

The Mystery of the Haunted Hay Wagon

by

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EXT. SAMOSET COUNTY HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL - NIGHT

Crowds exit the grounds.

A vendor, GEORGE, 80's locks up his cotton candy stand.

The guard, OTIS, 60's and overweight, approaches.

OTIS
Good day, George?

GEORGE
Middlin'. 'Spect ta see more folks
out Friday for the fireworks.

OTIS
Make sure you lock up good. Strange
things happen at this here
halloween festival.

George laughs as he pockets his keys.

EXT. HAUNTED HOUSE TRAILERS - LATER

Otis walks around a series of trailers, arranged in a square.

Each semi-trailer depicts a grisly scenario.

He approaches a door marked "Employees Only. All others shall
be eaten." He opens the lock and enters.

It's the area inside the trucks, the center of the square.

Trees are decked out with hanging skeletons, along with
numerous tombstones, crypts and coffins.

As Otis patrols the area, he hums a familiar tune. He shines
his flashlight towards a coffin, in the corner.

A grey hand pushes off the lid, revealing LAUREN, 16, dressed
as a vampire bride!

Otis shouts and Lauren shrieks. Otis backs up and falls over
the gravestones.

LAUREN
Are you alright? I am SO sorry!

OTIS
Yeah. I'm OK. I think. What are you
still doing here? The fair's been
closed for two hours!

LAUREN

I was up last night studying for a test...and stupid Joey Franconi was SUPPOSED to make sure I didn't doze off before closing time.

OTIS

I'll walk you to your car.

LAUREN

Stupid Joey was also my stupid ride home...

Just then, a loud bang is heard coming from one of the permanent buildings on the grounds.

LAUREN

Did you hear that?

Otis nods. They run towards the building.

EXT. HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL EXHIBITION HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Otis approaches the door and fumbles with the padlock.

The key appears jammed.

Bumps and thuds can be heard from inside the building.

OTIS

Let's see. It's gotta be this one!

Lauren walks around the building and peers into a window.

Lauren cups her hands for a better look and sees the face of PATRICK, 17, with freckles and bushy red hair, looking out.

He appears to smile before he disappears into a mist.

LAUREN

Who? Hey, Mr. Guard! There's a kid in there!

Otis joins her by the window. He looks in himself. Nothing.

OTIS

No, there isn't. That's the only door, and I can't get the stupid lock to open.

LAUREN

I saw him. He had freckles, a red plaid shirt and big bushy red hair...And He SMILED at me.

OTIS
I'll get to the bottom of this.

As if on cue, the front door swings open. The troublesome lock is ripped out by the screws.

Lauren and Otis turn to see a trash can fall over.

Lauren runs in that direction.

Otis takes a deep breath and joins the chase.

EXT. OLD HAY WAGON - MOMENTS LATER

A broken down vintage wooden wagon, surrounded by weeds.

Lauren stops, out of breath herself, sits down by one of the wagon wheels.

Otis catches up.

OTIS
So...You catch 'em?

LAUREN
No. I think I saw a few orbs, though. They seemed to circle around this spot.

OTIS
Orbs, eh? You believe that?

LAUREN
I don't believe in anything. That way I am never disappointed.

Something catches her eye under the wagon.

LAUREN
Wha? Hey, Dude! Check this out!

Lauren picks up a black and white photo of SAVANNAH, 16.

She holds a bunch of roses with a satin sash that reads "Miss Samoset 2009."

The photo appears to have been ripped in half vertically, so that only Savannah is in the picture.

OTIS
Pretty girl.

LAUREN

Oh, please. I know her. That Savannah Burdett is THE biggest plastic phony in the history of plastic phonies. She's as deep as a kiddie pool and about that bright.

Otis checks his cell phone.

OTIS

Shouldn't you be calling home?

LAUREN

Well, I'm staying with my aunt, and she is probably way passed out by now...We all "have our demons."

Otis looks concerned.

LAUREN

My mom passed away when I was two and my Dad- Well, lets just say he's a guest at The Green River Correctional Facility for another six years, four months and thirteen days.

OTIS

Understand. I've fought some of those demons myself. Been sober eighteen years this August.

Lauren smiles. They take the picture and head back towards the building.

Two small green orbs, like fireflies, swoop out from under the wagon and follow behind them.

EXT. HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL EXHIBITION HALL

The door is closed and locked, like it was never opened.

OTIS

Strange things happen at this Halloween festival...

On the first try, Otis opens the lock.

INT. HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL EXHIBITION HALL

Tables full of crafts and artwork fill the exhibition space.

Otis tries the lights. Doesn't work.

