

1.1

Large panel. We are standing at the edge of a sprawling forest as twilight descends, it appears to be late autumn because the trees are slender and bare with wide spaces between them. The ground is covered with orange and yellow leaves. In front of us, leaning against a tree is a man. We can't really make out much detail on the man because of the fading light, he's little more than a silhouette. His hair is curly and longish, about neck length, and he wears a jacket with a high collar and a trim waist. The jacket comes down to about mid-thigh. He wears tight fabric pants, and high boots. In front of him is a large and unkempt Victorian-style mansion. It's wide and low, with two levels, a dilapidated porch out front and windows, cracked and dusty, everywhere. A pitched gable roof juts skyward covered in rotted shingles. Despite its age and seeming wear, the structure is intact.

MAN

"I felt that, after all of these years, it was time for me to find a place of my own. It's true that I was comfortable in my previous situation, with all of my comrades and friends but, The open spaces and wind through the trees were beginning to play on my nerves."

MAN

"You know what they say; familiarity breeds contempt."

MAN

"I looked for less than a night (I'm useless during the day) when I found it; a great grey Victorian manor abandoned for what seemed like a century, if not more, it loomed stolidly over an overgrown and weedy patch of woods."

PAGE 1 (CONT.)

1.2

The man, still in shadow is standing in the open doorway now. His arms are spread out, holding the stout double doors open. The waning light from outside is casting its light through the doorway and throwing the man's shadow to the tiled floor. His shadow is strange, wispy, almost opaque. This effect is subtle though.

MAN

"I recalled hearing stories about this old house, supposedly haunted, of course."

MAN

"I fell in love immediately."

PAGE 2

2.1

The man now stands at the foot of a wide, sturdy staircase that is in the main hall. It leads up for about 10 steps, then splits into a double staircase, curling around the topmost portion of the main room and leading into the upper regions of the house. There is a moth-eaten, burgundy, carpet that runs up the middle of the staircase and covers the first landing, before the stairs split. There is a huge window at the landing as well and through its dirty glass we can make out the shadows of bent trees and the glow of a full moon. The man, still in shadow, has his hand on the carved wood balustrade of the staircase. His head is bowed a bit as if lost in thought, we can make out the shadow of a drooping mustache on his face.

MAN

"The house reminded me of when I was a boy, long before the war. Stout construction from a time when homes were actually crafted and not manufactured in droves. I recalled hearing stories about this place..."

2.2

We now see an image of an old, bald man dressed in an ornately designed robe. He's got a twisted white goatee that twirls down into a point. He's bent over a worn desk and a thick and open tome. He has a devious and maniacal look on his face. Twisted shards of teeth protrude from diseased gums. Candles on the desk cast his shadow upon the wall behind him. His shadow has horns.

MAN

"The story began with a mad, devil-worshipping patriarch..."

PAGE 2 (CONT.)

2.3

We now see the mad old man standing before three woman of varied age. He has his hands flung up high in the air, an aura of power emanates from each gnarled appendage. The women are kneeling down in agony as their life is drawn, forcefully, from their bodies. Their skin is turning gray, their cheeks are hollowing and their eyes are sinking into their sockets. The background is dim but it looks as if we might be in a basement, or maybe an attic. The women are dressed nondescript, perhaps a bit old-timey, but it's not overtly noticeable.

MAN

"...and ended with the deaths of every other man, woman, servant and child in the house."

2.4

We are still down at the bottom of the stairs and are looking up. The man is walking upstairs, his left hand is trailing along the banister as if the feel of such craftsmanship warms and calms him.

MAN

"I decided to move in immediately and resolved to take my time in exploring the old home."

PAGE 3

3.1-3

Along the top of this page are three panels, one right after another. They represent the layout of the top three attic rooms of the old manor. In fact, it might make more sense for this whole page to be a kind-of watered down cross-section of the house. The ceilings are low up here, as are the windows. The full moon casts its silvery light upon each room. The rooms are fairly sparse, simple beds with unadorned night-stands and bureaus. These were probably the servants quarters. In the third room, the last one on the right, the man, still shadowed, his features barely discernible, is standing before a low dresser and is holding some odd knick-knack, lovingly in his hand.

MAN (3.1)

"I passed from room to room on the upper levels..."

MAN (3.2)

"...dotting over all of the aged and familiar pictures and objects that were left behind..."

MAN (3.3)

"I found it odd that I was drawn most to the attics cramped bedrooms. There was a strong sense of history and past lives up there."

