

# **THE LOST GHOST**

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FADE IN:

EXT. HIGHWAY 1 - DAY

A thick blanket of fog smothers the California coast.

SUPER: HARMONY, CALIFORNIA

SUPER: 150 MILES SOUTH OF SAN FRANCISCO

A red minivan drives along the twisty and deserted highway. Waves strike the coastal rocks and drench the somber beaches.

EXT. HARMONY - DAY

The minivan passes a blue sign and enters the isolated town's limits. The few buildings and houses look to date back to the late 1800s.

The sign reads:

HARMONY

POPULATION 18      ELEVATION 175

EXT. SAMUELS HOUSE - DAY

The minivan pulls into the driveway of a white, two-story house that looks at least 100 years old.

MIRANDA CARPENTER(late 30s), an exhausted mother, exits the van. She peeks her head into the backseat.

MIRANDA

Out!

The backdoors open and out pop the Carpenter boys, CHUCK(13) and JASON(10). The boys are engaged in a game of who can hit each other's arm the hardest.

Chuck takes a big swing and bops Jason right above the elbow. Jason grabs his limb in pain and shoves Chuck.

JASON

Jerk and a half!

CHUCK

Muwahahaha!

Miranda breaks the two of them up and starts toward the front door.

MIRANDA

Behave!

They present themselves before the door and Miranda knocks. Chuck sneaks one more punch to Jason.

The door opens and the Carpenters are warmly greeted by LIL and SID SAMUELS, two folks in their twilight years but still going strong.

Everyone presents a smile and exchanges hugs and kisses.

LIL

Miranda! So great to see you!

MIRANDA

Hi, mom.

They exchange a hug.

LIL

And the boys! They're turning into modern day James Deans!

Lil gives both of the boys a big kiss. Sid then exchanges masculine handshakes with them.

SID

Come on, Chuck. Give me the best you got.

Chuck's face pinches up as he squeezes Sid's hand harder and harder. Sid squeezes back and Chuck yanks his hand away.

CHUCK

Man, you have an unfair advantage!

Sid smiles and pats Chuck's head.

SID

Give it time, kiddo.

LIL

Come in, come in! You must be exhausted!

They enter the house.

JASON

Who's James Dean?

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

They enter the kitchen where JODIE, a beautiful golden retriever, dashes to greet the Carpenters.

JASON

Jodie!

SID

Awe, she sure remembers you, Jason.

CHUCK

Yeah, she's his only friend.

MIRANDA

Chuck!

CHUCK

Sorry.

LIL

How about the boys go get washed up while I make some lunch?

MIRANDA

That sounds like a plan. Boys, upstairs, now!

The boys exit.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The boys pass by the front door and through the living room en route for the stairs.

Hundred year old antiques dazzle the house. Black and white portraits hang on the walls. It's a museum.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

The boys wash their hands and examine themselves in the mirror.

JASON

How old was Nanny when she died?

CHUCK

101, I think.

Chuck gets an evil grin on his face.

CHUCK  
So...you know what happens when a  
person dies that's over 100?

JASON  
What?

CHUCK  
Their spirit remains in the home  
that they died in.

JASON  
Nuh-uh!

CHUCK  
Oh, really?

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

They step across the hallway and peer into NANNY'S ROOM, a  
dim, clean, and deathly silent area.

CHUCK  
Go on. Take a step in.

JASON  
What if we're not allowed?

CHUCK  
Well, prove me wrong that Nanny  
still ain't here, tough guy.

Jason takes a step into the room. He's very uncomfortable.

JASON  
There. I'm in.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Miranda and Sid sit at the table. Lil prepares some  
sandwiches.

MIRANDA  
How's it been around here since  
Nanny passed?

SID  
It's a lot more quiet, that's for  
sure. For someone 100 years old,  
she sure had a mouth on her.

LIL

It's been an adjustment. We were so used to helping her around the place, and now we have nothing to do.

SID

I guess this is retirement.

Miranda smiles.

MIRANDA

It's been a while since you two had time to yourselves.

LIL

I know. But what is there to do here? Kids are gone. Nanny's gone. It's just me and this guy here.

Lil puts her hand on Sid's.

MIRANDA

And Jodie.

Jodie's ears perk up. Lil smiles.

LIL

And Jodie.

Miranda walks over a window overlooking the beach. Visibility is low due to the fog.

MIRANDA

Has the weather been like this all summer?

LIL

Generally. Though it did start to get ridiculously foggy right after she died.

INT. NANNY'S ROOM - DAY

Jason is now in the center of the room. He looks into a dusty mirror perched above an antique dresser.

JASON

There's nothing here, Chuck.

