

THE HAUNTED HOUSE FARCE

By Michael Bigelow Dixon and Jon Jory

Copyright © MMXIX by Michael Bigelow Dixon and Jon Jory All rights reserved.
ISBN: 978-1-61588-466-7

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Heuer Publishing LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Heuer Publishing LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this Work must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this Work. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this Work is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: ***Produced by special arrangement with Heuer Publishing LLC.***

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Heuer Publishing LLC.

HEUER PUBLISHING LLC
P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406
TOLL FREE (800) 950-7529 • FAX (319) 368-8011

THE HAUNTED HOUSE FARCE

By Michael Bigelow Dixon and Jon Jory

SYNOPSIS: Malcolm has a big problem—his client, Mr. Dreadful, insists he sell an old mansion by midnight. Malcolm finds a host of zany potential buyers, however, his real problem is that the mansion’s haunted by a family of ghosts who don’t want the place sold. Watch as all heck breaks loose when the ghost of Abe Lincoln, a ghostly “lift” driver, and a ghost-busting exorcist add to the chaos of the ghost family’s haunted antics to scare off all potential buyers. As the deadline approaches, a developer, a banker, and the mayor show up with plans to demolish the mansion. Only a deus ex machina could solve this problem—and fortunately for Malcolm, that’s when Deus Ex Machina does show up with the perfect solution. This whirlwind farce features a large cast and includes chases, songs, and a scary amount of laughs.

DURATION: 30 minutes.

TIME: Present day.

PLACE: A Haunted House.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(11-15 females, 5-7 males, 0-3 extras)

MALCOLM (m) A realtor. *(83 lines)*

THE GHOST FAMILY:

MOM (f) A ghost. *(37 lines)*

DAD (m) A ghost. *(24 lines)*

BOO (f) A ghost. Youngest daughter.
(15 lines)

BESS (f) A ghost. Middle daughter. *(12 lines)*

BENITA (f) A ghost. Oldest daughter. *(23 lines)*

THE GREENS:

JACK GREEN (m) *(11 lines)*

LOLO GREEN (f) *(11 lines)*

THE PERFECTS:

PRETTY PERFECT (f) (24 lines)
 JUST PERFECT (m) (21 lines)

THE SPOILED:

MRS. SPOILED (f) (28 lines)
 SORTA (f) (5 lines)
 SHIRLEY (f) (5 lines)
 CUTE BUT (f) (5 lines)
 WICKED (f) (5 lines)

THE BIGSHOTS:

MR. DREADFUL (m) A banker. (32 lines)
 DEVELOPER (m) (6 lines)
 MAYOR (f) (6 lines)
 SOCCER GIRL (f) (1 line)
 ABRAHAM LINCOLN (m) Ghost. (*Non-Speaking*)
 CAL (m) Ghost. (3 lines)
 MELISSA (f) An exorcist. (19 lines)
 DEUS X. MACHINA (f) (15 lines)
 BLOODY ZOMBIE (m/f) (*Non-Speaking*)
 YOUNG GHOST (f) (*Non-Speaking*)

OPTIONAL DOUBLING

JACK can double as DEVELOPER and ABRAHAM LINCOLN
 JUST can double as CAL
 LOLO can double as SORTA
 PRETTY can double as CUTE BUT
 SHIRLEY can double as MAYOR
 WICKED can double as BLOODY ZOMBIE
 SOCCER GIRL can double as DEUS X. MACHINA and YOUNG GHOST

SET

Upstage is a white wall with five red doors evenly spaced. Downstage is a table with five places set for dinner.

COSTUMES

MALCOLM: Suit and tie.

GHOST FAMILY and CAL: All white contemporary clothes.

THE GREENS: All green contemporary clothes.

THE PERFECTS: Lookalike couple, wears the same color/style.

THE BIGSHOTS: Suits.

THE SPOILED: The dress style is unbearably cute, think teenagers dressed like ten-year-olds.

SOCCER GIRL: Soccer uniform.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: Traditional Lincoln attire. White clothes and hat.

MELISSA: Medical greens, a football helmet, and rabbit slippers. A birdcage strapped to her back and she carries an elaborate water gun in each hand.

