FADE IN:

EXT. WINTER RIVER, CONNECTICUT - DAY

A crisp and perfect New England town. Almost too neat to be real. No visible townspeople. CAMERA EXPLORES town.

CAMERA FLIES OVER a rickety bridge -- PAST the Maitland Hardware and Appliance Store -- PAST the church -- the Historical Society -- UP OVER the graveyard on the hill and finally --

TO the Maitland house. The perfect Victorian house surveying the perfect village. Suddenly --

A giant daddy longlegs spider -- mounts the crest of hill beside the house, pauses to wave a spindly leg and then creeps menacingly on top of the Maitland house.

ADAM (O.S.)
Well, well, you're a big fella...!

A hand -- as big as God's -- with a huge tweezer, gently reaches down out of the sky and lies, palm up, in the yard next to the house. Daddy longlegs climbs into it. The hand raises into the sky again.

INT. ATTIC - NEW ANGLE - DAY

Reveals Winter River as a miniature town, while the daddy longlegs and the hand are normal size. Above the model are a homely representation of moon, sun, and stars -- a whole, tiny mechanical universe to track the hours of the day. A large plat map of the city is prominent on the wall.

The hand is ADAM MAITLAND's. In his late 30's, he's a solid easy-going citizen. Capra used to make movies about him.

Adam's model town sprawls across most of the attic space. Windows on either end of the attic shed good light into the warm room. Adam very carefully lifts the spider out the open window. Smiles as he drops him lightly on the
breeze.

CAMERA TILTS UP FROM the window to see -- the real Winter River, laid out exactly as the model, at the foot of the hill. Adam breathes deeply and looks very pleased at the glorious town below him.

ON his huge hand again -- as it reaches into model and tweezes a tiny sign into the tiny window of Maitland's Hardware Store on Main Street. It reads:

ADAM AND BARBARA MAITLAND
ARE
ON VACATION!
HOORAY!

Adam leans down and eyes the sign.

BARBARA
(behind him)
I'm ready!

Adam turns to see entering: BARBARA MAITLAND, 35 -- a wholesome beauty who is mellowing well. She smiles at him. Perhaps a certain tinge of sadness about her, because they don't have children.

ADAM
(happy to see her)
She's ready.

BARBARA
(eyeing the model)
Oh, Adam, the model looks so good. The Historical Society will love it. You've finished the streets?

ADAM
(nodding)
Almost.

She pushes a wrapped present across the table.

BARBARA
Happy vacation, honey!

Adam smiles and gives her a present. He opens his present. A can of furniture oil.

ADAM
Manchurian Tung oil? Where did you get it?

BARBARA
Helen got it for me in Oslo.

ADAM
God... Manchurian Tung oil? There's enough to refinish the gateleg table and the cherry wardrobe!

Barbara nods and unwraps her gift. Rolls of very expensive floral wallpaper. She cradles it like gold leaf.

BARBARA
Oh, Adam! It's Laura Ashley, isn't it?

He nods.

ADAM
Enough to do the guest room.

PHONE RINGS. They freeze, then grin.

ADAM & BARBARA
(unison)
No one's home!

BARBARA
Oh, I love it. I can get the guest room done.

ADAM
Yeah, I want to get one coat on the wardrobe and then I'll help you.

BARBARA
Oh, honey, I'm so glad we're spending our vacation at home.

ADAM
(hugging her)
God, how I have looked forward to this, honey.

HONK HONK outside. They look at each other horrified. Peer out the window.

BARBARA
Oh no.

ADAM
(pointing at her)
It's your turn, darling.

She shakes her head with resignation and goes downstairs. KNOCKING on door from below.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY
A comfortable, slightly old-fashioned kitchen. Barbara enters with determination.

HER POV

A woman -- JANE BUTTERFIELD -- tall, gawky and aggressive peeks in the kitchen door. She's divorced three husbands and buried another for good measure. She's ruthless but is weirdly, seamlessly pleasant. She waves a legal-sized paper at them, starts to come inside.

INT./EXT. KITCHEN DOOR

Barbara makes dash for it and holds it just as Jane gets a foot in. Jane smiles wildly.

JANE
Hi, Barb! I'm glad I caught you. I heard you were on vacation!

BARBARA
That's right, Jane. Complete vacation.

JANE
Honey -- today I am three hundred fifty thousand dollars!

BARBARA
No! Jane, it is 6:45 in the morning!

JANE
Look at me, think of me as cash! This offer is really real! From a rich man in New York City who only saw a photograph!

BARBARA
Jane, don't send photographs of our house around the country! We're not interested in selling.

JANE
You could double the size of your hardware store! You'll be rich.

BARBARA
And live in what, our station wagon?

JANE
(frustrated)
Barbara Maitland, sweetie, you
just listen now. This house is too big. It really ought to be for a couple with a family.

That hurts Barbara a little. She looks at Jane.

JANE
Oh, honey... I didn't mean anything ... it's just too big for you two. I know these things.

BARBARA
(shutting door)
'Bye, Jane, I'll see you in church in a couple weeks.

Jane compulsively affixes her business card, face inside. in the windowpane. Barbara pulls the shade down. Shakes her head and walks to the roll of wallpaper.

BARBARA
(to herself)
Some people...

INT. MAITLAND HOUSE - DAY

CAMERA FOLLOWS Adam DOWN stairs -- PAST photos of himself and Barbara, old photos of the early days of Winter River. Pictures and momentos of a satisfied life in hardware.

We see the master bedroom, sewing room, guest rooms, bathrooms, the rambling, old-fashioned quality to the house. Clean, sentimental, warm and floral. Some rooms in progress.

Adam is humming happily looking for paintbrushes in the ground-floor storeroom. He spies a CASSETTE DECK and looks through a stack of cassettes and plays one. It is an old INKSPOTS LOVE SONG.

INT. GUEST ROOM - DAY

Barbara is starting to paper the walls already. She frowns at the MUSIC. Goes to the door.

BARBARA
Oh, honey. You said no Ink Spots on this vacation!

It CLICKS OFF. She goes back into the room.

INT. STOREROOM - DAY

Adam puts away the tape but keeps on humming the song.
He needs more light.

He opens the shutters on a small window. He jumps back, frightened by Jane's huge face grinning at him from outside.

JANE
Maybe I am three-eighty-five if you carry a second lien!
(desperate)
I can arrange the most creative financing in the six states of New England.

ADAM
No, Jane.

JANE
You'll be rich!

ADAM
 stil trying to be polite

We're rich in what really matters.

JANE
Adam my booyy! When you're really rich in what matters...
(shaking the contract)
... nothing matters! My buyer has just made a killing in condos in the Village. And he's got a little stress problem...
(taps her head)
... so his wife says they want the old peace and quiet!

ADAM
So do I, Jane. I'm on vacation.

JANE
Does that mean you'd consider it in two weeks? You don't have to answer now. He wants me to check the deed restriction anyway. You take your vacation, Adam. Say 'bye!

He shakes his head. She puts business card in the window.

JANE
Come see me. You know where to find me.

Jane exits jauntily, flapping her contract down the lawn.
Squirrels scatter. A bird dives at her. She swings the contract at it angrily.

JANE
Get away you little monster.

ADAM
(after her)
I will never sell this house. I'll be buried in my yard next to Barbara. Holding hands!
(looking for brush)
And a good paintbrush!

He rummages for a brush. Can't find it.

ADAM
(calling to distant Barbara)
Honey, come with me down to the store? I need a good brush for this Tung oil and I want to pick up a piece of the model. Let's go early before anyone sees us.

INT. MAITLAND HOUSE - DAY

Barbara has already papered a few rolls in the guest room.

BARBARA
Okay, but let's hurry back. You just run in okay?

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The Victorian house from the model "in the flesh." Adam stands by the station wagon.

On the bumper of the car is a sticker reading: WARNING: I BRAKE FOR ANIMALS.

Barbara gets in driver's side. They drive off.

INT. CAR - DAY

Adam dusts the inside of the dashboard. Clean. Clean.

ADAM
You know... September is the best month of the year. Leaves turning, kids are back in school...
Barbara looks a little wistful about her lack of children.

BARBARA
Jane said we should sell the house to someone with a family.

ADAM
Ah, the ever-tactful Jane. (putting his hand on her shoulder) Let's just relax about having children.

EXT. RIVER AND BRIDGE AND HILL - DAY

We see the car coming down the hill toward the bridge.

ADAM (V.O.)
We should be flattered that she wants to sell our house.

BARBARA (V.O.)
I know... I just wish she'd leave us alone.

ADAM (V.O.)
Let's not think about it. We'll have a nice romantic, quiet, vacation. Here comes the bridge chorus.

Car reaches the rickety bridge. CAR SHAKES, bobbing up and down on every plank.

TIGHT ON BARBARA AND ADAM

(They've done this routine before). They sing an old Johnny Mathis song. With a lot of vibrato.

TOGETHER
Chances are... When I wear a foolish grin...

They laugh.

EXT. DOWNTOWN WINTER RIVER - DAY

Just like the model, but real. And populated.

CAMERA PAUSES ON a gorgeous storefront with a brass lion out front. Sign above doors says:

BOZMAN BUILDING 1835
An old man polishes the lion as Maitlands drive by and wave.

BARBARA (V.O.)
Wave at the lion.

ADAM (V.O.)
Don't forget the balls, Ernie.

BARBARA (V.O.)
(embarrassed)
Adam!

Ernie looks around to see no one's looking and polishes the balls of the lion.

CAMERA spies a jaunty dog, like Benji, peeing on the opposite corner of the lion. Maitlands drive by store with sign:

JANE BUTTERFIELD
ANTIQUES
REAL ESTATE
TRAVEL

INT. ANTIQUE STORE-REAL ESTATE OFFICE-TRAVEL AGENCY - DAY

The store is bursting with antiques of all sorts, travel brochures, photographs of houses for sale, and a serve-yourself Xerox machine. LITTLE JANE, her 8-year-old daughter is drudgingly making copies.

Jane, phone in hand, rushes to the window to watch Maitlands drive by. Almost popping the cord when it reaches its end. She's waiting for the other party to pick up.

JANE
(after Maitlands)
How can you be Republicans and not understand real estate?
(changing attitude; all sweet)
Y... ello. Mrs. Deetz?
Well the condition is what we country folk call, fixin'... Yes, I think they are fixin' to accept another offer. Don't scream at me, Mrs. Deetz. Well maybe if you offer 390,000 they'll take it.

EXT. MAITLAND HARDWARE - DAY
Adam sprints up the steps of his lovely hardware store. OLD BILL, a slightly-addled ancient barber, is napping in a chair in front of his shop, next door to Adam's. Adam fumbles with the lock, not interested in conversation. He drops his keys, waking Old Bill.

OLD BILL
'Morning, Adam. You need a haircut before your vacation?

ADAM
No thanks, Bill.

OLD BILL
How's the model coming?

ADAM
Good, Bill -- Good.

Bill turns around and continues prattling even though Adam has entered. Bill prattles throughout.

OLD BILL
Y'know, I was thinkin'... you said Bozman built the foundation in 1835 but y'know his grandson come in here last week and said he found a bottle with an 1836 stamp in it plastered in the foundation. (suddenly disgusted at the memory) He's got hair down to his goddamned shoulders...

INT. MAITLAND HARDWARE

Adam pulls down a few good paintbrushes and carefully picks up a small model of the Bozman building. He walks out. Old Bill continues unabated.

OLD BILL
He said 'Just give me a trim...' I took a scissors to him so fast ... would've skimmed him clean if he hadn't...

Adam strides by quickly to the car.

ADAM
See you, Bill.

OLD BILL
Right.
INT. JANE'S OFFICE - DAY

JANE  
(on phone)  
Well, Mrs. Deetz, I am doing my best. What? Oh the Maitlands are fine country people. What make car do they drive?

She runs to the window again almost popping cord.

EXT. MAITLAND'S CAR - DAY

The Maitlands drive their 1984 Volvo station wagon toward their house.

JANE (V.O.)  
They drive an old beat-up red Chevrolet pickup.

ON JANE  

JANE  
Yes, that's right, they don't know the value of their land. Not if they take this offer of yours they don't. I'll be in touch.  
(fingering her business card)  
Come see me, you know where I...  
(cut short by Mrs. Deetz's hang-up)  
... am.

EXT. CAR AND BRIDGE - DAY

Car approaches.

INT. CAR - DAY

Five brushes sit on the seat next to Adam. He cradles small replica of the Bozman building, complete with brass lion.

BARBARA  
Adam, your Bozman Building is a beauty.

ADAM  
Yeah it turned out okay. We applied for a National Historical
plaque for it. That'll be the third one on Main Street.

BARBARA
You're doing it, Adam. You're saving this town.

ADAM
(grinning proudly)
Slow down there, honey... I don't want the vibration to weaken the model.

BARBARA
(nervous)
Oh... I'm sorry...

Barbara starts to apply the brakes.

Just before the bridge the dog waddles out in the road. Stops to pee. Barbara swerves. As the car hits the rickety bridge, the speed is just a bit too much. BOARDS RATTLE and loosen, the car skews and catches in an open slot, careens to the right, then the left and SMASHES through the side RAILS. It hovers on the edge of the bridge.

INT. CAR - DAY

A piling has smashed through the window on the passenger side, crushing the upper part of Barbara's arm. She is wailing in pain and fright.

Adam attempts to maneuver the car onto the bridge again. Adam tries to help Barbara. He tries to get out of the car. None of this succeeds.

EXT. BRIDGE AND RIVER - DAY

The dog finishes, looks over at the car, walks across the bridge and steps on the one board which holds the car aloft.

The car rocks back and forth for a moment, and then slides forward toward the water.

EXT. CAR AND BRIDGE

The car plunges into the rushing water. It floats for a moment, and then sinks like a stone.

UNDERWATER - DAY
The car floats downward with panic-stricken Adam and Barbara inside. For a moment, we hear their SCREAMS, then as the car fills up with water, the screams are cut off.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. BARBARA AND ADAM'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Quiet, still, expectant. There is a fire laid in the hearth. Suddenly and for no apparent reason it ignites and burns with a furious cheerfulness.

Barbara and Adam enter, dazed, wet, and bedraggled.

BARBARA
Something like this always
happens when we try to go on
vacation. Always.

Adam leads her toward the fire.

ADAM
You'll feel better when you're
dry.

He holds out his hands to be warmed. Barbara comes up beside him. All this time she's been holding her injured arm with the other hand.

BARBARA
This fire wasn't burning when
we left the house.

ADAM
How's your arm?

BARBARA
I'm not sure. It feels... frozen.

She holds her arms out to warm them. One hand catches on fire.

BARBARA'S LEFT ARM

They stare at it dumbfoundedly before Adam regains his senses and snatches it out of the fire. Two of the fingers are burning like candles, and Barbara industriously blows them out.

BARBARA
Oh, Adam.

CUT TO:
INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (FEW MINUTES LATER)

They are sitting on the couch together. Barbara is looking away slightly -- as one does when a doctor is drawing blood -- while Adam looks at her fingers. He frowns.

He looks at his skin. It is pale. He looks at Barbara.

ADAM
You'd better sit down, hon.

BARBARA
I am sitting.

ADAM
I'll tell you what, Barbara. I don't think we survived that crash.

BARBARA
(pause)
Oh, Adam. We're home. In our own house. Nonsense. I'll make some coffee. You get some more firewood.

Adam gets up, a little absently, she follows him as he wanders to the front door. He peers out.

ADAM
Let's take things extra slow. Do you remember how we got back up here?

Barbara tests her hand, clenches and unclenches her fist.

BARBARA
I'm fine. My arm works fine.

Adam, exploring, opens the door, steps out on the front porch.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - TWILIGHT

Adam's face is painted with color of sunset. He stands atop the steps leading down to the front yard. Barbara stands just inside the open threshold, looking out worriedly.

BARBARA
(quiet sarcasm)
The end of a perfect day.

Adam starts to step down to the yard.
ADAM
Honey, I'm gonna go down to the bridge and retrace our steps.

He steps off the last step into the yard and promptly disappears.

BARBARA
Adam!

EXT. GREAT VOID
Adam is nowhere. There's no ground, no sky, nothing to stand on or hold onto or give boundaries or distance. Just vast nothing. Not white and not colored either. Noise of a CLOCK TICKING.

Adam looks about, surprised, doesn't like what he doesn't see. He turns around to head back up the steps. There are no steps.

ADAM
Barbara?

His VOICE ECHOES STRANGELY. He runs off a little in the distance, and calls again from over there.

ADAM
(quietly)
Where are you?

He goes even farther away.

FOREGROUND - ENORMOUS GEARED WHEEL
-- The size of a man -- rolls by, tearing up the unseamed ground. Something pours up out of the tear -- ooze or stuffing.

Adam runs forward and stares after the wheel, which is now out of sight.

TWO SMALLER GEARS
looking very much like components of a giant watch -- spin along behind him. One of them veers suddenly toward him, and though Adam jumps out of the way, the gear snags his trouser leg and shreds it. LOUD TICKING. A perfectly enormous gear comes barreling toward him. Adam leaps out of its way. The gear turns, fish-tailing, kicking up ooze and stuffing.

Adam flings himself suddenly to the right, but trips into the path of the gear. As he's about to be crushed, he's
suddenly jerked up to safety.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

It's Barbara who's grabbed him, and quite evidently saved his -- not life, perhaps -- but existence. He's shaken, breathless.

Barbara stares at him, as if wondering what he's just been through.

ADAM
(weakly)
You saved my -- uh -- life... or whatever... something.

BARBARA
Two hours.

ADAM
What?

BARBARA
That's how long you were gone.

ADAM
(pondering that)
... Hmmm?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Barbara leads Adam into the house.

ADAM
Anything happen while I was away?

BARBARA
Yes it did. Yes it did. I made a couple of small discoveries. Here's one.

She stands by the mirror over the hearth mantle. On the mantle is Barbara's prize collection of porcelain horses. Adam comes to stand beside her. They look into the mirror, and there is no reflection of them.

Barbara picks up one of the horses, and trots it through the air. The horse is imaged in the mirror.

BARBARA
There's that, and there's this.