3.4

We now see a shot of the basement door, down on the main level of the house. The door is black with age and has an iron handle rusting on the thick sturdy wood of the door. If you can figure out a way to denote that sound is coming from the basement, through the door, without using out-and-out sound effects, then go for it. Otherwise just the shot of the door is fine.

MAN

"One night I heard sounds drifting up from the basement..."

PAGE 3 (CONT.)

3.5

We now have a shot of the double-stairs that lead into the upper portions of the house. At the top of the stairs, on the right side staircase, is the Man. He's still fairly shadowy but we can see his eyes open wide and white in the darkness. He's looking down toward the basement door.

MAN

"..and in spite of my very being
the noises frightened me."

MAN

"I would take my time in getting
down there...there was certainly no
need to rush"

PAGE 4

4.1

Another shot of an empty room. This room is fairly lavish, and is without a doubt one of the main bedrooms of the place. Everything is old and dusty. Cobwebs litter each scene and the moonlight can barely diffuse through the filthy windows. In this room is a large four-poster bed, without a canopy. An elaborately carved dresser with an unusable filthy mirror above it, and a moth-eaten chair.

MAN

"The next two nights I spent on the main bedroom level drifting from room to room..."

4.2

Another empty room, similar to the last one, except this one is notably feminine. Light colors dress up the room. Flowered wallpaper covers the walls and a wispy canopy hangs limply above the luxuriant bed. Dusty satin and tattered lace.

MAN

"...absorbing the dusty energies from those plush beds and rotting canopies."

4.3

We are now with the Man as he stands in the main bedchamber. This room puts all of the others to shame. It is by far the most lavish of the three. An opulent bed with a frayed canopy covering it squats off to one side. A lavish bookcase with decaying books sits by the grimy window, and next to that a plush reading chair. The Man stands in front of a large marble-set fireplace, leaning on the mantle as he gazes at a framed oil portrait of a distinguished looking gentleman.

MAN

"Every room was rich with feeling and I considered taking the main bedroom as my own..."

PAGE 4 (CONT.)

4.4

Close up of the portrait. The man in the painting looks a lot like the mad wizard we saw previously. He looks saner in this portrait though. Saner and almost distinguished. He's dressed in a fine, double breasted coat. The time period of the portrait looks like it could be the 1860's.

MAN

"...especially since the portrait above the mantle reminded me so much of my old uncle."

4.5

Same panel as panel 4 except now the bleak dawn sunlight is forcing its way into the room. The Man is nowhere to be seen.

MAN

"But no one room could be mine, not yet at least."

PAGE 5

5.1

We now see a shot of the main hallway, it's dusk and the dwindling sunlight colors the scene. The double doors are open and through them we see a pink-ish van parked out front. Leaves scatter across the tiles, blown by a gust of wind into the hall. On the van is a decal; an iconic representation of a house. The words "SOLD! REALTORS" are printed on the side of the van, but are half obscured by the doorway. There is a cabinet near the door, inside the house, and all of its drawers are pulled out and doors opened, as if someone just rifled through them.

MAN

"The next night, at around dusk, I made an horrific discovery..."

5.2

We are now in a large drawing room. A few broken down bookcases line the walls, the books have already turned to powder or quickly going that route. Chairs that are more dust than upholstery and desks with their drawers turned out. It looks like someone has just recently come poking through this room. There is an open door at the far side of the room that looks as if it leads into a dining area. The light is a bit dimmer now as the sun goes down.

MAN

"...someone was here, in my house..."

5.3

We are now in the dining room. There are two open doors here, on the same wall. Through one door we can see the drawing room that we just came from. Through the other we can see the hallway. A plump, elderly woman is passing through the door to the hallway, all we really get to see of her is a bit of leg, maybe an arm, and her back as she blows through the room. She is wearing a pink blazer. There is a large old table that dominates this room. Ornate candlesticks are placed intermittently upon the table. There are a few finger-streaks in the dust that covers the table. The light coming from the hallway is almost gone, night is approaching.

PAGE 5 (CONT.)

MAN

"..opening cabinets, shifting things, smearing the dust off of table-tops."

MAN

"Taking inventory."

5.4

We're back in the main hallway again. The sun has gone down and the moonlight is shining through the windows giving us some illumination. The woman, a short, plump woman of about 60 is standing in the doorway of a room across the hall with her back to us. She's marking something down on a clipboard she has cradled in her arm. She wears her dyed red hair up in a small beehive hairdo. The main staircase is also in this shot, and up at the top, almost completely covered in shadows is the Man. He's on the first landing and is leaning down a little so he can see what the woman is doing.