DEUS: Cheerful print dress.

BLOODY ZOMBIE: Ripped up clothes, bloodied.

YOUNG GHOST: White sundress.

DO NOT COPY

AT START: *A white wall with five red doors in it. Downstage a table with five places set for dinner. Sound of thunder. All five doors open at once revealing a GHOST FAMILY dressed in contemporary clothes but white from head to toe. In the center door is DAD. In the other doors we see MOM, BENITA, BOO, and BESS. They move downstage, talking. The doors close.*

BENITA: *(In the midst of a fairly heated family discussion.)* Mom! Give me one, one good reason why I can't go to regular high school with humans.

MOM: You're a ghost, dear.

BESS: And mean as a demon.

BENITA: I didn't ask you, Bess.

MOM: Everyone in class would be reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* and your copy would be floating in mid-air.

BENITA: Can I help it if I'm invisible?

MOM: Benita, you're doing very well in Ghost School.

BENITA: A ghost high school is ridiculous, everyone's three hundred years old. The senior class president is Cleopatra. I want to be around kids!

BESS: So you can tell everybody how you scared the wits out of Abraham Lincoln.

The center door opens. It's ABRAHAM LINCOLN, he has an axe.

BENITA: I just moved the logs every time he tried to chop the wood.

BOO: And he cut off his toe.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN screams and the door shuts.

BENITA: Give it a rest, Boo.

DAD: *(Being "The Dad".)* Well, that was a little funny.

Center door opens and CAL, a young muscular male ghost, enters.

CAL: I'm Cal, did you call Lift?

DAD: Oh good. That was fast. *(Gestures to the side.)* Hang out over there, Cal. We'll be with you in a minute.

CAL: Yes, sir. (*Moves to the side and stands facing front without reacting to anything until his moment arrives.*)

MOM: Now listen carefully, Benita, Ghost School is a top-rated college prep. You'll go right to Ghost Harvard and get a great job at Ghost Amazon.

BENITA: Mom, you don't understand. It's just a whole bunch of boring dead people wearing sheets and jumping out of the janitor's closet to scare each other. Besides, I want to be on a soccer team.

MOM: Benita, your foot would go right through the ball.

Center door opens. SOCCER GIRL, dressed in a soccer uniform, is screaming out...

SOCCER GIRL: Her foot went right through the ball! Her foot went right through the ball!

MOM: It really wouldn't work out.

Door closes in front of SOCCER GIRL.

BOO: (*Hands over ears.*) I just hate family arguments! What's for dinner?

MOM: A lovely flank steak with mushroom sauce, baked potato with chives.

DAD: And cooked, as usual, to perfection.

BENITA: It's not cooked perfectly, it's imaginary food.

BESS: Which goes perfectly with your imaginary tongue.

BOO: And imaginary manners.

BENITA: You are going to get it.

DAD: Enough. We may be dead but there's no use fighting about it.

MOM: Now girls, this is the loveliest old mansion we've haunted since those two memorable centuries we spent at the Palace of Versailles. We're nicely settled in. Your father has an excellent job haunting the state legislature and I do birthday parties.

BENITA: This place is a wreck. The roof leaks and my bedroom has corn growing in it. Plus the "For Sale" sign is up and that real estate guy...

MOM: Malcolm.

BENITA: Call it a “fixer, fixer, fixer upper”—which nobody wants, so there’s never anyone to scare.

DAD: Oh, I like that Malcolm. He’s a pleasure to terrify.

Center door opens on MALCOLM, dressed in suit and tie. He screams. Door shuts.

DAD: Tears his hair out, runs into walls, twice he’s jumped out a window without remembering he’s on the third floor.

BOO: He’s kind of adorable.

Center door opens again. MALCOLM has his hands out in front of him in an imploring gesture.

MALCOLM: Hello? Hello? Any dead people home?

DAD: Speak of the devil, it’s Malcolm.