She picks up an ancient, leather-bound book. It's yellow and worn, about the size of the Boy Scout manual.
CLOSEUP - BOOK

Its title is: **Handbook For The Recently Deceased**.

BACK TO SCENE

ADAM
(reading)
Handbook for the recently diseased.

BARBARA
Deceased. I don't know where it came from.

ADAM
Look at the publisher.
(as he does)

They look at each other as it sinks in to Barbara.

BARBARA
(finally admitting it)
I don't think we survived the crash.

ADAM
This is going to take some time.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Adam is already in bed, reading from the handbook.

Barbara is getting ready for bed -- going through a ritual of sorts that they practiced every night of their married lives.

BARBARA
I don't like situations like this.
I hate it when I'm not in control.
So just tell me the basics.

ADAM
This book isn't arranged that way.
What do you want to know?

BARBARA
There are a thousand things... Why did you disappear when you walked off the front porch? Is this a punishment? Are we halfway to heaven or are we halfway to hell? And how long is this going to last?
ADAM
I don't see anything about 'Rewards and Punishments' or 'Heaven and Hell.'

(frustrated)
This book reads like stereo instructions! Listen to this...
'Geographical and Temporal Perimeters... Functional perimeters vary from manifestation to manifestation.' This is going to take some time.

Barbara paces, she trips on her wallpaper rolls. Kicks them.

BARBARA
I knew I'd never finish the guest room. Adam, we just can't stay in here forever!

They look at each other, the question hangs in the air. Can't they?

Adam stands and walks to the window.

ADAM
(thoughtfully)
Maybe we should set up a normal routine.

She looks at him like he's nuts.

ADAM
I mean, let's try to nail down something in our lives. A regular schedule. We can keep track of time and go on with our projects up here in the attic.

She shakes her head, exasperated. Flops down on the bed.

BARBARA
Oh, God, maybe this is all just a bad dream.

TIGHT ON ADAM
A somber look comes across his face.

ADAM
I'm afraid not, honey.

Barbara looks up at him, questioningly.
BARBARA
Why? What's wrong? Adam?

She stands and joins him at the window.

THEIR POV THROUGH WINDOW

In the distance we see an automobile funeral procession threading its way toward the nearby cemetery. Headlights are on. We recognize Jane's car in the line.

REVERSE ON BARBARA AND ADAM

Sober faces.

TIGHTER ON PROCESSION

It arrives at the gravesite. We see some familiar faces, Ernie, and Old Bill the Barber. Jane and Little Jane watch as two identical coffins are carried together, to two open graves.

ON BARBARA AND ADAM

She drops her head sadly on his shoulder. He leans his face slightly into hers.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Adam is setting up a small monument in the model town cemetery. It reads: ADAM AND BARBARA MAITLAND / UNITED IN LIFE / UNDIVIDED IN DEATH.

ADAM
I wish I could see the cemetery from up here, I don't know which area is the best placement for us.

Barbara, trying to clean, lets out a frustrated yelp! She paces.

ADAM
Cabin fever, hon?

BARBARA
I can't clean anything. The vacuum is out in the garage. I can't leave the house. Why don't they
tell us something? Where are all the other dead people in the world? Why is it just you and me?

ADAM
Maybe this is heaven.

BARBARA
(looking at the dusty walls)
In heaven there wouldn't be dust on the wallpaper.

ADAM
Hon... I didn't want to die, but really, this is fine with me. As long as I never have to wash dishes again.

BARBARA
Dishes? We haven't eaten in three weeks! Adam, I'm not like you, I really need to be around people, get out to the church and go grocery shopping.

ADAM
But I'm not hungry, are you?

Barbara shakes her head and picks up the handbook, and pages through it desperately.

BARBARA
I keep having this feeling that something has got to happen.

CAR DOOR SLAMS outside. Adam and Barbara look at one another. Run to window.

EXT. MAITLAND HOUSE - DAY
Jane Butterfield is staring up at the old house.

INT. ATTIC - DAY
Adam, from his angle, can just barely see her.

ADAM
God, it's Jane Butterfield!

BARBARA
What's she doing here?

ADAM
I don't know.
(shouting)
Jane, Jane, up here!

EXT. MAITLAND HOUSE - DAY

Unhearing, Jane heads for car. Sound of WIND UP. Blows her dress. Little Jane straggles along with her like an apprentice.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Barbara watches Adam, and shakes her head. He stops.

BARBARA
She can't see you, right?
(as Adam nods)
In the book, Rule Number Two:
the living usually won't see the dead.

ADAM
Won't? Or can't?

BARBARA
Just says 'won't.' Wait a minute. Here it says 'the living are arrogant... they think they'll never die, so they refuse to see the dead.'

ADAM
Arrogant. That's Jane Butterfield all right...

BARBARA
(sighs and nods)
At least we won't have to worry about her.

Adam pats her on the head, smiles and goes to his model.

ADAM
Keep studying the book. Breathe deeply, relax. It doesn't seem to me we have to worry about much of anything, hon.

She smiles, finally a little contented. Returns to the book.

BARBARA
I guess... if I'm going to be dead, I'll just have to be the best dead person ever!
ADAM
That's my girl!

EXT. MAITLAND HOUSE - DAY

Jane drives away. CAMERA HINGES to see a For Sale sign. Across it -- another smaller banner. It reads:

SOLD!

CUT TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

The Maitlands are asleep. CAMERA EXPLORES the room a bit. It is getting slightly tatty. Adam rolls over, pulling the covers off Barbara. We see:

ON BARBARA

She is hovering off the side of the bed.

An OMINOUS RUMBLE --

-- like a 4.0 earthquake, shakes the house. GLASS RATTLES, the ceramic horses on the mantlepiece jump around. Barbara falls to the floor. They look at one another with horror. They leap up and run downstairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The RUMBLE BUILDS to a climax, there is a LOUD METALLIC SQUEAL, and then a CRASH... just as Barbara and Adam arrive.

MOVING VAN RAMP

SMASHES open the front DOOR and CRASHES down into the foyer.

TEN-FOOT ELECTRIC-BLUE ITALIAN LEATHER COUCH

slides smoothly down the ramp. On the couch sits DELIA DEETZ.

Delia is relentlessly New York, relentlessly fashionable, relentlessly thin -- a totally self-assured Joan Rivers.

DELIA
Get it right, you people! And I don't pay overtime!
She is also a woman with a mission -- to gut Barbara and Adam's house and remake it in her own very upscale image.

Delia's gaze is on the living room, but she looks through Adam and Barbara as if they weren't even there (which to her eyes they're not).

The COUCH CRASHES into the base of the staircase, SMASHING the NEWELL POST and several of the BALUSTERS.

Barbara cringes. One of the balusters falls at Delia's side. She grasps it like a scepter.

Two MOVING MEN rush down the ramp.

MOVING MAN #1

Sorry about that, Mrs. Deetz.

DELIA

Don't worry. It was going anyway.

Staggered by Delia's grand entrance, Barbara looks toward Adam, but he has disappeared.

Flustered, Barbara glances around the room, shakes herself experimentally, then with a look of surprise on her face that it works -- disappears herself.

Still holding the baluster, Delia gets up off the couch and moves into the living room, surveying it with an odd mixture of ambition, contempt, and resolution.

Behind her, the two Moving Men bring in a matching blue leather armchair. In the armchair sits LYDIA DEETZ.

Lydia, age 14, is a pretty girl, but wan, pale and overly-dramatic, dressed as she is in her favorite color, black leather. She's a combination of a little death rocker and an 80's version of Edward Gorey's little girls.

She has a couple of expensive cameras around her neck and is already taking photographs of the Moving Men. Lydia is cool, Lydia is sullen, Lydia is her father's daughter by his first marriage. Lydia is usually about half-pissed off. But underneath... we like her a lot.

The Moving Men still hold up the chair, waiting for Delia to decide where she wants it.

DELIA

Jesus. Who lived here? The Waltons?

TIGHT ON LYDIA
Calmly surveys the house.

LYDIA
You hate it? I love it.

Delia signals wearily that the Moving Men can put the chair down anywhere.

DELIA
Get all this other crap out of here.

Lydia hops down out of the chair, and comes farther into the living room.

DELIA
Where is your father?... Probably in the kitchen.

That's the cue for CHARLES DEETZ, who comes in through the swinging door, and across the dining room.

He's holding a butcher knife in one hand, and a massive meat cleaver in the other.

Charles is not exactly the equivalent of his wife, being at heart a basically pleasant man. But pleasant isn't "in" this year, so Charles does his best to be offhanded and brittle.

CHARLES
The noise in that kitchen. Noisy refrigerator, noisy faucets... We'll have to replace it all. I want no humming in the house.

Lydia exploring on her own, gazes around the living room with growing pleasure, she backs up for a good angle to photograph.

CAMERA HINGES -- She is standing with her back right up to Barbara -- who is horrified at this creature.

LYDIA
(to herself)
A real house.

Barbara looks closely at Lydia's hair and thinks "Yecchh!" Charles enters.

CHARLES
What do you think, honey?

LYDIA
Delia hates it.
Lydia gazes at a dusty maze of spider webs.

LYDIA
I could live here.

A movement makes Lydia turn around and scream. It is Delia. Not Barbara.

DELIA
Settle down, Lydia. I wonder where we are going to get counseling for you out here.

A VIOLENT FALSETTO SCREAM turns the Deetz family's attention to the front windows.

OTHO (O.S.)
Help! Oh help!

Wedged in the window frame is a massive body.

The short, stubby legs, dressed in the world's largest pair of Georgia Armani slacks, protrude into the living room, waving frantically. Expensive Italian loafers are kicked off the feet revealing a pair of expensive patterned socks. By their feet shall ye know them.

DELIA
It's Otho!

CHARLES
Otho, why didn't you just come in the door?

Otho's voice comes as if from a great distance.

OTHO (O.S.)
It's bad luck. And I believe hugely in luck.

LYDIA
Hold your breath and we'll pull.

The entire Deetz family at last pulls Otho into the living room.

All this while the Moving Men are variously carting out the handsome old furniture and bringing in the hideous new furniture.

Otho is Robert Morley at his most obscenely fat and faggoty. But he's not all fat and fun -- this customer carries nasty emotional weight as well.

As Otho is pulled through the window he is holding onto the curtains for support. And when he is at last all the way through, and upright on his feet, he suddenly
gives a tremendous yank. The whole drapery apparatus, including valences, crashes to the floor.

OTHO
That was the single most unattractive window treatment I have ever seen in the entire of my existence.

DELIA
(starry eyed)
I'm so glad you could leave the city to consult me, Otho.

Otho is looking around the room with an eye of quiet horror.

OTHO
Yes, of course you are. Well, Otho had an intuition. Call it a hunch -- that it was going to be a fabled monstrosity of a house. And it certainly is. Charles, you're lucky the Yuppies are buying condos, so you can afford what I'm going to have to do to this place. We are talking from the ground ups'ville!

CHARLES
That's fine, Otho. Just keep me out of it. I am here to relax and clip coupons. And goddamnit, I mean to do it.

During this speech, Otho has been surreptitiously posing for Lydia's camera. She clicks the shutter.

OTHO
(ignoring her)
Is the rest of the house as bad as this?

DELIA
The rest of the house is probably worse. When can you and I get started?

OTHO
No time like the present, as my wicked stepmother used to say.

 Unexpectedly, Otho sweeps Barbara's entire collection of CERAMIC and PORCELAIN HORSES from the mantlepiece. They all CRASH to the hearth, except for one, which Lydia manages to catch.
LYDIA
Otho, that's terrible.

OTHO
My sentiments exactly. Porcelain is for teeth!

He takes the sale remaining porcelain horse out of Lydia's hand and flings it into the fireplace. Lydia is sad.

Then, out of the pockets of his size 56 Georgia Armani jacket, Otho takes two cans of spray paint -- the kind the graffiti artists use -- and shakes them as if they were castanets. They certainly sound like it.

OTHO
Delia, let's get this show on the road.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

At one end, near the stairs leading up to the attic, Barbara and Adam are slumped against opposite walls.

BARBARA
Adam, we are in hell. I hate these people.

ADAM
They make gypsies look good.

BARBARA
Is this a punishment for something we did in life? What can we do?

ADAM
I don't know if there's anything we can do.

BARBARA
(determined)
We're not completely helpless. I've been reading the book. There's a word for people in our predicament, honey.

Adam looks at her.

BARBARA
Ghosts!

Adam is shocked at the reality.

Otho and Delia come up the stairs at the end of the hallway.
OTHO
We're dealing with negative entertainment potential here. I mean, there's absolutely no organic walking flow-through.

Otho looks down the hallway. It's empty. Adam and Barbara are no longer there.

DELIA
What's wrong?

OTHO
I thought I saw something.

DeLia turns and spray-paints on the wall -- in luminous orange -- the word MAUVE.

DELIA
Okay?

OTHO
(screaming with delight)
You read my mind! I love clients who can read my mind. I don't think people realize how strong a connection there is between interior decoration and the supernatural.

DELIA
(fawning)
I know... I read your book, The Haunted Tapestries of the Waldorf.

OTHO
Gooooo!

Delia opens the door and they step inside another room.

DELIA
This will be Lydia's room.

INT. LYDIA'S ROOM - DAY

It's not Lydia's room yet, of course, because it still has the Maitlands' furniture in it. Barbara had partly wallpapered it before the accident. Her tools are still there.

DELIA
What do you think?

OTHO
Viridian?
DELIA
Viridian? What is...?

Otho spray-paints the word "viridian" on the wall -- plus the word "blue green" -- and "Cr2 O3," right over a picture of Adam and Barbara as kids.

OTHO
Blue-green! Hydrated chromic oxide! Remember I'm schooled in chemistry. I was a hair analyst! Briefly. Interior design is a science, Delia! Think of me as Doctor Otho.
(looking at wall)
And this patient is truly sick!

DELIA
Of course, her favorite color! How beautiful!

Otho stares straight into her eyes.

OTHO
'I' will tell you what is beautiful.

Delia smiles. Behind Delia and Otho, the room's CLOSET DOOR swings slowly open with and OMINOUS CREAK.

Delia and Otho turn that way, with a suggestion of dread. Inside the closet, Barbara's corpse is suspended from the ceiling by a belt. The CORPSE twists with a CREAK, and Barbara grins ghostly and slowly tears off her face, leaving nothing but muscle and bone beneath. Her eye-balls dangle on her cheeks.

Delia and Otho stare aghast.

DELIA
Oh my God!

OTHO
I know! We just have to pray that the other closets are bigger than this one.

He walks over. Looks inside.

OTHO
Were these people dwarves? (sic)
(spies something)
Oooo!... Look!

He finds, neatly hung in plastic, the Maitlands' wedding outfits. Totally captivated by this powerful image, he peers through the plastic at them. Holding
each up to Delia. Barbara watches wide-eyed at them.

OTHO

Ozzie...
(holding up her dress)
... and... Harriet! What happened to these people?

Delia SLAMS the DOOR in Barbara's contorted face.

DELIA

They died.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Delia and Otho come out of Lydia's bedroom. Look around. Delia opens a door on the opposite side of the hallway -- Adam and Barbara's old room. They enter.

INT. BARBARA AND ADAM'S OLD ROOM - DAY

The room looks like Barbara and Adam left it just a few hours ago. Delia and Otho poke around.

OTHO

Yes, but how did they die?

Delia has gone over to the bathroom door, and pushed it wide open. But before she goes in, she stops a moment to think.

DELIA

I think... they drowned.

Behind Delia, in the bathroom, the old-fashioned bathtub suddenly overflows with vile water. Adam's face-up bloated corpse bobs to the surface. His dead, drowned stare is ghastly.

OTHO

Argh! Look at this water. Mosquito central. This will be overtime, Delia.

He rolls his sleeve and reaches down into the water, past Adam, who looks at him puzzled. Otho pulls the plug on the drain. Water swirls out.

Delia stares downward directly at the corpse, then she points at the floor.

DELIA

Otho, I cannot live with these cheap domestic floor tiles.
OTHO
Be brave! Otho take care! Onward!

The bathroom is now empty. No water, no drowned corpse. Otho sneezes. Shivers a bit.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Otho and Delia come out of the master bedroom suite.

OTHO
Is there much more of this torture?

DELIA
That's Charles' study. But you don't have to even look in there. He'll love whatever you do to it. He's such a sheep.

OTHO
Oh, as long as we're here...

Otho reaches out and turns the knob. The door swings ominously open on:

CHARLES'S STUDY

This had been Adam's reading and birdwatching study. Bird posters on the wall, books everywhere. Straight out of *Better Homes and Gardens* 1963.

There is one slight difference however because on the rag rug in the middle of the floor lies Adam's headless corpse. Standing over him, holding in one hand a long knife and in the other Adam's blood-and-gore dripping head is Barbara -- with a maniacal look on her face. Shrieking silently.

OTHO
Ooo. Deliver me from L.L. Bean!

Inside the room, the eyes of Adam's severed head open and look up at Barbara -- she stops screaming.

ADAM'S HEAD
They don't see us. They can't hear us.

Outside, Delia is shaking her head.

DELIA
The woman who lived here had the aesthetic instincts of Betty
Crocker.

BARBARA
I'm going to get her.

DELIA
I cannot convey to you the extent to which this house bores me.

OTHO
'I' will tell you what is boring.
   (looking around scientifically)
Once you cover up the wallpaper, knock down a few walls, alter the traffic patterns, and -- perhaps -- only perhaps -- think about an inground pool -- the place might just be livable. What's on the third floor?

DELIA
Attic space.

OTHO
Let's see. We could turn that into a media room.

They head up the stairs to the attic.

INT. LYDIA'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Adam's head has a look of terror on it.

   ADAM'S HEAD
   Oh, God. I forgot to lock the attic door!

Adam's headless body jumps up off the floor and rushes out of the room.

INT. STAIRCASE TO ATTIC - SAME TIME

Otho and Delia climbing. The headless corpse careens past them, around the bend in the stairs and out of sight.

   OTHO
   Did you feel something?

Delia shakes her head.

   OTHO
   I felt a cool wind.

The expression on Otho's face suggests he knows more than
he's telling.