Suddenly, Chuck shuts the door. Jason tries to open it, but it's no use.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Chuck holds the knob in place, trapping Jason inside.

INT. NANNY'S ROOM-DAY

Jason steps back from the door and sits on the edge of Nanny's bed. A small desk in the corner of the room features framed pictures from the past 100 years.

The pictures include Sid and Lil's wedding portrait, Miranda as a child, Miranda's wedding day, Jason and Chuck as infants, and an aged photo of a little girl and a black dog.

Chuck bursts into the room and stares at Jason.

CHUCK

I didn't hear screaming so I got bored. Let's go eat.

JASON

Thanks, jerk.

Chuck exits first but shouts back.

CHUCK

Jerk and a half.

Jason starts to head out when he suddenly hears a light wind pass by him. He sharply turns around but nothing's there.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The family enjoys their lunch. Jason feeds Jodie some of his sandwich from under the table.

LIL

So, Jason, do you have a girlfriend?

JASON

Nah.

SID

Come on, kiddo! A mug like yours has to be getting some action on the schoolyard!

JASON

No. Girls at my school are pretty stupid. Most girls are.

SID  
Well, your mother is a girl.

JASON  
Grandpa, moms aren't girls.

Sid chuckles.

SID  
Then what are they?

LIL  
Did you know you're named after  
Nanny, Jason?

JASON  
You mean her name wasn't Nanny?

Lil laughs.

LIL  
God, no! Her name was Jessie.

MIRANDA  
When you were born we thought it  
would be appropriate to name you  
after her. I mean, it's customary  
to name a newborn after a deceased  
relative but your great grandmother  
and I had a close relationship.

CHUCK  
You named Jason after a girl?

Chuck bursts into laughter.

JASON  
Shut up, Charles!

Chuck stops and glares.

Sid puts his napkin on the table and scoots his chair out.

SID  
Alright. Walk time for dog. Who's  
going?

EXT. DOG RUN - DAY

A deserted dog run located next to the Samuels residence.  
The grass is tall and waves in the wind.

A rusted baseball backstop sits at the end of the run with rotted benches on either side.

Jodie and Chuck wrestle in the grass while Sid and Jason sit on one of the benches.

JASON

Grandpa, did you ever play baseball here?

SID

Back when I could run, sure. Also back when this town's population was greater than my age.

JASON

When was that?

SID

You're makin' me feel old, Jason. It's been a while. See, kiddo, this town is over 100 years old. Used to have a pretty favorable population. Generations have come and gone including Nanny's. But as cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco grow, the small towns such as Harmony are forgotten. Kind of lost in it all.

Lil and Miranda walk over.

MIRANDA

Aren't you gonna join Chuck?

JASON

Meh.

LIL

"Meh." The teenage language. Get used to it, hun.

JASON

Grandma, I saw a picture in Nanny's room of a girl and a black dog. Who was that?

LIL

That was her and her dog, Serenity.

Jason grins.

JASON

Serenity now!

MIRANDA

A few decades early, hun.

JASON

Oh. I didn't know she had a dog.

LIL

Well, it was a century before you came along. She always told stories of how the two of them used to come out here to play. Then one day, Serenity wandered off and they never found her.

JASON

Never?

LIL

Never.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

A door creaks open and out comes Jason into the pitch black hallway. He creeps down it and enters the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

He flushes the toilet and washes his hands while he simultaneously admires himself in the mirror.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

As he exits the bathroom and turns off the light, he glances into Nanny's room.

He walks to the edge of the doorway. As he stops, he looks straight ahead into the antique mirror where the ghostly face of NANNY, a frail 101-year old woman, appears.

Jason's eyes bulge open as he jolts down the hallway and dashes back to the guestroom.

INT. GUESTROOM - NIGHT

Jason shuts the door, jumps in his bed and pulls the covers up to his eyes. A few seconds later he lowers the cover and peeks out.

A LIGHT GREEN GLOW seeps in from the crack beneath the door. He breaths deeply and then pulls the covers over his head in one swift motion.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Sid and Miranda read magazines and eat breakfast while Lil prepares some bagels. Jason stiffly enters the kitchen and sits down opposite his mom.

His eyes are purple and giant bags hang from his lids.

MIRANDA  
Trouble sleeping?

JASON  
Yeah. Where's Doofus?

MIRANDA  
Dog run.

EXT. DOG RUN - DAY

Jason makes his way outside. Chuck sits on one of the benches and pets Jodie.

CHUCK  
Okay, Jodie, the enemy is near.  
Prepare to attack!

JASON  
We need to talk.

CHUCK  
Why?