MALCOLM: All right, all right, I know you’re all in here. I can feel your presence. No playing around. I hate it when you stick severed hands in my pockets. I’m getting ectoplasmic palpitations and the hair on my arms is standing on end and my heart is pounding like a jackhammer, but I have a potential buyer for the first time in two years and I’m begging you, begging, do you hear me? Don’t scare him off. My wife is pregnant and we need a new water heater and I really, really need to sell this junkpile and get my hands on the commission.

BENITA has moved behind him, reaches around and tickles him, sending him into a fit of hysterical laughter. BESS takes his clipboard.

MALCOLM: No, not the floating clipboard, the floating clipboard thing makes me crazy!

BOO claps and the center door opens and a BLOODY ZOMBIE is revealed, staggers downstage, rips off her own arm, and hands it to MALCOLM and then exits.

MALCOLM: Not the arm, not the severed zombie arm! I’ll throw up. Nobody likes a real estate agent who throws up.

MALCOLM throws the arm offstage, which the *GHOST FAMILY* finds funny.

MALCOLM: All right, all right. Nobody is here, Malcolm. Ghosts do not exist. Zombies, I'm not so sure about. This is all my overactive imagination. I am obviously alone. I am the 913th best real estate agent in Los Angeles, and I am completely calm...

GHOST FAMILY gathers around *MALCOLM*.

MALCOLM: Well, more or less calm... (*BESS* flips his tie.) Not very calm, a little scared, actually completely petrified.

GHOST FAMILY: (*Simultaneously.*) Boo.

MALCOLM falls to the floor in a fetal position.

DAD: Works every time.

MOM: It's so nice to have a human you can count on.

BOO: Told you he was adorable.

Center door opens revealing *THE GREENS*, a chipper young couple, dressed, of course, in green.

LOLO: Mr. Johnson?

JACK: Malcolm?

LOLO and JACK: It's us, the Greens.

LOLO: Are we early? (*Sees MALCOLM.*) Good gracious!

JACK: Malcolm, are you all right?

MALCOLM: (*On the floor.*) Me? All right? Oh, I am absolutely tip top, Mr. Green. I was just taking a closer look at these amazing tongue and groove pine floors from around 1910. Absolutely fabulous. Would you care to lie down and take a look?

LOLO and JACK: Oh absolutely!

LOLO and JACK lie down on either side of *MALCOLM*. *GHOST FAMILY* lies down on either side of *LOLO and JACK*. *ALL* are facing downstage so we see their faces.

LOLO: Now what exactly is tongue and groove flooring?

MALCOLM: Well, you see, it's a method of fitting wood together edge to edge without nails that prevents shrinking, warping or working loose. This is a wonderful example ...

GHOST FAMILY: *(All whisper.)* Wonderful example...

LOLO: What was that?

MALCOLM: Just a breeze from the window. Just tap a little here so you get a sense of the nice tight fit.

JACK: Like this?

JACK taps. A GHOST taps. JACK taps. A GHOST taps.

JACK: That's strange.

LOLO taps a little rhythm. The GHOST FAMILY taps back in the same rhythm.

LOLO: That is very strange.

The GHOST FAMILY start a syncopated tapping.

JACK and LOLO: That is very, very strange.

On one end of the line, BOO picks up JACK'S briefcase. At the other end, BENITA picks up LOLO'S purse. They begin a little dance.

JACK and LOLO: That is very, very, very strange.

LOLO: Your briefcase.

JACK: Your purse.

JACK and LOLO: They're floating!

BOO and BENITA toss the objects off either side of the stage where they are caught by stagehands.

JACK: Well, speaking rationally ...

The doors open. JACK and LOLO scream and run out. The doors close.

MOM: What a cute couple.

DAD: *(Analytically.)* Would you say they were frightened or actually terrified?

Two doors open. We see and hear LOLO and JACK screaming. The doors close.

BESS: Definitely terrified.

MALCOLM: *(Getting to his feet.)* Now look what you've done. And don't pretend you're not in here. I know you're in here.

MOM: He knows we're in here.

MALCOLM: I am sick and tired of you poltergeists.

BOO: What's a poltergeist?

DAD: I think it's a ghost with an English accent.

MALCOLM: You have scared away the only clients I have for this rat-trap. And now, Mr. Dreadful, the banker who owns the house ...