INT. LANDING OUTSIDE ATTIC DOOR - SAME TIME

The headless corpse rushes through the open door into the attic.

INT. ATTIC - SAME TIME

The headless corpse SLAMS the DOOR SHUT, turns the key in the lock. Then he slumps against the locked door in an exaggerated stance of relief.

INT. ATTIC LANDING - SAME TIME

Delia tries the knob. The door is locked.

    OTHO
    You don't have a key?

    DELIA
    Maybe Charles does.

    OTHO
    I have a feeling there's some very interesting space behind this door.

    DELIA
    (sarcastic)
    Probably the world's largest Reader's Digest collection! C'mon, let's have some chablis, Otho, I'm laid bare by this experience. Entirely bare.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Barbara still holding Adam's head.

    ADAM'S HEAD
    Whew! That was close.

    BARBARA
    I cannot witness this.

Barbara distractedly puts Adam's head on a bookshelf. His headless body fumbles with the books and finally reattaches the head.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

Adam turns away from the window. Barbara, still with her face unattached, is fuming. She's trying unsuccessfully,
to rip apart the handbook.

BARBARA
What's the good of being a ghost if you can't frighten people to death?

She explodes and flings the handbook at the mirror.

ADAM
Oh, honey, we may need that.

BARBARA
No, I'm not putting up with this.

She storms out of the room.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Barbara storms in, as if straight from the room upstairs. She heads straight for the back door. Just as she opens the door, Adam rushes up.

ADAM
Barbara, honey! Don't go out there. You don't know --

BARBARA
Whatever it is it can't be worse than this.

She flings open the door and steps outside. She promptly disappears.

ADAM
Barbara!

EXT. SURFACE OF SATURN'S MOON TITAN - DAY

Barbara plunges into the dusty surface of Titan with an enormous Saturn looming in the sky. She looks around with wonder and some fear.

A sulfur volcano erupts in the distance. A METEOR CRASHES with a lurid EXPLOSION. As from a great distance she hears Adam's voice. Like thunder.

ADAM
Barbara!

She turns slowly in the yellow dense sand that covers the surface of this distant moon.

BARBARA'S POV
Adam is trudging towards her. Behind him, hovering isolated in the air, is the kitchen door.

BACK TO SCENE

Adam at last catches up with her. Surveys around them.

BARBARA
Oh, Adam. Find somebody. I'm getting all yellow. Do something!

Behind them, something is burrowing rapidly toward them through the sand. The something could be right out of Dune.

Barbara and Adam stare for a moment, then Adam grabs her and pulls her toward the kitchen door. But the kitchen door has moved, so they veer in the new direction. The something follows them and rises out of the sand.

ON SOMETHING

It is a very big, very nasty, and very hungry snapping SANDWORM. It ROARS and lunges at them.

Barbara, slightly angered at it, instinctively bats at it.

The sandworm is momentarily stunned at Barbara's audacity. It freezes and shakes its loathsome head.

Barbara bats at it again. Adam is wide-eyed, tries to pull her away. The SANDWORM recovers and ROARS after them.

Adam grabs Barbara and tries to escape, but they slip and sink in the sand. They make it to the door just in time, swing it open and hurl themselves through. The DOOR SHUTS with a BANG just in front of the ROARING SANDWORM.

The SANDWORM rears and ROARS in frustration, HOWLING to the ringed planet.

INT. KITCHEN

Barbara weeping, throws herself in Adam's arms.

BARBARA
Oh, Adam, don't ever leave me alone.

ADAM
You left me.
BARBARA
I know. I'm sorry.

She hugs him tight.

BARBARA
I just realized that I could have been killed alone. Don't ever leave me, honey.

Both contemplate that horror.

BARBARA
We're trapped in this house forever... with those... people.

ADAM
You can't say that for sure. It could be a transitional thing. Like a post-life crisis. We just have to be tougher with them. Come on. Have some brandy. Spirits, get it?

BARBARA
(a tentative smile)
Death didn't improve your sense of humor.

They head for the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM

Adam has his arms around Barbara's shoulder. They walk in the door and stumble upon the Deetzes at their dinner. Lydia's back is to them. Barbara and Adam back out of the room but stop to listen.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The Deetzes around the dining room table. There are candles and good china laid out -- but they're eating out of Chinese take-out boxes.

DELIA
I can't believe that we're eating Cantonese. Is there no Szechuan up here? Hunan?

CHARLES
There's only one Chinese restaurant in town, darling, the owners are Irish and Irish people happen to cook Cantonese. They don't know
LYDIA
I plan to have a stroke from the amount of MSG that's in this food.

DELIA
This is our first meal in this house, Lydia. Why don't we all do our little private parts to make it a pleasant one?

CHARLES
Lydia, relax. We'll build you a darkroom in the basement.

LYDIA
(dramatically)
My whole life is a darkroom! One ... big... dark... room.

Delia rolls her eyes and nods. She's been through this before.

DELIA
Nonsense... you'll go to school, get a bike, maybe have an ant farm. Maybe meet a farm boy.

Delia laughs. Charles smiles.

LYDIA
(doleful)
Yeah, maybe if he's nice, he'll let me hang myself from a rope in his barn.

CHARLES
Lydia, we're the first trickle! In a couple of years this whole town will be filled with people like us.

DELIA
We'll be the art center of summer New York. I'll teach those phony gallery creeps to refuse my sculpture. And when Otho and I get through with this house, you people are not going to recognize it.

LYDIA
(dramatically)
I say let's keep it the way it is.

Charles and Delia stare at her simultaneously,
unbelieving.

LYDIA
I do. I really like it. I mean, it's already sort of like somebody's home, isn't it? Their couch is comfortable and doesn't stick to your legs. It smells like a real home, not a French whorehouse.

There is a pause, as if the family were considering this whole business in a new light. Then the moment and the light fade.

DELIA
Lydia, at your age, you are so young.

(back to business)
Charles, we need to call that awful Jane Butterfield tomorrow and get the key to the attic door. Can't you find a way to hold back some of her commission?

CHARLES
We're going to have a lot to do tomorrow... The Goodwill truck is coming, and whatever is up there in that attic goes away with it. Should have it fumigated too. I saw a fly today.

Lydia looks at them with a mixture of sadness and anger.

OUTSIDE DOOR - ON STAIRS

Listening, sit Barbara and Adam. A tear rolls down her face.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Adam and Barbara are lying down on the floor, peering out of one of the small windows overlooking the front yard of the house. The handbook open in front of them.

EXT. FRONT YARD - ADAM AND BARBARA'S POV - DAY

The entire front yard is alive with workmen and their vehicles. Plumbers, electricians, cable TV men, etc. Goodwill truck arrives. MOS Charles directs the Goodwill men to a pile of the Maitlands' furniture. They grab one of Barbara's prized antique tables and fling it up into the truck.
In the road in front of the house are several cars of rubbernecking locals, astonished by all the activity. The city has come to town.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Adam and Barbara just look at one another as if to say "we're next!" Adam leafs through the handbook furiously.

BARBARA
Look in the index... maybe there's, like an emergency number or something.

ADAM
Not really... what's this?

Adam pulls from the book an ancient, yellowed, crumbling handbill. He carefully opens it.

ON HANDBILL

Very primitive, crude, red printing.

ADAM (V.O.)
(reading)
Trouble with the living? House full of pesky, arrogant live people? If you got the dough... I make 'em go! Betelgeuse the Bio Buster. Betelgeuse... Betelgeuse... Betel...

The remainder of the sheet is torn off.

ON BARBARA

fingerling the torn edge. Looking in the book for the remainder. No luck.

BARBARA
That's it? No number, or instructions?

ADAM
Nothing. The bio buster? I don't get it...

A THUNDERING CRASH shakes the house. They both scurry to the window to see what has happened below.

EXT. FRONT AND SIDE YARDS - DAY

CAMERA follows ACTION -- small vignettes.
Charles flails his arms at a dimwitted crane operator who is unsuccessfully trying to get a 2500 pound Vulcan range through a formerly too small kitchen window. Now a gaping hole in the wall.

Moving men watch and then continue to move in the Deetz's modern, expensive, and ugly furniture. They collide with Goodwill men coming out with the Maitlands' lovely antiques and personal possessions.

Delia shreiks periodically at some fine art movers who are struggling under her horrid modern welded steel sculptures.

Lydia snaps photos of the mayhem. She stops to scan the whole house.

LYDIA'S POV
When her gaze reaches to top of the house, she suddenly glimpses Barbara and Adam's faces in the window.

BACK TO SCENE
Lydia blinks hard. Her mouth drops open. She looks all around -- as if she'd just seen a ghost or two.

Jane Butterfield's car pulls up and Jane gets out. Little Jane sits in the front seat, burdened with an enormous stack of collated and stapled copies. Jane waves to Charles but he doesn't see her and walks away. She walks in his direction.

Lydia catches sight of Jane and runs over, squeezing between two vans.

Little Jane locks her door, in fear of Lydia -- the strange. Lydia stares at her.

LITTLE JANE
Are you a boy or a girl?

LYDIA
I only speak to vertebrates.
Where's your old lady?

Jane comes up.

JANE
Well there's a Little Deetz at least. Boy, when you city people do something, you do it right, don't you?
LYDIA
What happened to the people who used to live here?

LITTLE JANE
(ratty little voice)
They drowned!

JANE
Yes, they were my best friends in all the world. I was devastated.
(beat)
Here, darling.

Jane hands a key to Lydia.

LYDIA
'impressed)
Is this the key to the attic?

JANE
That's a skeleton key. It'll open any door in that house. Will you give it to your father?
(handing her a business card)
And you might mention that I single-handedly decorated the house. In case he needs advice in that area. Come see me.

Jane goes away. After a few steps, she looks back.

JANE
Are we going to be seeing you at Miss Shannon's Boarding School?

LYDIA
Yes, but I'm going to live at home.

JANE
Remind me to talk to your mother about the dress code.
(walking off)
I'm sure you're going to be very happy there.

LITTLE JANE
(sarcastically)
You bet! We love new kids.

Jane drives off. Little Jane stares back with her grubby little grin. Lydia's face sober as she looks up at the now empty attic window.
DELIA (O.S.)
Help! Get off me!

Lydia drops the skeleton key into her pocket surreptitiously. She follows Delia's SHRIEKING.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Lydia rounds the corner to see Delia, pinned flat against the house by one of her horrid steel sculptures. Two movers are struggling to free her. Lydia snaps a quick photograph.

They finally free Delia. She clutches at her head, just short of tearing her hair out.

DELIA
You jerks! That is my art, and it is dangerous! You think I want to die like that?
(seeing Lydia)
Lydia. Moving is a family affair. So buckle down now and go get Mommy some drugs.

LYDIA
Any particular kind?

DELIA
Joke! Joke! Aspirin! It doesn't matter what brand.

Lydia walks off toward the house.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Barbara is half-hiding on the edge of the window.

BARBARA
That little girl saw us.

ADAM
She couldn't have. We can't make them see us.

BARBARA
But she saw us. I could feel it.

ADAM
(pause, thinking that over)
That's all we need.

Lydia goes off towards the house. Looks up at the window again. No one there.
INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Lydia looks up the stairs at the attic landing. She's a little scared. She decides to go up the dark stairs.

INT. HALL

At the end of the hall stands Charles, directing men who are carrying books into the room that will be his study. Charles sees her.

CHARLES
Where is your mother?

LYDIA
(very quick decisive delivery)
Stepmother.
(back to regular speech)
She's out torturing the movers.

CHARLES
Lydia. Try to be civil. I'm going to see if I can set up a noise-free zone in the study.

He continues on.

A BLAST of STEAM --

-- fills the hallway, because workmen are already going at the wallpaper. Lydia emerges from it. Looking up at stairway to attic. Mounting courage.

INT. STAIRCASE TO ATTIC - DAY

Lydia creeps upward, taking the skeleton key from her pocket. She stops momentarily when she hears her father's voice somewhere behind her.

CHARLES (O.S.)
Lydia! Lydia!

Then, when that voice is covered by OTHER SOUNDS of the MOVING, she continues upward. FLOORBOARDS SQUEAK.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Adam works on his model. He hears the SQUEAK, looks up confidently.
ADAM  
(whispering)  
Don't worry. I've locked it.

INT. ATTIC LANDING

Lydia quietly inserts the key in the lock of the attic door. She turns it. The key is stiff. She turns harder. It's stuck. Lydia tries the door -- it's no go. She turns the key again. This time it goes all the way around.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Barbara and Adam, surprised by the key, look at each other, carefully, very quietly, stand up and tiptoe toward door.

Suddenly -- on the screen of an old TV set in the corner of the attic, a ghostly image POPS ON.

ON TV

A bizarre smallish fellow, outfitted in a too-big cowboy hat, bad wig, and over-sized sunglasses appears on screen singing very quickly. (It's a heavily disguised Betelgeuse.)

Behind him the camera quickly pans an assortment of tombstones a la Cal Worthington.

BETELGEUSE

(singing)
Have the living got you down?  
Betelgeuse!  
Are they jacking you around?  
Betelgeuse!  
Have you broken out in hives  
'cause you're tired of their jive?  
I will drive them from your hive...

Betelgeuse!

Camera tilts down a flashing tombstone with "BETELGEUSE" written on it.

ADAM

rushes over to shut it off. He can't find a plug. He looks around behind set... no workings inside at all. He peers around to the screen. It is blank. Suddenly Betelgeuse POPS ON AGAIN.

BETELGEUSE
Say it once... Betelgeuse
Say it twice... Betelgeuse.
The third time's a charm...
    Betelgeuse!
Come on down!

He POPS OFF. Adam and Barbara stare at each other.

INT. LANDING - DAY

Lydia listens. Did she hear something? She puts her hand on the knob and tries to turn it. It's stuck.

Then the key eerily pops out of the lock and falls on floor.

Charles' head suddenly appears behind her. Scares her.

CHARLES
What are you doing?

INT. ATTIC

Adam is holding on tight to the knob of the door. With her knitting needle, Barbara has poked the key out. The two stand absolutely still, listening, terrified of the living intruders.

INT. ATTIC LANDING - LYDIA AND CHARLES

LYDIA
I was just trying to open the door. Mrs. Butterfield brought over a skeleton key.

CHARLES
Let me have it.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Barbara and Adam tighten.

ON LANDING

LYDIA
But it doesn't work.

She hands her father the key. He looks at it and throws it in the corner.

CHARLES
Skeleton keys never work. Anyway,
this can wait. We'll get a crowbar later. Your mother...

LYDIA
(very quick decisive delivery)
Stepmother.

CHARLES
... asked you for something, didn't she? I'm going down to relax. I want a noise-free zone. Do you understand? Noise free.

He goes down the stairs.

LYDIA
Dad?

He continues.

CHARLES
(irritated, over his shoulder)
What?

LYDIA
I'm lonely.

A BLAST of STEAM from below drowns out her words. Charles stops and turns around. The blast stops.

CHARLES
What?

EXT. YARD AND BARN

Delia comes out of the barn, tearing her hair. She screams up at the house.

DELIA
Where are my drugs?

TIGHT ON LYDIA

She is resolved.

LYDIA
Nothing.

Charles continues. She begins to follow slowly.

ON KEY
Behind Lydia, Adam rushes out the door, grabs the key and rushes back in again. Lydia hears something but doesn't see.

INT. ATTIC

Barbara and Adam have moved away from the door.

ADAM
There's nothing we can do. It's just a matter of time before they unlock this room. There goes my model. There goes our last refuge.

BARBARA
We're not going to wait here like cornered animals. I can tell you that. We need help. I'm going to talk to that little girl.

ADAM
What about this Beetle guy?

BARBARA
We don't know who he is...
(thinking)
... I'm going to talk to that little girl.

ADAM
Are you crazy? She can't hear you.

BARBARA
I don't know... what are you looking up?

ADAM
(looking through the handbook)
We need some help. I found something this morning. Here. Emergencies. (reads)
'In case of emergency, draw door.'

BARBARA
Draw door? I don't know why we keep looking in that stupid book.

Adam takes a piece of chalk and draws a little door on the exposed brick of the chimney.

BARBARA
You don't actually think this is going to work?

Adam draws a doorknob. Then he tries to turn it. The door, perhaps to his surprise, fails to open.

BARBARA
Yet another triumph for Adam and Barbara in the afterlife.

ADAM
Wait.

He looks at book, then writes on the door: KNOCK AND ENTER. He exchanges a glance with Barbara. She's even more skeptical than before. Turns away in disgust.

Adam knocks on the door, and turns the knob. Nothing. She is more disgusted. Adam goes back to the book.

ADAM
Aha! Knock three times.

He knocks three times. Turns knob. The chalked door swings magnificently open.

Behind is an eerie light source, SOARING MUSIC, maybe even a heavenly choir singing pear-shaped syllables.

Barbara and Adam look at one another again. They hold hands and step tentatively through.

Their figures are lost in the blinding light.

They start to shut door after them.

ON ATTIC LANDING

Lydia is staring at the light pouring from under the attic door. It suddenly goes out.

ON LYDIA

She is dumbfounded. She listens.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Deserted silence. Just the chalkmarked door.

ON LANDING

Lydia speeds down the steps.
INT. CHARLES' STUDY - DAY

Charles, fiercely intent on relaxing, paces like a catfish out of water. Ralph Lauren in K-mart. He stretches. He sits uneasily in an easy chair, tries like hell to get comfortable. Finally, he puts a book under his bottom to get sitting straight. Looks around tapping his fingers. What to do? Looks at watch.

He takes down a book from Adam's library, it is an Audubon book of birds. He whips through it like it's the comics and then looks around for more.

He finds the Illustrated Walden by Thoreau. He speed reads it.

He is now really bored. Goes to the fireplace, tries to light it. Cannot do it. Goes to desk and writes.

OTHO-INSTALL GAS FIRE LOGS IN STUDY.

He studies bird posters. Finds beautiful cardinal picture.

Takes field glasses and looks out window.

HIS POV

Spies big ugly-looking rattly bird.

ON CHARLES

Horrified. Wrinkles his nose.

Lydia enters. He jumps.

