

Spiritism

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INT. HOUSE - ROOM - NIGHT

The walls are painted in a dark-purple color.

A small round table and three chairs around it are the only furniture.

The flickering flame of three candles in the middle of the table illuminates the room.

A loaf of bread and a basket of fruit lie on the table.

A funereal atmosphere pervades the room.

INT. HOUSE - ROOM - MINUTES LATER

A good-looking woman and a muscular man in their 30s enter the room accompanied by a ghastly elderly man in his 70s.

No words are exchanged.

Slowly, they take a seat around the table.

ELDERLY MAN

I'm ALCESTER from the Seance Services Association, I'll be the MEDIUM for this session. Please, follow my instructions.

The woman offers a subdued smile.

WOMAN

I'm MARA.

The second man briefly looks at Alcester.

SECOND MAN

I'm her brother, ALBERT.

A brief pause.

ALCESTER

Please, recite with me. What's the name of the spirit you want to contact?

MARA

Our grandpa MARTIN

Alcester writes the ritual words on two pieces of paper and gives one paper to each of them.

ALCESTER
Let's join hands.

The PARTICIPANTS join hands forming a circle.

They slowly repeat the ritual words.

ALCESTER	MARA, ALBERT
Our beloved Martin, we bring	(in unison)
gifts from life into death.	Our beloved Martin, we bring
Commune with us Martin and	gifts from life into death.
move among us.	Commune with us Martin and
	move among us.

A long silence. The spirit does not respond.

Mara's and Albert's expression shows their disappointment.

ALCESTER
Martin wants to hear our voices
again. Let's repeat the chant.

Mara and Albert nod.

ALCESTER	MARA, ALBERT
Our beloved Martin, we bring	(in unison)
gifts from life into death.	Our beloved Martin, we bring
Commune with us Martin and	gifts from life into death.
move among us.	Commune with us Martin and
	move among us.

A few minutes of silence then...

Three distinct RAPS interrupt the silence.

Mara and Albert appear astonished. Alcester looks hypnotized. He is in a state of trance.

ALCESTER
Martin, I am going to ask you a few
questions. Please respond YES with
two raps and NO with one rap.

Alcester falls in deep concentration.

The other two participants close their eyes.

ALCESTER (cont'd)
Do you know whom we are?

Two raps follow the questions.

ALCESTER (cont'd)
 Are you willing to help your grand-
 children?

Again two raps.

ALCESTER (cont'd)
 They would like to know where the box
 with the diamonds is located. Can you
 tell them?

One very loud knock on the table follow the question.

ALCESTER (cont'd)
 Why not Martin?

For a few minutes, a deep silence follows the question,
 then...

Alcester's mouth begins to move almost imperceptibly.

A low-pitched, unearthly voice comes out of his lips.

Martin's words are spoken through Alcester's mouth.

MARTIN
 (slowly)
 How did you find out about the
 diamonds?

Alcester stares at Mara and Albert with an inquisitive
 glance.

Mara stares at Albert in his eyes.

MARA
 (whispering)
 Tell him.

Albert looks at Alcester as if was asking for help.

Alcester's expression remains imperturbable.

ALBERT
 Grandpa, I read the letters you wrote
 to grandma when you were in South
 Africa.

MARTIN
 Where did you find them?

ALBERT

We were cleaning the attic, they were in an old chest.

MARTIN

Who gave you the permission to read my letters?

MARA

Nobody grandpa, we were curious.

MARTIN

Was your curiosity satisfied?

MARA

Yes and no. We have one question, what happened to the people working with you in the mine?

MARTIN

Were killed by the rebels.

ALBERT

But they didn't kill you.

MARTIN

They spared me because I gave their chief more than thousand diamonds I had stolen.

ALBERT

What about the gems you brought back?

MARTIN

While they were killing my co-workers, I was able to hide a box with the best stones.

MARA

In a letter, you said to grandma to never open that box, why?

MARTIN

Because the diamonds are cursed.

MARA

Cursed? Nothing happened to you.

A long silence interrupts the conversation. Alcester intervenes.

ALCESTER

Martin, are you tired? Do you need to rest?

Again, silence.

Suddenly, Alcester's lips move rapidly.

MARTIN

I killed the man who pronounced the curse against me. An African legend says that I've liberated myself from the curse when I killed him.

Mara is visibly shaken. Albert is stone-faced.

MARA

Grandpa, do you really think this is real?

MARTIN

Some miners died after stealing a few cursed diamonds. Maybe, they were sick...I don't know.

ALBERT

I don't believe in these primitive superstitions. Diamonds bring wealth not death, that's all they do. They make you rich.

MARTIN

Would you put your life at risk to get the diamonds?

ALBERT

Yes, I would, any time. It's all a figment of one's imagination.

MARTIN

What about you Mara?

Mara glances at Albert. He nods.

MARA

I feel the same.

A deep silence pervades the room.

Mara, Albert and Alcester stare at each other.

Finally, after a few minutes, Alcester's lips move slightly.

MARTIN

If this is your decision, I'll tell you where the box is located. Go in the cemetery where your grandma is buried and excavate two feet from the headstone on its right side. You'll find the box under a foot of soil.

A funereal silence returns in the room.

Mara and Albert are speechless. They stare at Alcester. He looks at them with a smirking face.

Alcester slowly extracts a small gun from his pocket and point it to Albert and Mara.

Bang.

Bang.

Mara and Albert collapse over the table, instantly dead. A rivulet of blood crawls down from the heads to their faces wetting the table's surface.

ALCESTER

(smiling)

You should have listened to your grandpa. His diamonds were really cursed.

He swiftly exits the room. Laughing.

The End