OTIS
They must have turned off the
generator.

LAUREN
What do you suppose made that
noise?

Otis shines his flashlight around the tables as they walk.
Lauren picks up a doll made from strips of colored cloth.
Her eyes well up slightly as she examines the fabric.

OTIS
What's that?

LAUREN
Nothing. Nothing at all. Just a
doll.

Otis moves past a row of delicately carved pumpkins.
Some have been smashed to bits on the concrete floor.

OTIS
It's these pumpkins! Stay away from
the pumpkins...

The door slams shut.

LAUREN
Turn off your light!

OTIS
Are you crazy!

LAUREN
No! Just do it!

Lauren grabs the flashlight and turns it off.

OTIS
Hello? Are you here, ghost boy?

LAUREN
Do you need help? Hello? Helloooo?

The two greenish orbs hover over the crafts.
They move about the room and disappear by the far wall.

OTIS
I think I lost them.

Otis turns on the flashlight to reveal a bulliten board.

The board is covered with festival photos, including a large photo of the beauty queens, which has been torn in half.

LAUREN
Check it out, right?

Otis hands Lauren the photo they found. Perfect match.

OTIS
Curiouser and curiouser.

Lauren's cellphone rings.

LAUREN
Hello? Yes, you forgot me, you loser! You won't BELIEVE what happen to us tonight! The security guy...

OTIS
Otis.

LAUREN
Otis an' me saw a real live ghost! Oh-you're in the parking lot? Good. You owe me big time, you know that, right? Yeah.

OTIS
That your boyfriend?

LAUREN
Hardly. That's Stupid Joey.

OTIS
Good. Go get some rest. You can work on this mystery tomorrow.

Lauren yawns and stretches.

LAUREN
I'm gonna. You'll be here tomorrow, right?

Otis smiles as they leave the building.

EXT. SAMOSET HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

Students filter out of the old brick building.

INT. HISTORY CLASSROOM

MRS. HEARST, 40's and attractive, sits on the edge of her desk. She talks with Lauren and JOEY, 16.

Both kids are dressed all in black and wear dark eyeliner.

MRS. HEARST
So, I understand you met up with
Patrick last night.

Lauren is slightly surprised.

LAUREN
Patrick?

MRS. HEARST
Legend has it that Patrick haunts
that fair every year, looking for
his lost love. As is most legends,
this one has an element of truth.
Seems some time ago, in the early
nineteen hundreds, Patrick's family
lived in a small house on the
Burdett's property.

JOEY
Where the fair is, right?

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

EXT. BURDETT FARM, CIRCA 1918 - DAY

FAMILY watches MABEL, 15, ride horseback.

MRS. HEARST (V.O.)
Yes, Joseph. It seems that our
young Patrick McGee had a liking
for Earl Burdett's youngest
daughter, named Mabel.

Patrick cleans up after the animals in the pasture.

MRS. HEARST (V.O.)
Now, Earl wasn't too keen with his
little girl getting involved with
the farm help, so of course, he
forbid any further contact. What do
you think they did?

LAUREN (V.O.)
The Romeo and Juliet thing.

EXT. HAYWAGON - NIGHT

Mabel and Patrick run towards the hay wagon.

MRS. HEARST (V.O.)
 Course. They decided that they
 would seal their forbidden love
 with THE most romantic kiss on the
 lips, behind the hay wagon, during
 the fireworks grand finale.

JOEY (V.O.)
 Kiss on the lips? That's just
 steppin' up to the plate!

EXT. SAMOSET COUNTY HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL-CIRCA 1918

Fair GUESTS in period clothes walk around the grounds.

MRS. HEARST (V.O.)
 Back then, it was a big deal. Also
 at that time, the fair was more
 about the harvest and animals than
 cotton candy and store bought
 costumes.

EXT. CORRAL - DAY

COWBOYS rope calves and preform rope tricks.

MRS. HEARST (V.O.)
 A corral was built right in the
 middle of the fair grounds, where
 the midway would be today. In this
 corral they had all sorts of roping
 competitions and bull riding.

RIDERS hold on tight as massive bulls try to toss them.

MRS. HEARST (V.O.)
 This year featured Tornado-one of
 the meanest, fiercest bulls that
 ever lived.

A rider gets tossed into the sawdust. Rodeo CLOWNS protect
 him as he scrambles to get out of Tornado's way.

EXT. HAYWAGON - NIGHT

Mabel and Patrick cuddle by the wagon, behind the corral.

MRS. HEARST (V.O.)
 Now, Mabel and Patrick were all
 settled in their secret spot by the
 wagon when the fireworks started.
 Boom!

The fireworks start. The animals react.