CHARLES

Jesus Christ!

Lydia is shocked.

CHARLES

Darling, can't you see I'm relaxing in here!

LYDIA

Well I just wanted to tell you what I saw.

CHARLES

Lydia. What the hell is the point of my moving up here if you people won't let me relax? Go help your
mother.

Charles returns to field glasses, spies something. She looks at him in frustration.

LYDIA
(on her way out)
Fine. Maybe you can relax in a haunted house. But I can't.

She exits. Charles peers after her, brow furrowed. Looks out again at the village. Uses his field glasses to get a better look.

HIS POV

It is the Bozman Building. Ernie is out front polishing the brass lion.

ON CHARLES

He thinks. Moves the field glasses to punctuate his discovery of the building. (His eyes never leave field glasses throughout the following.)

CHARLES
Nice building... Bad paint.
Good lines... bad roof.
Good parking... hmmm???

That really registers with him. Without looking he dials a familiar number on the phone with one hand, lifts the receiver. He clacks his teeth together purposefully.

SECRETARY (V.O.)
Botco International.

CHARLES
Yes, I'd like to speak with Maxie Dean.

SECRETARY (V.O.)
He's not in right now.

CHARLES
Well tell him that Charles Deetz called.

He hangs up and continues to spy on Bozman Building. Clacks his teeth.

CHARLES
My God what I could do with that parking.
TIGHT - BARBARA AND ADAM

Very still, they look cautiously to the right and left -- just with their eyes. They're astounded by what they see, though we don't yet see it.

ADAM
... Not what I expected when we walked through that door.

BARBARA
No. But it's somewhere without big worms.

CAMERA DRAWS BACK and we find that Adam and Barbara are in:

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

The most unpleasant waiting room that you ever remember waiting in. Fifties furniture with broken legs, couches propped up on telephone books. Standing ashtrays with dirty sand. Linoleum floors patched a hundred times. National Geographics with the covers torn off. The "Take a number" registers in the millions.

As the CAMERA COMPLETES A CIRCLE of the room, we see a RECEPTIONIST. She's the quintessential 50's receptionist -- tight sweater, bullet-breasted bra, bleached hair, red lipstick. She's wearing a ribbon across her breast reading "MISS ARGENTINA" and there are knife slashes across both wrists.

RECEPTIONIST
You don't have an appointment, do you?

ADAM
W... We didn't know how to make one.

BARBARA
An appointment for what?

RECEPTIONIST
What do you want?

BARBARA
We need some help.

RECEPTIONIST
Already? You just bit the big one nine months ago and you want
ADAM
Nine months? What difference does that make?

RECEPTIONIST
(shrugging)
Good luck. You're going to use up all your help vouchers.

ADAM
Help vouchers?

RECEPTIONIST
D-90's. You spend a hundred and twenty-five years on earth, actually, in that house, during which you get only three class-one D-90 intercessions with Juno. You probably haven't even read through the manual completely yet.

BARBARA
Why three?

The Receptionist holds up both hands, each of which have only three fingers on them.

RECEPTIONIST
Rule Number Three. Everything comes in threes. You'll have to wait if you don't have an appointment.

BARBARA
How long do we have to wait?

ADAM
Wait for who?

RECEPTIONIST
For Juno, your caseworker. Not that it matters to your type. But there are all these other people here ahead of you. I'd say three hours.

The waiting room is now filled with people. Dead people, some in fairly awful states. A cornucopia of carnal shreddage.

Adam and Barbara look around for a moment, then very quietly, they reach out to grasp hands.

RECEPTIONIST
Number 54 million, six hundred one. Ferndock.

CAMERA PUSHES IN CLOSE.

INT. ATTIC LANDING - DAY

Lydia kneels down with a screwdriver, a nail file, an ice pick, and a credit card. She inserts nail file into the door. She struggles, and after several attempts -- finally uses the ice pick and POP! The door swings open ominously.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Lydia enters. The room is dim, and filled with dust motes. There are shadows in all the corners.

She bumps into a switch which engages the model sun and moon and that eerily illuminates the model town. She's frightened, then entranced.

She peers at it from different angles, her fear forgotten. She notes small tools scattered around an unfinished area. She continues around the model, oblivious to everything else. Then...

A LOUD CRASH --

She whirls around, barely stifling a scream. It was only a pushbroom that she knocked from its hook on the wall.

Recovering, she kicks something. Ducks under the table and comes up with something, holds it up to the light. It's the handbook. She looks through it. Finds the marked page... looks at the chalk door.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Barbara and Adam are still holding hands, as if they hadn't moved. Like waiting for an IRS audit.

BARBARA
(to Adam)
Is this what happens when you die?

The Receptionist overhears. She points at Barbara.

RECEPTIONIST
This is what happens when YOU die!
(points to another corpse)
That is what happens when HE dies.
That is what happens when THEY die. It's highly personal. And I'll tell you something... if I knew then what I know now... I wouldn't have had my little 'accident'!

She holds up her wrists and smiling at her little joke, wriggles them indicating her slashes.

OTHER CORPSES
(all together)
Amen!

Barbara and Adam look at them. Corpses resume doing what they were doing. A GRINDING NOISE O.S. -- the Receptionist looks up.

Barbara and Adam also look O.S.

THEIR POV

A message delivery WIRE GRINDS along LOUDLY on a pulley. The actual message is held in the hand of THE MESSENGER, a flattened corpse, suspended as if a shirt on a clothesline, tire marks on his face and clothing. A major roadkill. Dust and gravel ground into him.

BACK TO SCENE

He smiles wanly at Barbara and Adam as the Receptionist takes a message on a piece of paper and reads it.

RECEPTIONIST
Maitland, party of two! Take your handbook and go to the sixth door.

Barbara and Adam upset at the loss of their handbook...

BARBARA
We forgot our handbook.

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Lydia is studying the handbook with intense interest.

CHARLES (O.S.)
(from distant downstairs)
Lydia, Delia needs your help!
Lydia gives one more look at the book, and then goes to the door quickly and silently.

CHARLES (O.S.)
Right now, Delia says!

INT. OFFICE - DAY

RECEPTIONIST
(shaking her head in disgust)
Out that way, through the typing pool, down the corridor, sixth door on your left. Sixth door.
Two threes.
(shaking her head)
Airhead.

Adam and Barbara walk through a door.

INT. TYPING POOL - DAY

A vast room of desks arranged in a grid, straight out of How To Succeed In Business... Each desk is occupied, too, but most of the secretaries are merely skeletons, or mouldering corpses slumped over their typewriters.

Only one secretary, somewhere in the vast grid, is typing slowly, with long pauses between words.

The Messenger on his return trip, parallels Barbara and Adam as they walk along. Barbara can't look at him.

MESSENGER
How do I look? There're no mirrors on this side.

ADAM
(trying to be pleasant)
Fine, you look fine.

MESSENGER
Thanks. I've been feeling a little flat.

He goes back through the very very narrow slot in the wall where the line runs. Adam and Barbara look to the right and left. A vast stack of files slips off a desk and spills out onto the floor.

Barbara and Adam enter corridor.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY
Empty, like a hotel corridor, but all the doors are of different types -- a revolving door, a Dutch door, church doors. They walk past a waist-high window, covered by a roll-up shade.

BARBARA
A hundred twenty-five years!
I can't believe it. I can't believe they didn't tell us.

She bumps into the SHADE and it rolls up FLAPPING. She stares in through the window. Adam peers in, too.

THEIR POV
A smouldering, mist-filled room. From the smoky plasma floats an occasional tortured soul. Unspeakably SAD MUSIC wafts from within. They get only a glimpse of the bodies in this horrible human soup.

BACK TO SCENE
BARBARA
Adam, look at this.

Suddenly, floating up from below, immediately on the other side of the window, a white-crepe face emerges. It seems to be that of a woman, her eyes are red and blue tears rim them. Her pale skin is covered with a flaking crust of salt. She wears the saddest look ever. Her mouth opens plaintively but no sound comes.

BARBARA
Oh, Adam... what is this?

A reflection joins them on their side of the window.

A SINISTER LITTLE JANITOR -- wizened and efficient, pulls the shade down firmly.

SINISTER MAN
That's the lost souls room. A room for ghosts who have been exorcised. Poor devils. That's death for the dead. It's all in the handbook. Keep moving.

The man scuttles off. Adam and Barbara walk on sadly, until they come to a door that looks exactly like the swinging door between the kitchen and dining room of their house.

ADAM
This is it... the sixth door.
Puzzled -- Barbara pushes it.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Everything is dark, quiet -- but the furniture is obviously not theirs, and neither is the decoration. Adam and Barbara exchange glances, and push on through into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Quiet, dark. Everyone's asleep.

    ADAM
    My God, we're back where we started.

    BARBARA
    Look at this, everything is different down here. All our furniture is gone.

    ADAM
    How long do you suppose we were waiting?

    JUNO
    Three months.

A spot comes on, revealing JUNO -- their case worker. She's an older woman, no nonsense about her. Overdressed in an outfit that includes a blouse with ruffled cuffs. We will at some point catch a glimpse of her slashed throat -- She smokes heavily. Occasionally smoke puffs from her cut throat.

    JUNO
    I'd nearly given up on you. I was about to leave. I do have other clients.

    BARBARA
    Are you Juno, our case worker?

    JUNO
    Yes. I evaluate individual cases and determine if help is needed, deserved, and available.

    BARBARA
    We need help. We deserve help.

    ADAM
    Are you available?
JUNO
No.
   (beat)
What's wrong?

BARBARA
We're very unhappy.

JUNO
What do you expect? You're dead.

ADAM
We'd like some help in getting rid of the people who moved in here. Barbara and I worked very hard on this house.

BARBARA
We probably wouldn't mind sharing the house with people who were --

JUNO
-- Like you used to be?

BARBARA
Yes.

ADAM
But these people --

He indicates a particularly bad piece of Delia's sculpture. Juno walks around it shaking her head.

The following conversation takes place as Barbara and Adam follow Juno as she looks around the house and ends up in their attic space. They walk through doors, survey the Deetzes on the way.

JUNO
Hell is other people. You obviously don't read much. Besides things seem pretty quiet here. You should thank God you didn't die in Italy.
   (checking the file)
The Deetzes. Okay. Have you been studying the manual?

ADAM
We tried.

JUNO
The Intermediate Interface chapter on Haunting says it all. Get 'em out yourself. It's your house. Haunted houses don't come easy.
BARBARA
We don't quite get it.

Juno's WATCH BUZZES, she stops it.

JUNO
I heard.
(refers to her file)
Tore your face right off! Bad news. It obviously doesn't do any good to pull your heads off in front of people if they can't see you.

ADAM
We have to start simpler, is that it?

JUNO
Start simply. Do what you know. Use your talents. Practice. We only help those who help themselves. Just do a little at a time. And of course, practice, practice, practice. It's tricky but -- you weren't murderers by any chance, were you?

BARBARA
No.

JUNO
Pity. Murderers seem to have an easy time of it. Just look at Amityville.
(reminiscing)
He was one of my boys. Didn't have to give that one any lessons. From day one... But I must be off... I've got a planeload of football players crashed in the midwest... they need a lot of help, just with the basics.

Points at her head indicating dumbness.

BARBARA
If... we have trouble. What about the guy in the flyer? Betelge...

JUNO
 quickly interrupting her)
No. You don't want his help.

Adam and Barbara look at each other. Puzzled.
Juno peers into the model cemetery with interest. A FLY BUZZES around her. Juno blows it away. Fly flees.

JUNO
No, you don't! He does not work well with others.

BARBARA
What do you mean? What's he do?

JUNO
He's a freelance bio-exorcist. Claims to get rid of the living. But he's a troublemaker. He's pushy. He's been sleazing around that cemetery for 500 years.

BARBARA
Our cemetery?

JUNO
Yeah.
(looking around)
He still tries popping up all over the place. But he can't join the party unless you call on him.
(stronger)
Get the Deetzes out by yourselves! I gotta go.

She sucks on cigarette and smoke billows out the hole in her throat. Juno starts to fade.

BARBARA
(persistently)
But what if we do need this Betelgeuse?

Juno fades.

JUNO
(angrily)
Don't say his name! Just practice. Do it yourself!

ADAM
And if we need you again, how do we...?

He turns around but Juno is gone. Barbara goes to the
model, looks at the cemetery.

BARBARA
That guy is in our cemetery. Oh, Adam.

ADAM
(holds her shoulders, calms her)
Look, she's right. We'll just start simple, honey, be tougher.
I feel... confident. C'mon.

They exit.

CAMERA FOLLOWS action -- OVER the model -- the FLY BUZZES. It lands and crawls along into the model of the cemetery.

CLOSEUP - FLY

Now large scale, crawls past gravestones marked Johnson, Burton, Olson, and Lee, finally to a crooked gravestone overgrown with ivy.

The Fly, resplendently green and iridescent, pauses and fiddles with its hairy parts. Starts to walk by.

VOICE (O.S.)
Pssstt! Over here!

Fly stops. Tilts its multi-eyed head.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Two hands come up from the earth of that grave. White gloves holding a golden, dripping comb of honey.

VOICE (O.S.)
I can't use this. You should have it. Flies get so little respect anymore.

The flattered Fly walks over to the grave. In a flash -- the hands grab the struggling Fly and dance it like a doll over the grave and then pull it into the earth.

FLY
Buzzz!
(turns into)
Hello me! Hello me!

A MANIACAL LAUGH grows from the grave. WIND BLOWS as the Fly disappears. Ivy whips away from the gravestone. We see, for the first time, the chiseled name:
BETELGEUSE

CLAP of THUNDER.

INT. CHARLES' STUDY - NIGHT

Charles is on the phone. He has drawings laid out in front of him. He is at his most urban persuasive.

CHARLES
Maxie, have I not always made you money? I think that is the only real question here.

INT. MAXIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

New York office, cool design, black couch, and MAXIE DEAN, a 55-year-old, super tan, white-haired wheeler dealer.

Sign says: CHAIRMAN OF BOTCO INDUSTRIES. Maxie looks rich and he looks cool as he talks to Charles. Behind him -- Sarah, his rich-looking blonde wife, is looking at herself in a mirror.

MAXIE
Well, Charles -- no one has made me money like you. Until your nerves went, you were a demon. It is just that... Winter River, Connecticut is, you'll forgive me -- no fucking where. Why would I invest that kind of money to buy an old building way the hell up there?

INTERCUT conversation.

CHARLES
Not a building! That's the beauty of it. I think I can buy the whole town. These people don't know the value of their property!

MAXIE
Then we own a whole town full of nowhere.

CHARLES
No, no, c'mon, Max, you know me. I've got plans. You gotta come up here and see, then I'll tell you about it.

Maxie isn't much interested.
MAXIE
Well, sure, Charles, but I am busy here... you know how it was when you were active.

This burns Charles. But he swallows it. He hears something in the corridor outside -- a kind of LOW MOANING.

CHARLES
(into telephone)
Just a minute, Maxie. Somebody...

MAXIE
No listen... we'll talk about this visiting later, I gotta go, I gotta meeting on the Japanese joint venture.

CHARLES
(torn between the moaning and Maxie)
Great idea, Maxie! Those Japanese could run it for us. Build them a dormitory in the woods. Listen, think right about it, will you? We've almost got the house ready, you bring Sarah with you and I'll show you.

MAXIE
Yeah yeah, we'll think on it. 'Bye ya, Charles. You relax up there, ya hear?

Maxie hangs up. Shakes his head.

MAXIE

INT. CHARLES' STUDY - NIGHT

Charles hangs up frustrated. MOANING INCREASES. He goes to the door and flings it open.

A figure is right there in the doorway -- A ghost under a sheet. But a "designer" sheet. He flails away like a banshee. Eyeholes cut in sheets, Charles jumps -- recovers.

CHARLES
Oh, Jesus, Lydia! Is Connecticut so boring that you have to think up shit like this?
ON BARBARA

She stands back away from the door observing skeptically.

CHARLES
I had Maxie Dean on the phone!
Darling, Dad's found a way to
make some money here while I
relax, so scram!

He slams the door, turns around. Then turns around
again, and jerks the door open. The ghost is retreat-
ing, beaten.

CHARLES
And your mother is going to kill
you when she sees that you cut
holes in her $300 sheets. You
provoke her, you know. I mean
she can be an unreasonable bitch.
But you do provoke her.

He slams the door again.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Adam helps Barbara on with her sheet.

BARBARA
God, this is so corny. Have we
been reduced to this? Sheets?

ADAM
Think of them as death shrouds.
And the moaning is important.
Really moan!
(Imitating Juno)
Practice, practice, practice.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

TELEVISION still going, Delia asleep with curlers.
Adam and Barbara glide inside, go over and stand
beside the bed.

ADAM
Deep breath... and...

INT. LYDIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

She has her ever-present camera around her neck. Sud-
denly hears MOANS from her parents' room. Thinking it
is sexual. She cringes. Covers her ears.
LYDIA
Gross! How can he stand that woman?
(louder)
Hey, cut it out! I'm a child!
For God sakes!

The NOISE gets weirder. Lydia gets interested.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Adam and Barbara moan and groan. Delia doesn't stir.

BARBARA
I feel really stupid.

ADAM
It's not stupid. We're ghosts.
Do you want this woman for breakfast for 125 years? Moan louder!

Barbara moans louder and more weirdly.

Delia stirs, sits up, but doesn't open her eyes.

Adam and Barbara are excited then... disappointed as Delia fumbles on the bedside table for the remote control device, and without opening her eyes, turns OFF the TELEVISION set. Then she turns over, and is lost to the world totally.

Barbara sighs. She and Adam walk toward the door. When they open it, however, Lydia is standing there in her pajamas -- she snaps a FLASH Polaroid -- and Adam and Barbara jump backwards with yelps of fright.

LYDIA
Sick! Sexual perversion! Total gross-out. If you're going to do weird sexual stuff you ought to stay in your bedroom, okay? You want me to be more twisted than I am? It's so embarrassing.

Lydia starts back into her room. Then looks at the developing photograph. Something catches her eye.

ON PHOTOGRAPH

Sheets suspended above the floor. No feet.

LYDIA
yelps with fear.