JASON  
I saw Nanny last night!

CHUCK  
Cool. Did she give you money?

JASON  
I swear! I saw her in her room!

Chuck chuckles.

CHUCK  
I was just joking yesterday. You know that, right? Her spirit isn't wandering the house, Jason.

JASON  
Yes it is! I saw her!

Jason looks up to the second story of the house and sees NANNY'S GHOSTLY FIGURE stare back at him from the window.

Jason collapses to the ground and covers his head. Chuck looks up to the window but doesn't see anything.

CHUCK  
The heck's wrong with you?

JASON  
She's there!

CHUCK  
Who?

JASON  
Her!

Chuck squints but doesn't see anyone.

CHUCK  
Who? Dude, nobody's there!

JASON  
Then how come I can see her?

A loud HACK comes from Jodie. The startled boys turn to her. A few seconds go by and there's another tumultuous HACK.

Now she starts to violently cough, frightening the boys with each rough vibration.

JASON  
Is she okay?

She collapses to the ground where her limbs shake in an uncontrollable seizure-like way.

CHUCK  
Get mom!

Jason leaves. Chuck continues to stroke Jodie and it appears that she's calmed down. When Miranda and Jason arrive, the coughs and shakes start up again.

Jason stands in horror as he watches his mother try to elevate the dog's head. Lil and Sid dash out of the house to join them.

MIRANDA  
Mom, what's wrong with her?

LIL  
I don't know! Did she swallow  
something?

CHUCK  
No! We were just sitting out here!

A tear comes to Jason's eye and then suddenly the hacks stop!  
Jodie licks her chops and gets to her feet and wags her tail  
like nothing had happened. Everyone is baffled.

MIRANDA  
What the heck?

LIL  
Jodie? Did you swallow something,  
girl?

Jodie nuzzles up to Lil. Jason looks up to Nanny's window  
with suspicion, but alas, nothing is there.

INT. NANNY'S ROOM - DAY

Jason stares at his reflection in Nanny's dirty mirror.  
Several seconds go by and it's the same result.

He walks over to the desk and examines the picture of Nanny  
and Serenity. Miranda passes by the door.

MIRANDA  
Jace, what are you doing in here?

JASON  
Checking out this picture.

She stands by him and looks at the picture.

MIRANDA  
Nanny and Serenity. I heard they  
were a good pair. Heh, Nanny would  
always tell me stories about how  
her and Serenity would run around  
outside on the beach for as long as  
the tide would stay out. Then when  
they'd go inside, they'd run all  
over the house until her mother, my  
great grandmother, would tell her  
to shut up.

JASON  
If Jodie was sick, we wouldn't be  
able to save her, would we?

Miranda strokes Jason's hair.

MIRANDA

Probably not, sweetie. The nearest vet is a good forty miles from here. If it was something serious then she'd be a goner. Thankfully she just had a cough or something, Jason. It'll be okay.

Jason bites his lip.

JASON

I thought I saw Nanny last night.

MIRANDA

Hmmm?

JASON

I saw Nanny last night and then again right before Jodie started coughing.

Miranda is unsure of what to say.

MIRANDA

Jason, things are different here. The fog plays games with your eyes.

JASON

She's still here, mom! She's still in the house!

Miranda sighs and brings Jason to his feet.

MIRANDA

All right. No more ghost stories with your brother.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

She leads Jason into the hallway and shuts Nanny's door.

JASON

Mom, I'm not lying!

MIRANDA

I know you're not. Your mind is just running away from you.

She smiles then kisses his head and walks off.

EXT. BLUFFS - DAY

A mighty wave CRASHES onto a set of bluffs behind the Samuels residence.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jason plays a game of chess with Sid. Sid uses his bishop to take Jason's queen.

Jodie walks over to them and wags her tail.

SID

You know, they say that dogs are man's best friend.

JASON

Too bad they're too dumb to talk, though.

SID

Anywhere the master goes, the dog will always follow and stay true.

JASON

That's true, isn't it? A dog will never betray their master.

SID

It's unheard of. Some of the worst people in history had dogs who stayed loyal to them.

Jason contemplates this as Sid takes one of his pawns.

JASON

What if the dog wandered off and was never seen again?

SID

They're not the most intelligent creatures, as you said.

JASON

No, I mean what if the master still looks for them?

Sid uses his queen to take one of Jason's knights.

SID

Well, then they're a devoted person.

JASON

But would the dog follow the person  
into death?

Sid's eyes widen.

SID

I'm not sure. At my age you don't  
want to be thinking about death too  
much.

Sid moves his pieces into striking position.

SID

Check.

Jason smiles and takes Sid's queen with his bishop, trapping  
his king in a corner.

