet up on his lap.

ANNA  
You know, I swear I saw an old  
woman out in the garden today. I  
even found a book sitting out there  
by the bench. Isn't that weird?

Again, a door SHUTS upstairs, this time followed by the sound of several objects hitting the floor. Anna and Ryan both freeze, breathing carefully.

RYAN  
Stay here.

Ryan gets up to leave, Anna grabs his arm.

ANNA  
I'm not staying down here alone.

Together, they leave.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY- NIGHT

Anna and Ryan walk together in the dark hallway, a light goes on underneath a closed door.

RYAN  
You're sure nobody's here?

The walls around them MOAN. Anna stays silent. Ryan reaches for the door, throwing it open. An apple rolls towards them, hitting Ryan's foot. The room is empty, except for a grand piano and a spilled bowl of apples. The window is wide open, the curtain fluttering in the wind.

Ryan breathes a sigh.

RYAN  
Why are there apples in here?

ANNA

I thought they looked nice on the piano.

George and Mary walk by the doorway behind Ryan and Anna, although neither of them notice. The floorboards CREAK, the walls CLANK in an almost rhythmic way.

ANNA

It's going to take a while getting used to all of these noises.

RYAN

You always said you wanted an old house, one with real character.

Anna laughs, nervously.

INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT

Anna lies in bed, reading the book she found in the garden. Ryan enters the bedroom, climbs in to join her.

RYAN

What're you reading?

ANNA

The book I found in the garden today. I suppose someone could've left it there before the last owners moved, but it's been years. I don't see how it would've survived.

RYAN

What year is it?

ANNA

1820. A first edition, too. It's so odd.

RYAN

Very, but I wouldn't worry too much about it. Stranger things are known to happen.

ANNA

True.

Anna puts the book on the bedside table near a clock that reads 10:45 pm, and settles down into bed. A door SHUTS down the hallway, FOOTSTEPS can be heard.

RYAN

Remind me again why you wanted an  
old house?

ANNA

Shhhhh.

Anna smiles at him and turns off the light, then moves in  
close beneath the covers. Together, they fall asleep.

INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT (LATER)

Anna and Ryan sleep in their bed, the clock on the nightstand  
reads 3:00 am in bright red numbers. Again, words WHISPER  
into the room.

DISEMBODIED VOICE

Safe, safe, safe.

Anna begins to stir.

GEORGE

Here we slept.

Anna awakens, Ryan is still deeply asleep. Mary and George  
stand above them, holding an oil lamp, illuminating the faces  
of all four.

GEORGE

Kisses without number.

Anna rubs her eyes, stares at the translucent couple before  
her. The walls contract, as if they're taking a deep breath  
in. The sound of a POUNDING HEART laces the unnatural quiet.

MARY

Again you found me here, with our  
treasure.

Mary looks at George and smiles warmly, the light on their  
lamp goes out, they disappear. The room relaxes, the heart  
beat is gone.

FADE OUT.