LYDIA
Holy cow! No feet!

She screams. Adam and Barbara scream. Lydia rushes back toward them, starts FLASHING pictures. Adam and Barbara run around and are pushed into a corner. Polaroids fly everywhere.

Lydia runs out of film. She stares at them, panting with fear. A standoff.

LYDIA
A... Are you the guys who're hiding out in the attic?

ADAM
(fake terror voice)
We're ghosts.

Barbara moans.

LYDIA
(skeptical, cautious)
W... What do you look like under there?

Adam and Barbara pull shut bedroom door, go out into the hall -- as if to keep from waking Delia with their conversation.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

All three stare at each other tentatively.

ADAM
Aren't you scared?

LYDIA
I'm not scared of Ralph Lauren. Those are sheets. Are you gross under there? Are you Night of the Living Dead under there? Like all bloody veins and pus?

ADAM
What?

LYDIA
Night of the Living Dead? It's this gross movie.

BARBARA
(pulling off
If I had seen a ghost at your age, I would have been frightened out of my wits.

LYDIA
You're not gross. Why were you wearing a sheet?

BARBARA
We're practicing.

ADAM
You can actually see us? Without the sheets?

LYDIA
Is this like a trick question?

BARBARA
Tell the truth.

LYDIA (offended)
I always tell the truth. Of course I can see you.

ADAM
Nobody else can.

LYDIA
I'm wearing contacts... Also I read through Handbook for the Recently Deceased. It says that live people ignore the strange and unusual... not me... I am strange and unusual.

BARBARA (tenderly)
You look like a regular little girl to me.

Lydia blushes. Barbara smiles warmly. She is beginning to like Lydia.

ADAM
You read our book? Could you follow it?

Lydia nods her head.

LYDIA
Why are you creeping around Delia's bedroom?

ADAM
We were trying to scare your mother.

LYDIA
Stepmother. I'm very sensitive about being related to reptiles.

Barbara smiles.

LYDIA
You can't scare her. She's sleeping with Prince Valium tonight.
(defiantly)
I stole the key to your attic, you know.

Adam and Barbara look at each other.

BARBARA
Maybe we better talk.

INT. ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

Adam's rigged up the moon, and stars, too. Adam and Barbara and Lydia stand just beyond the fringes of the town, dimly lighted giants.

LYDIA
You did this? You carved all these little figures and houses and things?

ADAM
(pleased)
I certainly did. I'd finish it too, but... I don't get out much.

LYDIA
And this used to be your house, I bet. Why do you want to scare everybody?

ADAM
We want to frighten you away.
(a little embarrassed)
So that you'll move out.

LYDIA
You don't know the Deetzes very well, do you? My father bought this place. He never walks away from equity. Why don't you leave?
BARBARA
We can't. We haven't left the house since the funeral.

LYDIA
Funeral. God, you guys really are dead!
(fascinated)
What was it like? The funeral. Did you cry?

ADAM
We weren't there. The handbook says funerals aren't for the dead.

LYDIA
God, if this is true this is like, amazing! I kinda like it up here. Can I visit you sometimes?

BARBARA
Well, I don't know... We don't get many visitors.

ADAM
Where are your skulls and bones?

BARBARA
(looking at her pajamas)
You know you're really a pretty girl.

Lydia flushes.

LYDIA
(defensive)
I don't wear that stuff to bed. Besides, there's nothing wrong with it. I'm getting out of here.

BARBARA
Wait... I don't think it would be a very good idea if you told your parents that we're up here.

ADAM
Unless you think it would scare them off.

Lydia hurumphs! Starts to exit.

ADAM
You tell them that we are desperate horrible ghoulish creatures who will stop at nothing to get back our house.
LYDIA
(looks him up and down)
Wait a minute. I had some licorice ice cream earlier. You guys could be gas. What if... I'm dreaming. Can you do any neat tricks to prove you're not gas?

Barbara shakes her head, a little ashamed.

LYDIA
Well, if you are real ghosts you better get another routine, those sheets suck!

She sneaks a smile at Barbara and exits.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY
A big ugly machine is doing something unnecessary to the yard.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY
Shadowed. Potentially filled with terror as are all basements in horror movies. CAMERA MOVES OVER TO a little shed-like room in the corner. Noise of FAST-TICKING CLOCK.

INT. DARKROOM - DAY
The FAST-TICKING CLOCK is a timer. Lydia is making Polaroid enlargements. She's quick and expert at this. She's examining a print with a magnifying glass.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - DAY
Delia shrieks. Going through the dirty clothes, she's just come across the sheets with the eye holes cut in them.

DELIA
Lydia! Lydia! My hands are shredded from doing the laundry, and now I have to deal with your vandalism!

INT. DARKROOM - DAY
A photograph coming up in the developing tank -- the
lydia

(hearing a commotion from delia)

oh my god... the sheets!

int. downstairs hallway - day

lydia, pounding up from the basement with the wet print, collides with delia, rushing down from the second floor with the scissored sheets.

delia

lydia, honest to god, i'm going to kill you. i'm having a party tonight. i'm cooking, i can't get servants. do i need angst? no, i certainly do not!

lydia speeds by her.

delia

you owe me three-hundred bucks, lydia! don't go running to your father, you worm.

int. charles' office - day

lydia rushes in. charles is working furiously on a word processor, amidst an array of maps and plans.

lydia

dad. do you believe me?

charles

yes. except when you creep around in your mother's --

lydia

stepmother's...

charles

... sheets.

lydia

well this is... i mean, this is the weirdest --

charles

lydia, i don't know what it is with you and these practical jokes, but --

lydia
This is not a joke! That sheet was full of ghosts.

She hands him the photo. He looks. Lydia points out...

LYDIA

No feet.

Charles laughs a fatherly, patronizing, but affectionate laugh and cuffs Lydia lightly. He laughs louder as he looks at photo again.

LYDIA

You don't believe me. That sheet was full of ghosts. They live here.

Charles begins to scroll through a computer program.

CHARLES

(dismissing it)
That's air-brushing! Now would you please -- I'll tell you what ... I know! You're bored, right? You take that camera and your bike and photograph every building downtown. Don't tell anyone what it's for...

(handing her a wad of bills)
Here, take some cash and go do it. How's that? You want to stretch, don't you?

Lydia exits, with determination. Charles looks up on the wall and runs his finger over a plat map of Winter River, just like Adam's in the attic.

CHARLES

Look at the size of these lots...

Adam peers at the map, puzzled.

ADAM

What is this guy doing?

Barbara follows Lydia out. Adam thinks, intrigued. Exits.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Delia is frantically preparing for the evening's dinner party. Lydia is very much in her way, trying to show her the photographs. Delia isn't looking at them.

DELIA
I can't believe you are doing this to me! *Ghosts.* I am giving a dinner party for seven people tonight. Otho has agreed to come back for the demolition of the attic. My agent, Bernard, is bringing some woman who writes for *Architectural Digest.* In fact, no one here tonight has not been in *Vanity Fair.* Except you.

**LYDIA**
(resigned)
I told them you were too mean to be afraid.

**DELIA**
Don't you dare talk to others about me. I'm an artist! The only thing that scares me is being embarrassed in front of my friends. Do you know how hard it is to get civilized people to set foot in this part of Connecticut? Not a solitary word of this pubescent tripe to anyone.

Lydia exits angrily.

**CAMERA HINGES.** Barbara is watching, horrified at Delia's occupation of her (Barbara's) kitchen. Adam appears.

**BARBARA**
Lydia's trying, but they don't believe her.

**ADAM**
She's got *photos,* Barbara.

**BARBARA**
Adam, you had a photo of Big Foot!

**ADAM**
This is different. Eventually she'll take someone to the attic. And then what? We've got to try to contact this guy Betelmyer. We gotta get some help, hon.

**INT. ATTIC ROOM - DAY (LATER)**
Adam looks intently through the book. Barbara is staring at the cemetery with his magnifying glass.

**REVERSE ANGLE ON HER MAGNIFIED EYES**
BARBARA
Did you copy these gravestones right, Adam?

ADAM (O.S.)
Of course I did.

BARBARA
Then it should be here.

BACK TO SCENE

She searches the tiny graves.

BARBARA

She takes a tweezer and moves some ivy on the Betelgeuse grave. Adam approaches.

BARBARA
(very excited)
Here's something.

ADAM
I didn't do that one... Hmmm.

BARBARA
... Yes this must be him. Look...
Betelgeuse... Betelgeuse...

She looks at Adam, "should I?" Adam chews his lip thoughtfully.

ADAM
Go ahead... third time's a charm.

BARBARA
(after a deep breath)
Betelgeuse!

Zap! They are transported into the model-graveyard.

EXT. INSIDE MODEL GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

WIND BLOWS -- with shovels and lanterns, Adam and Barbara are unlikely gravediggers.

The mechanized clouds move in the sky across the mechanical moon, throwing weird shadows everywhere. Ground fog creeps slowly along the graves. It is so eerie.

BARBARA
What happened?

ADAM
Three times. Powerful number.

BARBARA
(standing in front of grave)
Bet... el... geuse. What an awful name. I thought it was like -- you know. The juice of beetles.

Adam cringes too.

BARBARA
Where is he? What do we do?

Adam looks down at the grave. Knocks on the stone. Nothing.

ADAM
Has anything been simple so far?
From the look of the shovel, we dig.

BARBARA
Oh, Adam. I don't have gloves. My nails keep getting longer. I'll break them.

Hands her a shovel anyway. She digs.

EXT. INSIDE MODEL GRAVEYARD - NIGHT (LATER)

They're almost down six feet. By now they are both almost out of sight in the grave. Inside the grave, Adam suddenly hits wood.

BARBARA
It's about time.

They lean down and brush dirt off a brass plate coffin.

"BETELGEUSE"

ADAM
I guess we open it.

BARBARA
Maybe we should knock first?

A slight TREMOR shakes them. They look at each other and try to scramble from the grave.
They just barely crawl out when a mouldering corpse springs out of the grave and jumps on Barbara's back, and plants a thousand-year-old kiss on her lips. She screams and burbles. Adam pulls the corpse off her back. The corpse does a Three Stooges hammer on Adam's head. Adam staggers backward, unhurt but shocked. All three stop. Something unreal about the corpse, almost mechanical. Then the corpse, grinning insanely at them, flies straight up into the air over their heads. He crashes against the tombstone...

And Adam and Barbara see the corpse is only a huge marionette on a string and pole. A LAUGH comes from behind the gravestone.

And out steps the puppeteer, Betelgeuse. He is small and wiry, with vaguely middle-eastern features. This is one slippery customer. Betelgeuse speaks in a rapid polyglot, choosing words and phrases from every slang in the world. Barbara is mighty uneasy.

BETELGEUSE
All right. Who are you?

BARBARA
We're...

BETELGEUSE
You're the dead.

ADAM
Aren't you dead?

BETELGEUSE
Hell no! I'm rolling. I'm a businessman. I'm the man what am. Beeetel Jooose! Who do I gotta kill?

ADAM
You don't kill anyone.

BARBARA
Just get some people out of our house.

BETELGEUSE

BARBARA
Just one daughter.
BETELGEUSE
Hey you've been on Saturn!
   (brushing yellow
dust off her)
I hate those sandworms! Yecchhh!
I've lost a lot of buddies to
sandworms.
   (back to work)
So a daughter? She got good legs?
God I love a young leg.

Air blows up Barbara's dress, exposing her legs. He
leers.

BARBARA
She's only fourteen...

ADAM
... acts like she's thirty-five.

BETELGEUSE
   (rubbing hands)
How does she feel about short old
men with dirty ears?

Barbara is grossed out and increasingly uneasy. Beetle
Juice senses it and gets back to business.

BETELGEUSE
So you, the dead, want me, the
   undead, to throw the live guys --
Mommie, Daddy and Lolita, who
might not mind a tumble with an
older guy, out into the cold?
Even though they have paid hard
casharooie for your dump?

ADAM
But... the Deetzes are destroying
our house.

BETELGEUSE
   (scolding sarcasm)
You Maitlands are the backbone of
the afterlife. So what's my cut?

ADAM
Can you scare them off?

Beetle Juice looks offended.

BETELGEUSE
Me scary? You betcha bootie!

He swirls his face and shoulders into a horrifying image.
Pleased, he laughs at himself.
BARBARA
(decisively)
Honey. Let's go.

ADAM
Go? What d'ya mean? We need help.

BARBARA
No, we don't. We can work something out ourselves. We just have to try harder.

BETELGEUSE
Hold on. Let's not be squeamish, missy. You rang my bell, you gotta lick the pump. I'm rolling!

Barbara grabs Adam. Betelgeuse is getting mad. He changes colors a couple times. Not pretty.

BETELGEUSE
Folks, be reasonable here. I'm at your service. You be the judge. I'm a harmless guy. Try me.

BARBARA
Home. Home. Home!

Zap. They are gone. Betelgeuse is furious.

BETELGEUSE
You fresh corpse creeps! Who do you think you are? ... Walking away from a professional?

He walks to a tree and kicks it hard. The whole huge tree falls, KABLOOM!

INT. ATTIC - DAY

A small tree falls in the model. Adam, across the room, walks over and straightens it. Peers down at graves. All are covered and straight. He looks at Barbara who is poring over the handbook. Making notes. Counting out procedures.

ADAM
Honey, I think that was a mistake.

BARBARA
I am not going to expose that little girl to that... pervert down there.
ADAM

But we let him out.

BARBARA

I don't care, I've changed my mind. ... I feel really confident. We're getting better at this stuff. We can scare them off ourselves -- tonight! I've got an idea. You're going to love it... I'm going to hate it.

Adam turns to look down at the model again. Straightens the tree. Turns away. We can see a tiny light moving through the tiny model forest towards the house.

ADAM (V.O.)

Okay. But that Betelgeuse sure seemed mad.

BETELGEUSE (V.O.)

(singing)

Hi ho, hi ho, it's off to work I go!

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Dinner for seven, as promised. Everything looks very nice. Deetzes are in control and in their element; The element is neurotic-chic.

Some of the guests are affecting distaste for having had to make the long drive to Connecticut. There's a bitchy feud going on between GRACE, the Art In America writer, and BERNARD, Delia's agent, that threatens to become a full-scale war.

Otho is drunkish and engaged in his third favorite occupation -- direct attacks on the personal weaknesses of his friends.

He's singled out his victim, BERYL, the editor for Ballantine, a frail-looking woman who is dressed "artistically."

OTHO

(to Beryl)

Well, darling, you can only have a hysterectomy once, so why don't you tell us what you really went into the hospital for last week? Or dare I ask, is that a nose 'nouveau'?

Beryl stands to get a drink.
CHARLES
(privately to Otho)
Otho, you've got to help me get
Maxie Dean up here. I have a
deal that could make all of us
very comfortable.

OTHO
He's a cloven-hooved beast!

CHARLES
He's your cousin.

OTHO
I am ashamed to say he is. Look,
nothing short of giving away free
sacks of money would get him up
here, Charles. And Sarah? Forget
it. You can't get her out of
Bergdorf's with plastic
explosives.

DELIA
Let's sit down, everyone.

They do. Beryl returns. Otho smells blood.

OTHO
(still on Beryl's
case)
I just hope it wasn't yet another
of your dreary suicide attempts.
You know what they say about
people who commit suicide. In the
afterlife, they become civil
servants.

BERNARD
Otho! I didn't know you were into
the supernatural?

OTHO
Of course you remember! After my
stint with the living theatre. I
was one of New York City's leading
paranormal researchers until the
bottom dropped out of the business
in '72.

BERYL
(sick to death of
this blowhard)
Paranormal... Is that what they're
calling your kind now?

Lydia watches Otho thoughtfully. Suddenly very curious.
Delia senses that Lydia might talk ghosts here.

    DELIA
    (a threat; quietly
to Lydia)
    Don't you **dare**.

    LYDIA
    I saw some ghosts.

All quiet.

    DELIA
    (interrupting)
    Lydia tried to play a most amusing
joke on me this afternoon.

    LYDIA
    It wasn't a joke.

DELIA
    Tried to convince me that this
    house is haunted. Kids. Kids.
    Kids! I love them.

Otho's glance sharpens at this. Everyone listens.

    GRACE
    By ghosts?

    LYDIA
    By what else?

    DELIA
    (laughing it away)
    In sheets yet. **Designer** sheets.
    They --

Charles, seeing things aren't going well for Delia, proposes a toast.

    CHARLES
    I propose a toast to our intrepid
    friends who braved the expressway
    and fourteen toll booths to visit
    us. May your buildings go condo.

All lift their wineglasses. All drink. All synchro-
    nously spit out their wine. All together now...

    EVERYONE
    Yechhh!

Charles lifts the wine bottle from the cooler. Disgust
    spans the room.
ON BOTTLE

It bears the familiar spread wings of Thunderbird!

BACK TO SCENE

BERYL
Thunderbird wine? My God, Delia, don't you even have a Safeway up here?

DELIA
(horrified, but recovering)
Joke, Joke! Charles get the good wine and I'll serve the sushi! It's a joke.

Delia stares a spike through Lydia. Delia and Charles rush into the kitchen. Otho looks at his glass and peers at Lydia.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Delia rushes to get the sushi. Charles finds some good wine.

DELIA
(rapidly; furious)
Lydia switched wines. Charles -- if you do not agree right now, to boarding her out, right now, you can forget having what you call sex -- ever again in your natural lifetime.

He nods reluctantly. She rushes back to guests.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Lydia is looking around curiously. Delia and Charles rush back in with sushi and good wine. Delia pours for Bernard, the obvious connoisseur. He tastes the wine. All wait. Is it Kerosene du Pape? He smiles. All smile. Beryl tastes her sushi and smiles.

BERYL
I'm famished!

DELIA
Isn't that a great grape? So melodic, exotic,...

Otho is more interested in Lydia's story. He leans
toward her...

OTHO
Now, Lydia... Favor us about your ghosts.

DELIA
No! Do not encourage this little... person.

OTHO
Oh, Delia, lighten up!

DELIA
She's been without therapy up here and I will not allow her to ruin...