MOM: He's actually called "Mr. Dreadful"?

BENITA: That's hilarious.

MALCOLM: ...will take the listing away from me and my life will be totally and irredeemably ruined.

The GHOST FAMILY gather around MALCOLM. The center door opens and MR. DREADFUL is revealed. The GHOST FAMILY pats MALCOLM, adlibbing "Poor man," "It'll be all right," etc. MALCOLM shivers and breaks away from the GHOST FAMILY, saying...

MALCOLM: Something feels very weird. Very chilly. Get away from me!

MR. DREADFUL: Are you speaking to me, Malcolm?

MALCOLM sees MR. DREADFUL. The GHOST FAMILY moves away to both sides of the stage.

MALCOLM: Mr. Dreadful!

MR. DREADFUL: You know I prefer to be called "Friendly-old-Bill."

GHOST FAMILY breaks into raucous, silent laughter.

MALCOLM: I meant, “Friendly-old-Bill.” “Friendly-old-Bill” is what I meant.

MR. DREADFUL: (*Dreadfully.*) Say, “Hello, Friendly-old-Bill.”

MALCOLM: Hello, Friendly-old-Bill.

MR. DREADFUL: (*Coldly.*) Hello Malcolm. I assume you sold this old chestnut to that idiotic young couple.

MALCOLM: Well, I...

MR. DREADFUL: You did?

MALCOLM: Well, I...

MR. DREADFUL: You didn’t?

MALCOLM: Well, I...

MR. DREADFUL: Make up your tiny mind!

MALCOLM: (*In a complete fuddle.*) Well, they really liked the... you know... and thought the “you-know” was terrific... and found the “you know” adorable but they need to, you know, think about it.

MR. DREADFUL: There is no time to think about it, Malcolm, the economy marches on. It’s either their money or my money and it better be my money! This house must be sold by midnight or, by contract, it becomes the property of a big developer who will develop a big development and won’t need my bank’s money to develop it! I’ll be shut out, Malcolm—and that won’t happen to Mr. Dreadful! Mr. Dreadful is a w-w-winner!

MALCOLM: Well, you see, sir, there’s a teeny-tiny itsy-bitsy microscopic problem.

MR. DREADFUL: A teeny-tiny itsy-bitsy microscopic problem?

MALCOLM: The house is haunted, sir.

MR. DREADFUL: Nonsense! No house has ever been haunted because there is no such thing as a ghost to haunt it.

DAD: (*To CAL.*) Over here, Cal.

CAL joins DAD behind MR. DREADFUL.

MR. DREADFUL: Ghosts, Malcolm, simply do not exist. They are the pitiful imaginings of weak minds and a desperate attempt of those who can’t make money to make their lives interesting and...

CAL and DAD pick up MR. DREADFUL so that he ends up sitting on their shoulders.

MR. DREADFUL: I seem to be floating in mid-air, Malcolm. Am I floating in mid-air?

MALCOLM: You do seem to be floating in mid-air, sir.

MR. DREADFUL: Well, that's just not possible. People don't float in mid-air, do they?

MALCOLM: People don't ordinarily float, sir.

CAL and DAD put MR. DREADFUL down.

DAD: Thank you, Cal.

CAL: Call Lift whenever you need a lift, sir.

DAD gives CAL a white five-dollar bill. Door opens. CAL exits. Door closes.

MR. DREADFUL: Listen very carefully, Malcolm. Do not fail. You have till midnight. Fail and you will never work in real estate again.

MALCOLM: Sir, the house is haunted.

MR. DREADFUL: Haunted? *(Laughs wildly.)* There's no such thing as haunted, Malcolm.

MALCOLM: But sir, you floated.

MR. DREADFUL: We agreed I didn't float. I don't float. I never float. Bankers don't float. Sell this rat-trap or you'll be found floating. Do not fail me!

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from:

THE HAUNTED HOUSE FARCE

By Michael Bigelow Dixon & Jon Jory

**For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the
script, please contact us at:**

Heuer Publishing LLC

P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

Toll Free: 1-800-950-7529 • Fax (319) 368-8011

WWW.HEUERPUB.COM

DO NOT COPY