MRS. HEARST
 All the animals got spooked at each
 blast, especially Tornado. Patrick
 noticed, out of the corner of his
 eye, that a little girl was in the
 pen! He hollered, but no one could
 hear him.

EXT. CORRAL - NIGHT

NELLIE, 3, wanders around the corral.

MRS. HEARST (V.O.)
 But Patrick saw her and decided to
 get her out of there.

Patrick spots Nellie. He puts his hand on Mabel's shoulder.

MRS. HEARST (V.O.)
 He assured Mabel it would only a
 take a second, and he'd be back in
 plenty of time for that midnight
 kiss. Well, wouldn't you know that
 with one huge blast...

The bull freaks over the loud blast and busts out.

MRS. HEARST (V.O.)
 ...that bull panicked and broke out
 his stall. He charged towards that
 little girl, but not before Patrick
 was able to scoop her Nellie and
 hand her over to Mabel.

Patrick hands Nellie to Mabel while the bull runs at him.

Patrick is killed by the bull.

END FLASHBACK

MRS. HEARST
 Patrick was run through that night,
 killed by that bull.
 (MORE)

MRS. HEARST (CONT'D)
Course, the family of the child wanted no blame for letting the kid wander off, so they told the press that Patrick had gotten drunk and wound up in the corral with that bull. And that's the way most of the people will remember that tale, with a few exceptions.

JOEY
Like you?

Mrs. Hearst stands and straightens her skirt.

MRS. HEARST
Like me. The little girl that Patrick saved from the bull was my grandmother. She never forgot his bravery, and neither did Mabel.

Lauren shows Mrs. Hearst the torn photo.

LAUREN
What do you think that Savannah has to do with this?

Mrs. Hearst smiles.

MRS. HEARST
She's the spitting image of her great grandmother.

LAUREN
So you think this ghost boy wants to kiss Savey Burdett, on the lips, this Halloween night?

Mrs. Hearst nods.

MRS. HEARST
Perhaps. Do you want me to ask her about it?

LAUREN
Are you insane? That picture perfect Barbie girl would never, ever in a billion years do anything like that!

MRS. HEARST
What makes you so sure?

LAUREN
Oh, I'm sure. Let's go, Joey.

EXT. OLD HAY WAGON - NIGHT

Joey and Lauren sit together with slush drinks and popcorn.

Otis approaches through the weeds.

OTIS

Thought I might find you here. Did you find out anything more about our invisible friend?

Lauren sighs and takes a sip of slush.

LAUREN

Yeah, but there is nothing I can do about it...Like everything else, it's all about Savey Burdett.

Savannah follows shortly behind Otis.

SAVANNAH

Hi, Lauren.

Lauren is startled.

LAUREN

You...You know my name?

SAVANNAH

Course I know your name! I was in Art Class with you in Junior year. I loved that bisque sculpture you did of Beowulf and Gretel.

JOEY

That's Grendal.

SAVANNAH

Mrs. Hearst talked to me this morning about your encounter, and I'd like to help. Now, if you will excuse us, I believe I have a date!

Otis, Joey and Lauren back away as the fireworks start.

They don't take their eyes off of Savannah.

Savannah watches the sky light up as a ground fog rolls in.

She turns to see Patrick, just for an instant, as the fireworks flash.

The pretty young girl smiles, closes her eyes and puckers her lips as the grand finale fills the sky.

Patrick is in full form as they kiss passionately.

As the last shell explodes, Patrick is gone, vanished with the mist.

Savannah smiles and takes a deep breath.

SAVANNAH

He was a surprisingly good kisser.

Savannah exits. Joey, Otis and Lauren sit back by the wagon.

LAUREN

So that was it. It's still all about her, ain't it.

OTIS

Well, Patrick would not have fulfilled his destiny had we- you, not intervened.

LAUREN

Yeah, but it would have been nice to have been about me for once.

Otis gets up and stretches. He pats Lauren on the back.

OTIS

Time to get some sleep. Been a long few days. You should do the same.

Otis and Joey exit the scene. Lauren still sits by the wagon, silently.

She doesn't notice two orbs flitting around her head.

Lauren takes a deep breath and stands. She spots an orb disappear under the wagon as the other flies away.

She gets on her hands and knees and looks underneath.

She notices a brown paper bag under the wagon. It's dusty, covered with spider webs, like it has been there for decades.

She opens it up to reveal the colored rag doll that she saw in the craft fair. It has a simple note attached, but it says plenty.

INSERT - THE NOTE, which reads:

"Love you always, Mom."

Lauren holds the doll the her chest and sighs.

FADE TO BLACK