But then... something comes over Delia -- She straightens, then crouches a little, her hand sweeps across in front of her, almost mechanically. And then our Delia Deetz, unable to help herself, leaves the white bread world behind and possessed, sings in someone else's voice, a rich, NEGRO TENOR.

DELIA
'If I didn't care, More than words could say,'

Lydia's eyes widen. MUSIC UP. All the guests are spell-bound.

Charles, too, has the beat -- The Ink Spots in his eyes, In a voice not his own.

CHARLES
'If my every prayer, did not begin and end with just your name.'

Delia is shocked. She looks at Lydia.

DELIA
For God's sake stop me...

She is cut short by her powerful inspiration.

DELIA
'I could not be true to you beyond compare.'

Suddenly all the guests, except Lydia, are possessed to become the chorus. They stand by their chairs, they spin in perfect Motown choreography.

EVERYONE
(except Lydia)
'Shoo doo wop.  Shoo doo wop.'

DELIA
'If I didn't care... for you...'

EVERYONE
'Shoo doo wop.  Shoo doo wop,,'

A look of sheer delight comes across Lydia's face, unlike anything we have previously seen. She dances and claps her hands in time with the music. She is in teen heaven.

NOTE: Delia and the guests are fully aware of their singing/actions, but helpless to stop themselves. While it is funny, it is nevertheless just a little frightening. Lydia excitedly looks around the room to see if she can see the ghosts. She can't.

Now the song pauses... Everyone tries to recover for a shocked second. Instead, the tempo changes. As the tempo quickens, the guest/chorus is syncopated like alternating pistons as they are pushed and pulled into their chairs. They sing throughout.

Lydia loves it. Suddenly, caught up in the moment, she rushes to the table and in one swoop, pulls the tablecloth from under all the plates, revealing the clear glass top. She is then swept back away from the table. She giggles with delight at her trick.

LYDIA
Wheeeeee!

The song crashes to its end. Bernard looks down at his sushi. The shrimp draped over the rice roll suddenly rears up like a hand and, making a tiny fist, grabs his dangling tie and... smash --

All the guests are punched by sushi, back over their chairs to the ground. They are stunned. Suddenly, everyone runs frightened into the next room.

OUTSIDE ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

Adam and Barbara, with huge smiles on their faces, dance the bugaloo then hug and kiss on the landing in front of the attic. Door is open.

TOGETHER
We did it!

ADAM
Let's watch 'em scatter.

INT. ATTIC
They enter the attic and run to the window. Look out over the front yard.

THEIR POV - YARD

filled with the cars of the guests, as well as Delia and Charles' vehicles.

ADAM (O.S.)
Any minute now. They'll all run screaming.

BACK TO SCENE

They wait. Nothing moving outside.

BARBARA
Your Ink Spots were wonderful!

Adam smiles proudly.

ADAM
And your sushi was remarkable.

BARBARA
The sushi? I did the wine. Didn't you do the sushi?

ADAM
N... No, I just did the Ink Spots.

BARBARA (V.O.)
Who did the sushi?

Timid KNOCK at the door of the attic.

Barbara glances at Adam. They don't know what to do.

LYDIA (O.S.)
It's me. Lydia.

Adam, puzzled, goes to the door and opens it. Lydia is standing there, sheepish.

LYDIA
They'd like for you to come downstairs. Delia says you can pick any sheets you want.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The guests are sitting expectantly. The photographs
are being passed around. Otho thinks that this is the choicest thing that ever happened to a family. The wheels are turning in Charles' mind -- he sees a goldmine. Everyone speaks at once.

DELIA
It does indicate a marvelously urbane sense of humor on the part of these ghosts -- that they actually appear in sheets!

OTHO
We're dealing with Tracy and Hepburn here, a very sophisticated pair. We must protect them, treat them with respect, nurture them.

CHARLES
People will pay big money for this. Right, Grace?

GRACE
(nodding)
Charles, I want to know why you didn't tell me about this --

DELIA
(now changing her tune)
We were waiting for proof. Lydia's photographs...

Charles is scheming.

BERNARD
(skeptical)
What are you all talking about? We... we just got a little drunk, that's all.

OTHO
No matter how drunk you get, you cannot sound like the Ink Spots. (to Charles)
Charles, this is it! You can get Maxie Dean up here now.

Charles plots and plans.

OTHO
His wife Sarah loves the supernatural. I did a reading for her just last week. Told her her jowls would tighten soon. I mean she will make him sprint up here in his helicopter
if you can produce ghosts for her.

BERYL
The Enquirer has offered fifty thousand dollars for absolute proof of life after death. I'll send them over.

BERNARD
I'm Delia's agent! I've lost money for years on her work. If anything actually happened here I'll handle it, thank you. But not until I see some real proof.

Lydia appears at the base of the stairs. Everyone stops squabbling, looks at her expectantly.

LYDIA
They don't want to come down.

OTHO
Why not?

Bernard shakes his head as if all this were an elaborate hoax. He harumphs!

LYDIA
I think the reason is they were trying to scare you, and you didn't get scared --

DELIA
Of course we weren't scared. (looking around) Just a little startled. One of those sushi dropped down my Kamali.

Bernard is now convinced this whole business was a put-on.

BERNARD
(shaking his head) Total collective hallucination.

BERYL
I was a little tipsy.

DELIA
This was not a hallucination, people. This was real, really totally real.

GRACE
Of course, they were rather spectacular effects -- for Connecticut, I mean.
OTHO
All presences have a home space.
A place where they live, so to
speak. Where do they hide out?

LYDIA
(reluctantly)
The attic.

CHARLES
The attic room is locked --

LYDIA
They're ghosts. They do what
they want.

OTHO
Fabulous! Otho Fenlock's 'locked
door' ghosts! Probably committed
suicide up there -- hanging like
bees from the rafters. I'm
totally enchanted.

Bernard gathers Grace and Beryl and walks out the door.

BERNARD
Delia, you are a flake. You have
always been a flake. I'm packing
up and going back to the tricks
of the city. That I can manage.
If you must frighten people, do it
with your sculpture.

They exit. Delia is horrified and embarrassed.

DELIA
Wait! I'm going to get to the
bottom of this! Lydia, is this
some high-tech trick of yours?
I want you to take us up there,
tout sweet!

INT. LANDING OUTSIDE ATTIC
Delia, Charles, Otho and Lydia creep, creep.

DELIA
(whispering)
Shhh. They're in there? God,
they live like animals. This
is where they've been hiding out?

Lydia nods. Delia suddenly, brashly pounds on the door.

DELIA
(shouting)
All right, you dead people! Come on out, or we'll break down this door and drag you out on the ropes you hanged yourself with!

LYDIA
Shhhh. They didn't commit suicide.

DELIA
It doesn't matter. What matters is I've got a roomful of guests down there, who think I'm a fraud.

(to Lydia)
I am going to teach you something here Lydia. You've got to take the right tone in things like this, or people -- whether they're dead or alive -- people will walk all over you.

(loud)
Come on out, or I will make death so miserable that you will wish you had never lived!

Delia pounds on door, which opens with an eerie CREAK.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Lydia is pushed in first. She looks around. Delia, Charles and Otho come in next, carefully. One by one they straighten up and look around.

DELIA
(whisper)
So where are they, Lydia?

Lydia shrugs, looks around.

CHARLES
(offhandedly)
Answer your mother.

LYDIA
Listen, you guys. These ghosts are really nice people. I think we scared them off. Let's just leave them alone. Okay?

Charles is suddenly transfixed. He stares at the model.

CHARLES
It's the whole damn town.

They gather around. Lydia is a little sad as she looks at
the empty room and the model.

OTHO
Look at that detail!

DELLA
Look at the tiny figures.

CHARLES
Look at all that parking!

LYDIA
Come on. Leave their stuff alone.

OTHO
They're not here, Lydia?

She shakes her head. Otho spots the handbook. Palms it.

DELLA
I have never been so embarrassed... They haven't gone for good, have they?

Delia is suddenly out the door, urging them all outside.

DELLA
Everyone out of there. If they're in there somewhere, I don't want to scare them away. Come on now, stay out of there. We've got work to do.

Otho pockets the handbook secretly as everyone exits. Delia carefully closes the door.

CAMERA EASES OVER TO the window we see two pairs of hands, white-knuckled, gripping the window sill from the outside.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Barbara and Adam are hanging outside the window. CAMERA EASES BACK to see that instead of hanging from the house. They are hanging from a ledge over the inferno.

ON INFERNO

Circles of rosy hell. Several devilish monsters slaver up at them, hoping for new meat for the furnace. Small geysers spurt foul gases.

WINDS BLOW hard; rain beats on Adam and Barbara. They struggle to hold on and pull themselves back up and into the window.
ADAM
Juno, help! Juno!

After nearly falling, Adam barely saves Barbara and they finally make it up, and disappear into the window.

INT. ATTIC LANDING - NIGHT

Delia, Charles and Otho all start down the stairs, one by one. All are holding the hand rail.

DELIA
Lydia, I will never forgive you for embarrassing me in front of my social inferiors. You help us with these ghosts or you'll be sorry.

LYDIA
I'm sorry already.

CHARLES
(fixing on Otho)
Now, let's get back to business. I want to get Maxie Dean and Sarah up here immediately. I can make history here! I'm going to turn this sleepy little backward town into a leading supernatural research center... and amusement park.

LYDIA
(disgusted)
I cannot believe this.

CHARLES
Delia will cook...

Delia glares at him.

CHARLES
I'll bring the wine... and the business plan. And Lydia you'll bring the ghosts.

LYDIA
(frustrated)
I can't bring the ghosts. They're not here!

CHARLES
Otho, could you actually... do something with them?
OTHO
(pats handbook under his coat)
Perhaps if I were properly motivated.

LYDIA
That's slavery and murder. You don't know these people. They're just like you and me. They're nice people!

THEIR POV

Down the handrail, as they walk downstairs. Lydia lags behind, sullen.

The lower end of the handrail lifts, and turns. The handrail has become a long, fat, diamond-backed SNAKE -- unlike any we have ever seen. It flashes terrifying teeth and a red-feathered comb. It turns and HISSES at them.

ON CHARLES
He stops, hand still on rail, and stares.

ON OTHO
He looks at Charles. Then at snake.

ON CHARLES
Fear begins to sink in. He backs up.

ON DELIA
She screams as she looks down at her hand on the rail -- It grips the scaly, throbbing, dripping body of the snake.

BACK TO SCENE

The snake just gets longer and nastier as it turns back in the air, up the stairs toward them. Its tail circles Delia and spins her like a top. When she stops -- the snake gives her a big wet snake kiss.

Snake snaps Otho in the behind. It hurts.

The three of them fall over each other trying to escape.
The SNAKE rears up and spreads a red comb and HISSES LOUDLY.

All three of them turn their backs and huddle on the stairs.

The snake hovers horribly over them; grabs Charles in its coils and squeezes him hard -- his fearful face reddens, then it suspends Charles over the edge of the stairs.

    SNAKE
    We've come for your daughter,
    Chuck!

He leers at Lydia and drops Charles, like a rock, over the bannister. Charles screams.

The Snake grins at a terrified Lydia,

Snake rears back for a strike, when suddenly, like thunder, one word is heard.

    BARBARA (O.S.)
    Betelgeuse! Betelgeuse! Betelgeuse!

The snake looks up with familiar eyes. At top of stairs stands an angry Barbara.

What happens next is almost too fast for the eye to see.

The snake shrinks and turns back into the regular mahogany handrail.

Betelgeuse, or his outline, whips up the stairs, through the door, and is gone like a rocket.

    BETELGEUSE
    Rrratt shit!

Otho and Delia rush downstairs -- Lydia is terrified. She runs away.

    LYDIA
    I hate you! I can't trust anybody!

    BARBARA
    No, wait!

Lydia screams and runs down the stairs.

    LYDIA
    (screams)
    I hate all of you!

Slowly, Barbara returns to the attic.
INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

Adam and Barbara are wet and exhausted. Agitated.

ADAM
Great choice we've got here. We get to spend the next century either hanging out that window or doing parlor tricks.

Adam is working with the model town. Barbara is pacing.

ADAM
Maybe they'll leave now. That snake was a pretty nasty customer.

BARBARA
He might have hurt somebody.

ADAM
But he didn't. We've got him where we want him.

ON MODEL

A column of water shoots high in the air.

Adam rushes over to the model -- looks down.

INT. MODEL - DAY

Betelgeuse has run a beat-up old pickup into a fire hydrant. He stands nearby, hopping mad; shakes his fist at Adam.

BETELGEUSE
You pansy-assed cretins! How dare you do that to me. I had 'em running; coulda finished the job!

Adam's huge thumb comes down and stops the hydrant. Betelgeuse steps defiantly up to it.

BETELGEUSE
Come on, try to touch me, you lousy do-gooder.

Adam withdraws his thumb. Betelgeuse gets on a Harley chopper MOTORCYCLE. VARROOM!

INT. ATTIC
Barbara and Adam, obviously disturbed, look at one another with concern.

    BETELGEUSE (V.O.)
    (thin and pip- ing voice)
    Why did you stop me?

    VRROOOM!  VRROOOOM!

Barbara joins Adam and looks down.

ON MODEL TOWN

Betelgeuse is ROARING down the street on the BIKE. Barbara and Adam are titans in the sky. He wheelies.

    BARBARA
    I don't like Charles Deetz particularly, but you could have killed him.

    BETELGEUSE
    Hey, I've been in a frigging bottle for six hundred years. I was out. Every dog has his day. This is my town. I need a night to howl.

    ADAM
    This is my town.

    BETELGEUSE
    You wish! I nearly scored with that little blonde. I need me a short little queen.

ON BARBARA

Angry, Barbara reaches down into the model and plucks Betelgeuse up with the Harley. Harley spins and winds up!

Barbara lifts him up toward her, squeezing him slightly.

    BARBARA
    You leave her alone, you horrid little prick!

CLOSEUP - BETELGEUSE IN BARBARA'S HAND

Betelgeuse grins. Suddenly large spikes shoot out all over his body, piercing the skin of Barbara's palm and fingers. Barbara's blood is a rich pink.
She squeals and releases the evil spirit and he plummets.

EXT. MODEL - DAY

Betelgeuse parachutes to a soft landing on the town common. The Harley smashes to the ground heavily, sinking in over its tires. Betelgeuse is defiant.

BETELGEUSE
Go ahead. Make my millenium!

We hear the tinny strains of "HONKY TONK ANGEL," as if from down the street. He turns around to follow it.

BETELGEUSE
This burg got a cathouse? I'm getting anxious, if you know what I mean. Six hundred years and all.

He turns the corner to a whorehouse, with women -- women with demon horns -- hanging out of the windows, beckoning. Betelgeuse rubs his hands together and swaggers inside.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Barbara aghast, watching this from above.

BARBARA
Adam! Why did you build a whorehouse? Have you ever been to...?

ADAM
I didn't --

He doesn't finish -- a strong WIND BLOWS through the attic, nearly knocking Barbara and Adam over. They close their eyes against the gale.

When they open their eyes again, they're no longer in the attic. They're in --

INT. JUNO'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

A cubicle in a much larger office. Miss Argentina swishes by.

RECEPTIONIST
God, you have got her steaming now.

She exits. There are other special workers. The place is
really, really busy. Adam and Barbara sit down to wait. Juno storms through with a sheaf of papers. She sees them. She is steaming mad.

JUNO
The whorehouse was my idea.
I want Betelgeuse out of the picture! We've got some serious talking to do.

BARBARA
About what?

JUNO
You people have really screwed up! I received word that you allowed yourselves to be photographed. And you let Betelgeuse out and didn't put him back, and you let Otho get ahold of the handbook.

ADAM
Handbook? When...?

JUNO
(continuing tirade)
Never trust the living! We cannot have a routine haunting like yours provide incontrovertible visual proof of existence beyond death.

ADAM
Well, we didn't know --

A bunch of FOOTBALL PLAYERS follow Juno like hungry dogs.

DUMB #1 (FOOTBALL PLAYER)
Hey, Coach, where's the men's room?

JUNO
(frustrated)
I'm not your coach. He survived.

DUMB #2 (FOOTBALL PLAYER)
You don't need a men's room.
You're not no man no more. But Coach, let me get this -- What's our curfew over here?

They start squabbling. Juno has to wrangle them into another room.

JUNO
(frustrated)
I'll be right back.
INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Charles sits on small hospital bed. Delia takes off her Gucci belt and whips it on a chair absentmindedly.

DELIA
I feel like we've been at war, Charles.

CHARLES
At least insofar as we have our first casualty. Me.

DELIA
Otho'll know what to do.

CHARLES
What's he going to do? Viciously rearrange their environment?

DELIA
Otho knows as much about the supernatural as he knows about interior decoration.

CHARLES
Let's hope he knows how to produce those damn ghosts for Max and Sarah... Because I've bought options on property all over town. I need Max's financing...

DELIA
Just don't tell Lydia.

CHARLES
Why not?

DELIA
I think she's in with them.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LYDIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

It's dark. The bedroom curtains have been closed. Dramatic OPERA MUSIC builds throughout.

Lydia melodramatically dressed in a long black dress appears carrying a candle. She is softly crying.

She sits at her dressing table, the candlelight shows her writing paper. She begins a very dramatic letter.
LYDIA
I am alone.

She looks at it and crumpling the paper, starts again.

LYDIA (V.O.)
I am utterly... alone. You have sealed my fate with your betrayal. I can no longer stand to be used like a puppet between two deceitful worlds. By the time you read this I will be gone, having jumped off...

She scratches that out.

LYDIA
... having plumeted off the Winter River Bridge. Then you will know that I am no longer a toy in your petty feuds. Goodbye, Lydia.

A tear falls on the paper as she folds it and puts it in an envelope. OPERA MUSIC BUILDS AND CONTINUES.

INT. CHARLES' OFFICE - DAY

Lydia slowly makes a copy of the suicide note. The green of the Xerox light falls eerily on her sad face.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Lydia at bottom of attic stairs.

LYDIA'S POV

Stairs and door at top. They look ominous. She starts upward.

INT. ATTIC ROOM

The door opens and Lydia peers in.