MAN

'Luckily for me she stayed until the sun went down.'

5.5

Close up on the woman now. She has turned and is slowly walking out of the room she was just in. She is still absorbed in whatever she was writing on her clipboard, and writes as she walks. She has a pleasant, puffy face with the hint of a smile on her lips.

5.6

The woman has now stopped in her tracks and is looking to her left as an ethereal light bathes her from that direction. Her eyes have gone wide with fear. Her mouth has turned into a tight little 'o'. Whatever she's looking at is terrifying her.

PAGE 6

6.1

Big splash of the Man walking down the stairs. He is emanating a bluish glow. His eyes are wild and furious, his mouth a grimace of anger. He is pointing a dirt encrusted nail at the woman, who is off panel. The Man is wearing a dirty, tattered Union-Army Civil War uniform. There is a deep gouge in his neck, a bullet hole that yaws obscenely and drizzles blood as if it were still a fresh wound. The front of his uniform is stained black with blood. He stands before us as a terrible apparition.

MAN

"As she neared the grand staircase
I appeared at its head. I made
sure that the bullet-hole I
sustained in the war gaped
prominently."

6.2

Close in on the Man's face as he stares at the woman, blood is still gushing out of his wound.

6.3

Shot of the front door. The realtor van is speeding off away from the house, dirt is spinning up from underneath the tires. Papers flutter about in the doorway and the woman's clipboard is laying wantonly just within the doorway, as is one of her stubby little pumps.

PAGE 7

7.1

The man stands on the staircase with a slight smile creasing his face. He is fixing his collar.

MAN

"I don't expect there will be any more visitors any time soon."

7.2

Shot of the basement door that is very similar to panel 3.4.

MAN

"As I began my explorations anew I once again heard the noises in the basement."

7.3

Close in on the Man's wide eyes.

MAN

"Disturbing sounds."

7.4

The Man is now approaching the basement door. His face is a mask of worry.

MAN

"Wet, shuffling noises."

7.5

We're on the other side of the door now. The Man is passing through the door, ghost-like because he's a ghost. There is a rickety wooden staircase, or rather the skeleton of a wooden staircase plunging down into the darkness of the basement. The walls are stone and are slick with unknown humidity.

PAGE 7 (CONT.)

7.6

The man is now down in the cellar. He is stopped in his tracks, one hand instinctively placed upon his chest. He's completely shocked. Roots from the trees outside have long invaded the basement, cracking up through centuries of rotting stone and concrete. A dim, pale light emanates from off panel, in front of the man, in the direction he's looking.

PAGE 8

8.1

In a far corner of the cellar, just below an old, thick, plate glass window set high up in the stone wall, shamble three of the walking dead. The zombies' clothing have long since rotted away and they themselves are little more than greyish skeleton-creatures-- their sex or age at the time of their death is no longer apparent. They are shackled to the wall and their chains dangle heavily in the dim light of the basement. The dirt floor beneath them is worn away by centuries of aimless stumbling. Their eyes are milky and their faces are senseless.

8.2

The Man is now just out of reach of the Zombies. One of them is weakly extending an arm in his direction while a sad moan escapes from his rotting jaw. The Man still looks shocked, but also a little sad. His arm is raised a bit, and if he has hesitatingly decided to aid the shambler.

ZOMBIE

"Mmmuuaaahh..."

8.3

Close up on the Man's fingers and the Zombies fingers as they touch. The Zombie's fingers are passing noiselessly through the man's.

PAGE 9

9.1

The Zombie attempts to shuffle off elsewhere, trained by years of futility. The Man drops his hand.

MAN

"As I gazed into their milky, senseless faces I realized that this could never be a home for me..."

9.2

The Man bows his head sadly and begins to fade from sight. The zombies continue zombie-ing.

MAN

"...not with this horror, this torture existing in the basement."

9.3

The Man is outside the house now. Walking into the woods as the sky begins to take on the color of dawn.

MAN

"I resolved to return to haunting the woods where I was killed at the battle of Gettysburg."

9.4

The Man heads further off into the distance.

9.5

The Man has vanished, leaving us with just a clear view of the spooky forest as the sun breaks up over the horizon.

MAN

"I may be a ghost, but that doesn't mean that I have to live with zombies."

HOUSE H(A)UNTING BY TIM MUCCI (C) 2005