JASON

Check mate.

Jason pats his grandfather's back and exits.

INT. GUESTROOM - DAY

Chuck sits on the floor and reads a comic book.

A loud wind passes by the doorway. Startled, Chuck stands up  
and heads into the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

He looks in all directions, but there's nothing unusual.

CHUCK

Hello?

Silence.

He starts down the hallway toward the stairs. A DARK SHADOW  
passes by with a loud wind into Nanny's room.

Chuck turns around once again and starts towards the room.

CHUCK

Jason? Mom?

His voice turns to a pathetic squeak.

CHUCK

...Jodie?

INT. NANNY'S ROOM - DAY

He enters. A drawer in the dresser is opened a crack. He kneels down and pulls it open. Inside, there's batches of old newspaper clippings. One headline catches his attention.

It reads: MYSTERIOUS DECOMPOSED CREATURE FOUND IN HARMONY

CHUCK  
Holy crackerjacks!

EXT. DOG RUN - DAY

Jason plays with Jodie. Chuck runs out to them.

CHUCK  
Dude, you need to see this!

Chuck shows Jason the newspaper.

JASON  
A mysterious creature? Is the  
mysterious creature you I wonder?

CHUCK  
I found this in Nanny's room.  
Dude, what if her dog didn't run  
off? What if this is it?

JASON  
Well...

Chuck raves like a mad scientist.

CHUCK  
What if Nanny is still here because  
she doesn't have her dog. It could  
be a sign! Like that movie! I  
forget what it's called-

JASON  
Signs?

CHUCK  
Yeah! Signs! Maybe that's what  
she's trying to tell you from  
beyond the grave!

JASON  
Me?

CHUCK  
Us. Look at the picture closely.

Jason examines the picture. The creature is a piece of rotten flesh hanging off bones.

JASON

I guess that could be Serenity.

CHUCK

Yeah, it could!

Chuck points to a GENERAL STORE in the background of the photo, points across the street where the store still stands.

CHUCK

It was right out here where they found it. That creature is a dog! That's Serenity! The body was found but never buried! That's probably why Nanny is still here!

JASON

But if it is Serenity and Nanny knew, then why didn't she say anything?

CHUCK

Maybe she knew no one would believe her...or wanted to.

JASON

Like you didn't want to believe me?

Chuck sympathetically puts his hand on Jason's shoulder.

CHUCK

Jason, I know I've said some really mean and creepy things to crush your spirits in the past, but for once I believe you.

JASON

You actually make sense for once, too. That's why Jodie was choking. It must have been a sign! If we can bury Serenity then maybe Nanny can finally rest in peace.

CHUCK

Yeah, okay moron, but where are we going to find a dog that died in 1915?

INT. MUSEUM - DAY

They enter the quiet, deserted display room. Several objects from the past 100 years are on display.

CHUCK

What's a small town like this doing with a museum?

JASON

Every town has a museum.

CHUCK

I've never seen one in LA.

JASON

That's because you're an idiot.

The SKELETAL REMAINS of SERENITY sit on display behind a glass case. Chuck and Jason enter the room and observe the body. Chuck reads the display note.

CHUCK

"The remains of the mysterious creature known as Lucy found on April 4, 1915. Nobody knows what she is or where she came from, but she's considered a local legend." Just as I thought...

JASON

How do we get it out?

CHUCK

Break the glass.

JASON

We can't do that!

CHUCK

Dude, there's like two people in this entire town. It'll be days before they figure out that it's gone.

JASON

Well, what do we break it with?

Chuck looks around and then picks up an aged wooden baseball bat from a wall display and prepares to swing.

JASON

Why's that in here?

Chuck reads the display note.

CHUCK

"The bat of Hal Carson, who pitched in two Major League Baseball games and struck out three batters in 1910." Heh, he was born in Harmony, that's why this is here. Grab that box.

Chuck takes a Ruthian swing and SMASHES the glass into dozens of tiny pieces.

EXT. DOG RUN - DAY

The boys run to the center of the field. The bones of Serenity sit in the box beside them.

They use their hands to dig a hole.

CHUCK

Dig, young peasant!

A deep hole is constructed and then the bones are dumped in and covered.

The boys stand up and wait.

Moments later a wind passes by and kicks up a small dust tornado. Sounds of CHILDREN'S LAUGHING echo in the wind.

SID(V.O.)

Anywhere the master goes, the dog will always follow and stay true.

The fog starts to clear and the sun shines through.

JASON(V.O.)

But would the dog follow the person into death?

Jason and Chuck shake hands as the fog continues to clear.

FADE OUT.

THE END