The room is empty. Lydia comes inside.

LYDIA
Are you here?

She hears something. Looks all around the room. Nothing.

LYDIA
Mr. and Mrs. Maitland? I've come
for the last time.
   (laying note on
    table)
Where are you? Barb...

BETELGEUSE (V.O.)
They're dead.

Lydia looks around, then peers into model.

BETELGEUSE (V.O.)
Think small. I'm talking to you.

EXT. MODEL TOWN - BUILDING ROOF - DAY

A tiny Betelgeuse on the roof of a building, wearing a silk dressing gown, looking like he just dragged himself out of bed. One of the horned whores is nude sunbathing in the corner, and Betelgeuse drapes a blanket over her. Lydia's face looms enormous in the sky.

BETELGEUSE
Cookie, they are dead, dead, deadski.

LYDIA
Of course they're dead. They're ghosts.

BETELGEUSE
No, I mean they've gone. Decamped. Split. Vanished.

LYDIA
Where'd they go?

BETELGEUSE
The happy hunting ground. Who cares?

LYDIA
Are you a spirit too?

BETELGEUSE
Sort of. High spirit. Heh heh. Listen, cookie, I've been trapped in this burg for hundreds of years. All I want is to get out.

LYDIA
I want to get in.

BETELGEUSE
You do? Over here? On my side?

LYDIA
I think so.

**BETELGEUSE**
(scheming quickly)
Well, yes, of course. It's great over here. You'll meet all the greats. James Dean. Buddy Holly.
(singing)
'The little things a you say and do... make me want to be with you-a-hoo.'

**LYDIA**
Well, it can't be any worse than my life here.

**BETELGEUSE**
(sinister; encouraging her)
That's right. They treat you like scum I bet?

**LYDIA**
Yeah.

**BETELGEUSE**
I can't help you from this side, but here's how we do it. So simple. Say my name three times. That's all. I'll be all yours. Then I'll bring you over here in style.

**LYDIA**
I... I don't know what your name is.

**BETELGEUSE**
Minor problem. The rules. I can't tell it to you. But... do you know how to play charades?

**LYDIA**
Yes.

**BETELGEUSE**
Of course you do.

He holds up two fingers in a V.

**LYDIA**
Two words.

Betelgeuse holds up one finger.

**LYDIA**
First word.
Betelgeuse puts two fingers on his arm.

LYDIA
Three syllables.

BETELGEUSE
No, dummy. Two.

LYDIA
Your fingers are so small I can't see them. First word -- two syllables.

He points behind her.

LYDIA
I don't know what that signal means.

BETELGEUSE
It means look behind you, bimbo.

Lydia looks behind her. A green beetle the size of a Volkswagen is crouching. Its feathery antennae reach out toward her menacingly. Lydia yelps.

LYDIA
Beetle!

BETELGEUSE
Good girrrl!

POP! The beetle disappears. Betelgeuse holds up two fingers.

LYDIA
(still shaken)
Second word. Be careful.

Apprehensive, she jumps when a simple carton of orange juice materializes. Orange juice pours out into a ghostly glass.

LYDIA
Breakfast? Orange?

The orange juice disappears. He shakes his head.

LYDIA

BETELGEUSE
Good thing you are beautiful, kid. You are dumb!
Betelgeuse does the signal for "now put them together."

LYDIA
I am not! Beetle... Juice?

BETELGEUSE
(jumping with delight)
That's it!

LYDIA
Your name is Beetle Juice? Yecch!
That's as bad as Deeelia Deeetz.

BETELGEUSE
It's spelled different, but basically... Now you said it twice; just one more time, and I'll be free.
(sinister) And then you'll be free.

Lydia, puzzled, gets the magnifying glass and peers at him.

ON HIS UGLY FACE

Big in the glass -- Betelgeuse jumps in the air, his robe parts -- we don't see anything but maybe Lydia does.

LYDIA
God, you're anatomically correct!

BETELGEUSE
Just say it.

LYDIA
(recognizing something about him)
You were the snake! Right? I know. I saw you.

BETELGEUSE
You've got to say it!

LYDIA
No I don't. I don't take orders from smurfs.

BETELGEUSE
How'd you like to have the biggest boobs in the world? Right now. I can do it if I get out.

LYDIA
They'd look silly on me. I'm fourteen years old!

BETELGEUSE
How'd you like to be married to... the King...?

Lydia doesn't get it.

BETELGEUSE
... Elvis?...

(Boasting)
You know, ever since he came over he and I have been just like this.

(crosses his fingers)
I can arrange it. Just say my name one more time.

She thinks about that one. Shakes her head.

LYDIA
No, No... I need to talk to Barbara.

Betelgeuse smiles.

BETELGEUSE
Well, cookie, just say my name. I can get her.

(rubbing his horny little hands together)
That and so much more...

Lydia walks around thinking for a moment.

LYDIA
Who else did you say is over there?

INT. JUNO'S OFFICE - DAY

Juno staring at them, hard.

JUNO
Yes... or no? Do you want the Deetzes out or in?

ADAM
Out.

BARBARA
What about Betelgeuse?

JUNO
Forget him. He'll remain with his whores until someone calls him. You need to worry about people like Otho. There are a lot of phony trance mediums. They usually can't make the formulas work, but if Otho stumbles on the right words in that handbook... he could hurt you. As in -- exorcism.

They both look puzzled.

JUNO
In plain English -- that's death for the dead. So keep going, over the top! And you'll have it done. It's better for everyone. It's not pretty but -- that's death! So, finish the job.

Adam stands to go.

JUNO
Wait a minute. Let's see what you're going to do...

They look at Juno.

JUNO
... to scare her. I want to make sure it's not some silly parlor trick.

Barbara looks at Adam.

ADAM
I'll do the hard part, hon.

Adam reluctantly pulls on his face, and contorts it into a living, breathing, horror. Juno is even a little repulsed.

JUNO

She reluctantly does with her face a minor version of Adam's horror.

JUNO
Okay. You look great! Now go clean house. And don't forget the photographs and the damned handbook.

Barbara and Adam slowly stand and walk out the door.
Barbara/monster looks back pleadingly. Football players flood into Juno's office. One PARTICULARLY DUMB PLAYER has had a revelation. (He's pretty grisly, maybe sat too close to the engine.)

PARTICULARLY DUMB PLAYER
Coach! Coach, I don't think we survived the crash!

Barbara and Adam look at each other and continue out the door.

OUTSIDE JUNO'S OFFICE

They enter a long dark hallway. They suddenly find themselves standing in front of Lydia's room. Adam/monster looks at Barbara/monster as he grabs the doorknob. She stops him. Tears fall down her sad ghostly face.

BARBARA/MONSTER
Adam. I can't do it. I like that little girl.

ADAM/MONSTER
It's too late. Sometimes things just work out this way. We have to, honey.

BARBARA/MONSTER
No we don't. We can rebel or something. We'll just stay up there in our room. I'll read, you can build on the model. Come on.

She rushes up the stairs, toward the attic. He follows her.

ADAM/MONSTER
Wait. We can't, honey. Our house...

She gets to the door. Grabs the handle.

BARBARA
I want to be with Lydia!

She throws open the door.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Lydia is standing over the model, about to say Betelgeuse's name.

LYDIA
Okay. Beetle... J...

Barbara/monster, horrified, screams!

BARBARA/MONSTER
No! Lydia, stop!

Adam/monster runs to grab her. Lydia is terrified. Screams.

ADAM/MONSTER
No, don't say it!

BETELGEUSE
Say it! Rat shit!

Betelgeuse slips off the roof into a patch of thorny bushes.

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

Lydia screams; Adam/monster tries to calm her. Lydia struggles and, thinking she is being attacked, runs out the door, smack into Barbara/monster.

Barbara/monster catches her, frightens Lydia even more. Barbara/monster holds onto her as she struggles. Barbara/monster slowly changes back into regular Barbara. Lydia sees who it is and she hugs her. Like mother and daughter.

ON ADAM

slowly returning to himself. He smiles slightly at the scene.

BETELGEUSE (O.S.)
You lilly-livered bleeding hearts!

BARBARA
I'm so sorry we frightened you. What were you doing?

LYDIA
He... Beetle Jui...

Barbara quickly puts her hand over her mouth.

LYDIA
He said if I let him out he would take me over to the other side to find you.

BARBARA
No, Lydia, we're dead.
LYDIA
I want to be dead too.

BARBARA
(shocked)
No you don't! No... Lydia... Why?

LYDIA
(after a pause, dramatically but for real)
Life is just... too awful.

Barbara hugs her. She fumbles for words. This is an unusual situation, a dead person talking a live person out of killing herself. She rocks Lydia a little. Barbara looks at Adam.

BARBARA
Lydia, believe me... we know... all the hard stuff is the same over here. You're going to be who you are... whether you're alive or dead ... and over here -- it's... It's flat... there's no food, no colors ... you can't smell the flowers.
    (thinking)
If we knew then what we know now we'd have been more careful...

ADAM
(in the style of the dead receptionist)
... we wouldn't have had our little accident.

Lydia looks at Barbara lovingly.

BARBARA
So, never let Beetle Juice out. Never. Besides...
    (looking at Adam)
We're thinking about letting everyone stay... You and your father and mother can stay too.

LYDIA
(smiles and says slowly)
Step... mother.

Adam/monster is not sure, huffs around a little. He is trying to change back into Adam, except for his nose, which remains like a beak for a minute. Finally, it changes too.
Lydia and Barbara laugh at him.

Suddenly, two men push in through the door. They push by Lydia and grab the model. They take it out the door.

Adam is beside himself. Doesn't know what to do.

Barbara stops him from taking action.

    ADAM
    What is going on?

    LYDIA
    Really. I don't know.

Adam looks suspiciously at her.

    LYDIA
    I really don't. I'll go find out.

She runs out the door.

    BARBARA
    Be careful.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lydia runs through the hallway and into the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Lydia walks into a presentation in progress.

Sitting around the table are Otho, Maxie, and Delia. SARAH DEAN is there too. She looks around Lydia hoping for ghosts. Sarah is heavily made up, smells bad.

Lydia's photos of the sheeted ghosts are blown up and standing on a nearby easel. Charles, over the model with a pointer, is lost in mid-sentence.

    CHARLES
    -- In short, I've got options to buy enough of the stores on Main Street to control the city council for a hundred years. And at the prices I'm talking about, if it all fell apart tomorrow, we just move out and sell to the Arabs and we still come out... I've talked to Ed Cornwall about a wax museum, here... in Thanksgiving park... Ed's the man who made the talking Jesse Jackson statue. And I've got a museum dedicated to fifty
great moments in the paranormal --
and parenthetically D-Con wants
the right to start an insect zoo
here in the old hardware store.
(seeing Lydia)
Lydia, did you finally decide to
join us?

They all give her an oily smile.

CHARLES
Honey, I am just finishing the
first phase presentation about
our little project here. Then
we'll take a stretch and invite
our friends... to meet your
friends.

Sarah gets Maxie's attention and unable to contain her
excitement, silently urges him to get on with the ghosts.

SARAH
Are they here yet?

MAXIE
Yes, Charles, let's cut the
bullcorn. We're here to see
ghosts. This whole ghost-town
museum and such-like, follows like
a train, if you've got the
engine... so let's see your
goddamned engine.

Everyone looks at Lydia.

LYDIA
They're... not here anymore.

CHARLES
(smiling apolo-
getically)
Nonsense, everytime she says that,
the paint peels, and some wild
creature tries to kill us.

SARAH
(motioning)
We've got these pictures, Lydia.

LYDIA
No, really... they said they might
come back and all of us could live
in peace if you agreed not to
tease them or make them do silly
tricks.

Sarah is disappointed. She goes to Maxie. Delia takes
over.

DELIA
She's become a little emotional about all this. No counseling up here. But we aren't relying on her. No, we rely only on professionals. We have... Otho.

The whole room turns to Otho. Who is scribbling something and mumbling.

CHARLES
Are they still here, Otho?

Otho looks up, he missed the question.

DELIA
Are they still here, Otho?

OTHO
Oh, they're still here. They're just not showing up.

CHARLES
They're probably guilty about what they did to me.

DELIA
Not these people! They are ruthless!

MAXIE
I don't care from guilt. I just want to see them.

CHARLES
Otho, can you do it?

OTHO
It's tricky, but I think I can do it.

He dramatically produces the handbook.

LYDIA
No!

Lydia begins to think about this scene and she shifts to another point of view.

LYDIA
Wait a minute! What am I worried about? Otho, you can't even change a tire!

OTHO
I'll need something personal of theirs.

Lydia smiles, confident that the house is stripped of Maitlands' possessions.

Delia carefully brings out a big plastic bag. Lays something out on the dining room table.

**DELIA**
I'm deeply sentimental about weddings.

Lydia stands to see: Delia carefully lays out Barbara's white wedding dress. Then next to it, Adam's wedding tux.

Lydia looks at it. A chill runs through her.

**LYDIA**
(hushed realization)
Their wedding clothes.

**OTHO**
(dramatically)
Their wedding clothes.

Lydia starts edging for the door.

**OTHO**
Now lock all the doors.

Charles and Maxie do it. Lydia is getting nervous.

**LYDIA**
(whistling in the dark)
This is a joke. You have got to be kidding.

**EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT**

The moon stares down icily through gray clouds. **WIND UP.**

**INT. ATTIC - NIGHT**

Barbara is looking out the window.

**BARBARA**
(wistful)
You know, I've been thinking. I could teach Lydia to sew.
ADAM
Little black party dresses?

BARBARA
(punching him playfully)
Ah, Adam, you don't know anything about little girls. She's just... missed out on some love, that's all...

ADAM
(huffy)
Let's see if she can get my model back.

BARBARA
You can build another one... with her.

Adam isn't convinced. Barbara motions him to sit next to her.

BARBARA
Come here, I want to talk to you.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The group is sitting silently in chairs and on the living room couch.

In the middle of the room, the carpet has been rolled back. Otho -- despite his massive bulk -- is on his hands and knees. He has laid out the clothes in a red square on the floor. (He refers to the handbook throughout.)

OTHO
It's the shape that will trap them.

He's measuring the string, making sure that it's even. He holds up the handbook.

SARAH
The 'words?'

Otho nods.

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

Barbara with her arm on his shoulder, talks to Adam.

BARBARA
We've been given a gift here, honey. A real live little girl. She likes us a lot. She needs us.
Maybe that's why we died so young,
to keep us from getting so...
attached to things. The house,
antiques, your model. Look at us.
We didn't have room for anyone.

ADAM
(after a long thought)
What makes you think she likes me?

Barbara slowly smiles. He does too.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lydia is nervous now. Otho lights a candle and Delia turns out the lights.

OTHO
As sudden thunder
Pierces night;
As magic wonder
Mad affright
Rives asunder
Man's delight:
Our ghost, our corpse and we...
Rise to be.

Nothing happens. Lydia nervously turns away.

LYDIA
(sarcastically)
Doo wah.

Then a SIZZLE, a TINY CRACKLE, along one side of the square.

OTHO
Hands vermillion
Stars of five
Bright cotillion
Raven's dive
Nightshades promise
Spirit's strive,
To the living
Let now the dead...
Come alive.

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

Adam is looking at his model thoughtfully. He smiles.

ADAM
I do kind of like her, you know...

He turns to Barbara. CAMERA HINGES WITH him to see --
ON BARBARA

Her face is frightened. She cannot speak. She reaches out to him -- but is disappearing. He reaches for her, but she is suddenly -- gone.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Vari-colored lightning bolts shoot from every corner of the square. A gasp from everyone but Lydia.

ON LYDIA

She is looking away. She turns to see --

ON DRESS

Barbara's wedding dress floats over the table and fills slowly, painfully, with the arms, legs and finally the frightened face of Barbara. A lightning bolt flares.

Lydia rises slowly to her feet, unable to resist.

More lightning bolts.

OTHO
As sudden thunder
Pierces the night;
As magic wonder
Mad affright
Rives asunder
Man's delight:
Our ghost, our corpse and we
Rise to be.

Lydia walks slowly toward Barbara.

ON BARBARA

She is in pain, she is very slowly aging. She speaks, but no words can be heard. Not even by Lydia. But we can see she is calling for... Adam.

LYDIA
Stop it!

MAXIE
Shhhh!

Lydia screams for Adam.
LYDIA

Adam!  Adam!

OTHO

(louder)
As flies the lizard
Serpent fell;
As goblin vizard,
At the spell
Of pale wizard,
Sinks to hell;
The buried, dead, and slain...
Rise again.

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

In a lightning flare we see Adam searching for Barbara. He rushes out into the hallway.

ADAM

Barbara!  Barbara?  Ba...

His last plaintive call becomes mute as he too begins to slowly disappear.

INT. DINING ROOM - ON EACH OF WATCHERS - NIGHT

One by one. They are scared but delighted too. No one is watching Lydia.

ON OTHO

OTHO

Hands vermillion
Stars of five
Bright cotillion
Raven's dive
Nightshades promise
Spirit's strive,
Into the living
Let now the dead
Come alive.

ON LYDIA

tears well up in her eyes.

ON BARBARA

She is slowly aging. Now a bewildered Adam appears, floating in his wedding suit. Seeing his Barbara, now older than he is, Adam reaches for her hand...
ON HANDS

As he grasps her hand, it seems to be made of white crepe, it wrinkles and nearly collapses.

Adam... puzzled, calls her name silently.

DELIA
What's happening to them?

OTHO
I don't know.

CHARLES
Are they suffering?

MAXIE
They're already dead. They can't feel a thing.

Obviously not true.

ON LYDIA

She cries.

LYDIA
Oh, no. No!

ON BARBARA

She looks down slowly at Lydia and with effort makes a loving smile. She reaches out toward Lydia.

Lydia rushes for the door. Pulls on it, can't open it.

LYDIA
No. No. No. This is a nightmare.

Completely helpless now, Lydia weeps openly and then something comes over her. She rushes across the room. Stares down at the model.

LYDIA
Where are you? Help us! Please. Betelgeuse!

A CRACK of LIGHTNING.

EXT. MODEL TOWN GRAVEYARD - NIGHT
Someone, or something, with leathery black wings, like the figure of death in the Goya drawing, is perched atop the gravestone of Barbara and Adam Maitland. The graves beneath him are open. The figure turns... it is Betelgeuse. He is filing his talons casually.

He speaks with a ghastly rasp.

**BETELGEUSE**

So... You're ready for me now?

**LYDIA**

You've got to help them.

**BETELGEUSE**

Can you help me?

**LYDIA**

(frightened)

... I will.

**BETELGEUSE**

Then I'll help them. For a price.

He grins.

**LYDIA**

W... What is it?

**BETELGEUSE**

(his words echo horribly

Be... my... queen!

**LYDIA**

(repulsed)

Your qu...? But you're...

**BETELGEUSE**

(smiling devilishly)

I'm beeyoo-teeful.

**ON LYDIA**

She is chilled. Steps back. She turns back to the Maitlands who are continuing to age. Looks back to the model.

**LYDIA**

All right... Betelgeuse...

**ON BETELGEUSE**

He flaps a wing. He's also doubled in size. The tombstone crumbles beneath him.
LYDIA (O.S.)
(louder)
Betelgeuse...

WIDER ON GRAVEYARD

He doubles in size again. Behind him, one of the model BUILDING BURSTS INTO FLAME. He soars off across the graves.

ON LYDIA

She hesitates.

TIGHT ON BETELGEUSE - TOMORROW

He looks up at her confidently.

LYDIA

Betelgeuse!

DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The ghostly square is now entirely zig-zagged on the inside with lightning.

CHARLES

All right, that's enough. Can you stop this now?

Otho doesn't answer.

CHARLES

Otho?

OTHO

It's too late, Charles. I'm sorry.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Lydia peers at the model. Betelgeuse is transforming. There is a LOW RUMBLE. The model town starts to shake.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Lydia backs away. Betelgeuse's head, now human-size, rises from the center of the model town.
TIGHT ON HIS FACE

His grin is malevolent and malicious. It's showtime, folks!

BETELGEUSE
Attention K-Mart shoppers!

INSIDE SQUARE

Barbara and Adam's corpses are nearly at the end of their ropes.

ON DEETZES

who have been focused on the Maitlands.

CHARLES
(turning around to the model)
Did you hear something?

ON MODEL

Betelgeuse begins a bright but sinister carnival Barker's pitch. His shoulders now are clearing the model.

BETELGEUSE
Welcome to Winter River!

Sarah rushes over to the model, thinking this is more of the show. Maxie follows.

BETELGEUSE
Hel-lo, piggies! Welcome to Winter River! See the museum of natural greed. The monument to bored businessmen! Come closer! Picnic on the shores of the river of cheap labor. Watch out! See the terrible river monster!

Suddenly six squid-like arms push out from his shoulders and grab Maxie and Sarah. She shrieks! The arms begin to rotate like a carnival ride. CARNY MUSIC UP.

BETELGEUSE
Yowser, yowser, yowser. Exit to the rear puleeze!

Maxie and Sarah are hurled across the room into furniture. They run out screaming! Betelgeuse springs out of the model, back to his regular shape.
BETELGEUSE
(in style of game show host)
Yowser, yowser. Well who do we have here tonight?

He looks up at the suspended Maitlands.

BETELGEUSE
Let's have a hand for the Maitlands, Barbara and Adam. They deserve a rest.

ON MAITLANDS
Wispy shadows by now, still alive/dead. They fall in a heap on the floor. NOTE: They immediately start to regenerate themselves.

BETELGEUSE
Well, we'll get back to them after they recover from their flight.

He turns his attention to the living. Suddenly the PHOTOS of the sheeted Maitlands BURST INTO FLAMES and disappear.

ON ADAM
filling out again, he struggles to stand, but falls. Barbara shakes her head trying to regain her focus.

BETELGEUSE
Look at this mess. Look at that... ugly dust!
(feeling the wallpaper)
My God, what ugly wall dressing. Who is responsible for all this ugliness?
(spying Otho trying to hide)
Otho, it's you! Watch out for the taste patrol!

He waves and the door opens. A little Italian gentleman appears --

OTHO
No. Noooo! My God. It's Giorgio Armani!

GIORGIO
Before youa getta started herea, I joost wanta to saya, Otho, don'ta weara my stuff? Okay? Youa too
fat for human-type clothes. Ita makes my designs looka like aircraft covering.

Otho is horrified. Suddenly, Otho's clothing begins to rip and fall off as he runs out the door screaming. Betelgeuse laughs with delight. Delia pleads with the recovering Maitlands.

DELIA
(frantic)
Please, can't you do something!
Please!

ON BARBARA AND ADAM

Adam, not fully recovered, heroically tries to speak, but his jaw falls off. An exhausted Barbara tries to help him reattach it.

Betelgeuse looks at Delia, with an evil grin.

BETELGEUSE
(Lawrence Welk-like)
Anda now our lovely champagne lady. To whoma grace and elegance are as natural as a simple blue leather couch.
(suddenly exploding like Tweetie Bird)
Do you know how many smurfs died needlessly to make that couch?
(like calling a dog on her)
Get her, Blue!

Suddenly, Delia tries to run for it. But she falls into the blue leather couch. The couch arms swell and grab her. The couch, now alive, holds her tight, bucks her like a bronco, and gallops around the room (as in her entrance), and out the door.

DELIA
Help! Help!

BETELGEUSE
Shane! Shane! Come back Shane!
(he turns and winks at Lydia)
Heh heh! Hell... llo honey!

Lydia screams!!

ON BARBARA
horrified, she tries to go to Lydia, but falls hard against the wall.

Charles moves protectively toward Lydia, who is cowering in a corner. A LOUD ZOOMING is heard from the model. Charles freezes, looks down at it.

ON MODEL

It shakes as many little CARS ZOOM around in the streets. They have angry little faces! ZOOM! ZOOM!

MED. SHOT - CHARLES

He is puzzled.

BETELGEUSE (O.S.)

Look at that, Charles!

(Recalling Charles' earlier speech to Lydia)

BETELGEUSE (O.S.)

You're the first trickle... in a couple of years this town will be filled with people like you and they will need...

CLOSE ON CHARLES

He freezes, his eyes big, he is sweating and shaking. A serrated yellow stripe rolls up the center of his face.

BETELGEUSE (O.S.)

Lots of parking!

ON MODEL

CARS ZOOM off the model and all over Charles, parking like crazy. He screams!

Charles has turned into a parking structure. He is quickly weighed down with hundreds of the nasty machines.

Two slightly larger cars drive off the model, under his shoes and like skates, propel Charles out the door.

BETELGEUSE

Okay. You can go now, you're full.

He laughs hysterically as Charles spins out, hollering.
BETELGEUSE
I love it when I have a good time.
What a guy!
(suddenly reflective)
But Betelgeuse is tired of the fast lane. He wants to be a country boy.
(looking around at the house)
I think I'll settle here. I think...
(big and dangerous grin, looks to Lydia)
I'll get ... married.

Suddenly the room glows red. A fire burns on top of the mantel. The WEDDING MARCH PLAYS EERILY. An ominous feeling creeps into the scene.

His leering horned whores walk, like bridesmaids, in step, through the door. They rush toward Lydia.

Frightened, Lydia is assaulted and pulled forward by these ugly handmaidens, she suddenly looks down and sees she is now clothed in a BLOOD RED WEDDING DRESS. LYDIA SCREAMS!

BARBARA
No... No!

Adam's eyes widen.

LYDIA
(frightened, but hurling the incantation to make him disappear)
No... Betelgeuse. Bet...

Betelgeuse waves a hand and Lydia's mouth freezes.

A death-masked old PREACHER stands ready to perform the service. He speaks with a hissing death rattle.

PREACHER
Do you, Betel...

His mouth drops and is frozen.

BETELGEUSE
Uh, uh! No one says the B word!

PREACHER
Do you _________ take this woman to be your wedded wife? To honor...
BETELGEUSE
(interrupting)
You betcha!

Lydia screams and struggles.

PREACHER
And... you? Do you, Lydia, take
this man? ... er, uh... man... to
be your lawful wedded husband?
... In sickness...

Lydia struggles. Her screams are muffled and distant.
Betelgeuse grabs her and shakes her.

BETELGEUSE
You don't have to answer him,
snookums. I'll do it for you.
(eerily, speaking
in her voice)
I'm Lydia Deetz and I'm of sound
mind. The man next to me, is the
one I want. You asked me... I'm
answering. Yes. How I love that
man of mine.

Adam, now fully regenerated, moves toward them. He
shouts the incantation.

ADAM
Beetle...

Betelgeuse turns to him and with a sweep of his hand --
Adam's teeth (as if they were false), fly out of his
mouth and CLATTER to the floor. Adam, toothless, musters
up his ghost powers and --

TIGHT ON TEETH
They rare back and continue shouting...

TEETH
Beetleju...

Mayhem breaks out. A furious Betelgeuse stomps at them
with his feet. The teeth scuttle under the model.

BETELGEUSE
(angrily, to old man)
Now move it, pops!

ON ADAM

Speechless, Adam heroically charges toward Betelgeuse,
ready to strike him. Betelgeuse spins on him and waves
his hand. Sound of RUSHING WIND. Betelgeuse animates the drapes, which reach out and twist around Adam like a shroud.

Adam struggles, but the drapes slam him hard against the wall and spin around him like a cocoon.

Adam violently thrashes but is helplessly hanging off the wall, as the drapes keep twisting and tightening around him.

Barbara screams and jumps at Betelgeuse.

BARBARA
   Beetlejuice...

Betelgeuse turns on her, eyes flashing.

ON BARBARA
A gag comes over her mouth. She tears away her face like tissue paper -- tries to say his name again.

   BARBARA
   Beetlej...

ON BETELGEUSE
More angry, he waves his hand magically.

ON BARBARA
Her lips are zippered shut. She angrily rips off that face.

   BARBARA
   Beetlej...

ON BETELGEUSE
As fire darts from his eyes.

ON BARBARA
A chromium steel plate is riveted across her mouth. She screams wordlessly behind it.

ON BETELGEUSE
He laughs maniacally.
THUNDER ROARS.

The mood in the room is now fevered and dangerous. Adam is hopelessly fighting to get out of the twisting drapes.

Barbara, struggling with her mouth, she pulls off the chrome, frustrated to the breaking point, looks all around the room, screams and rushes to the window and crashes through into the night.

ADAM
(screaming in anguish)
Barbara?!!

BETELGEUSE
(angry)
Now, let's get rolling!

PREACHER
Then, by the authority vested in me by...

A RUMBLE comes from outside. Everyone notices but the Preacher. He stutters to finish the wedding.

BETELGEUSE
By me! Get on with it!

LOUDER NOISE from outside. Now nearly DEAFENING.

PREACHER
Yes... by him. I now pronounce you man and...

A CRASH at the window.

ON WINDOW

Through it, amidst a cloud of yellow dust, CRASHES the sandworm. Barbara rides him bareback. Barbara struggles to control the ROARING WORM. She pulls on his ears and looks around for Beetle Juice. Seeing him she spurs the worm after Beetle Juice.

Beetle Juice struggles, trying to run from the worm. But Barbara and the worm outmaneuver him, corner him, and when the worm reaches him, he opens his hungry mouth and gulps Betelgeuse in one mouthful.

BETELGEUSE
Rrrat shit!

Barbara leaps off, as the sandworm continues back through the hole in the wall around the window.
WIND HOWLS. Lydia runs to Barbara who holds her, Adam staggers up and stares at her with admiration.

    ADAM
    What...?

    BARBARA
    (shrugs)
    Just a hunch.

ON HOLE - FOOTBALL PLAYERS

peer down into the room. Pull the whores up through the hole.

Barbara looks around the room. Sees something. Walks to the wall. A piece of Delia's wallpaper has been ripped, exposing Barbara's wallpaper underneath. She grabs a corner and rips it off, revealing her old clean floral.

    BARBARA
    Just goes to show you. Nothing lasts forever.

Lydia and Adam watch.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. WINTER RIVER - MAIN STREET - BRIGHT DAY

BIRDS SING. Ernie polishes the lion. Old Bill sleeps. People stroll.

EXT. MISS SHANNON'S BOARDING SCHOOL - DAY

A lovely white boarding school with long green lawn. A BELL RINGS. Girls come out the front door. Say good-byes. Lydia walks out too, carrying books.

    LYDIA
    'Bye, Serena. See you later.

Lydia walks along Main Street of Winter River.

EXT. WINTER RIVER - MAIN STREET - BRIGHT DAY

BIRDS SING. Ernie polishes the lion. Lydia passes him.

INT. JANE BUTTERFIELD'S ANTIQUES/TRAVEL/REAL ESTATE
Lydia enters and begins to use the Xerox. Little Jane is collating nearby. She looks up at Lydia.

LYDIA
Are you a kid or a machine?

Little Jane frowns at her. Big Jane sits at a cluttered desk trying to find something. She spies Lydia.

JANE
Hellooo! How's school?

LYDIA
(not particularly interested)
It's okay. How's the dirt business?

JANE
Well, I just placed a call to your mother. She had stepped out but I have some news for her.

PHONE RINGS. Lydia happily walks out the door.

LYDIA
Tell her I'll see her soon.

Jane answers the phone.

EXT. WINTER RIVER MAIN STREET - BRIGHT DAY
Ernie polishes the lion. Lydia passes.

LYDIA
Don't forget the balls, Ernie.
He looks around surprised.

INT. JANE BUTTERFIELD'S ANTIQUES-TRAVEL-REAL ESTATE
Jane screams into the phone.

JANE
What do you mean no? After all I've done for you. I don't do this for my health you know.

CAMERA EXPLORES a row of photographs of houses for sale.

ON PHOTOGRAPH OF OLD MAITLAND HOUSE
It is dilapidated and haunted looking. A legend reads: FIXER-UPPER'S SPECIAL.
BACK TO JANE

She is frustrated.

JANE
I have here a bonafide offer of $250,000 for that dump.

Little Jane is now at the Xerox machine. The NOISE irritates Big Jane and she throws a wad of paper at Little Jane. Little Jane gets mad and throws her papers into the air and exits.

JANE
(to phone, not so polite)
What do you people want? The Franklin Mint?

INT. NEW YORK APARTMENT - DAY

We recognize the furniture. It's the Deetzes. Delia is on the phone to Jane. Charles comes in with the Wall Street Journal. He fidgets, taps his fingers, as he reads and pours coffee -- all at once.

DELIA
(whisper to Charles)
It's Mrs. Butterworth again.
(to Jane)
Listen to me, Jane. Read my full red lips. We don't want anyone looking at the house. We don't want it painted, the yard mowed, the trees trimmed, nor do we want it termite inspected. It's not for sale.

INT. JANE'S STORE - DAY

Jane listens. Silent. Thinking.

JANE
Well. Okay for now. When will you sell it?

INT. NEW YORK APARTMENT - DAY

DELIA
(smiles)
Never, honey. Never.
She hangs up. Looks at Charles.

**DELIA**

Some people never know when to leave things the way they are.

Charles smiles.

**INT. MAITLAND ATTIC** - DAY

Sound of SWEEPING -- CAMERA EASES UP -- Barbara is sweeping out the attic. Adam working on his model.

**ADAM**

What time is it?

**BARBARA**

3:30 I guess.

**ADAM**

Give or take a year.

Barbara smiles.

The kitchen DOOR SLAMS. Barbara looks up at Adam. They exit carefully and walk down the stairs.

**INT. ATTIC STAIRWAY** - DAY

Adam and Barbara walk down the stairs. They smile at something at the foot of the stairs.

**ADAM**

Did you get the paint?

**LYDIA (O.S.)**

I got it. And I took pictures of the new church for you, too.

**BARBARA**

How'd you do on the science test?

**ON LYDIA**

**LYDIA**

(hangs her head)

It was gross. They wanted me to dissect a frog. I told them no way. I said it was against my religion. I got a C.

Adam frowns a little.

**BARBARA**
How did you do on the math test?

Lydia looks down coyly.

ADAM
We studied all day yesterday.
Don't tell me...

LYDIA
I got an A!

They grin with pride.

LYDIA
So can I?

ADAM
(shaking his head)
Uh-uh. Only if you got above a C on science.

LYDIA
Oh puh-leeze!

BARBARA
Oh, Adam, don't tease her. You never got an A in science in your life!

ADAM
All right.

ON LYDIA
She puts down her books. Loosens her collar, ruffles her hair and waits.

ADAM
Okay.

Lydia looks down.

She lifts her head and leaves the white bread world behind! In a voice as deep and soulful as Percy Sledge:

LYDIA
'When a man loves a woman.
He cain't keep his mind on nothin'
else.'

Adam and Barbara sway and clap.

ADAM & BARBARA
LYDIA

'He'd change the world for the good thing he's found. When a man needs a woman, he cain't keep his mind on nothin' else. If she's bad, he won't see it, she can do no wrong.'

MUSIC CONTINUES OVER:

CREDITS

OVER:

INT. ATTIC - DAY

CAMERA APPROACHES the model --

INT. MODEL (WINTER RIVER) - DAY

CAMERA FLOATS ABOVE the little town. PAST the hardware store, with its new sign.

MAITLAND "FAMILY" HARDWARE STORE

CAMERA FLOATS ABOVE the graveyard and DOWN the country lane.

Juno walks past a great pile of sand with the whorehouse in the middle. An irritated Betelgeuse crawls out on the roof. Hating the singing he shakes his fist at the sky -- loses his footing and tumbles into the sand. Terrified, he scrambles to get out.

ON PILE

A moving coil under the sand sends him scurrying inside again. The sandworm snapping right behind him as he runs back out on the roof.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Juno walks past the Maitlands' yard.

ON BENJI-LIKE DOG

The same one who caused the Maitlands' accident on the bridge. He is taking a leak on a big tree.

Juno whistles and the dog joins her on the lane. They walk away together.
CAMERA TILTS UP to see house. It is the perfect, New England house. CAMERA PULLS BACK FROM the model -- OUT the window of the real house.

OUTSIDE REAL HOUSE

We see it is dilapidated, and undeniably, the perfect haunted house.

FADE OUT.