



**Sample Pages from  
The One**

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# HORROR MOVIE 101: FAILING CAN BE DEADLY

*A Collection of Five Hauntingly Bizarre Tales*

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT BY  
*Steven Stack*



## Cast of Characters

### *Heirlooms (2W, 1M)*

**Tara:** Female. 16, very rough, lives in squalor.

**Dane:** Male. 16, is trying to build a life with Tara.

**Nicole:** Female. Current “Hook Hand.”

### *The Girl on the Side of the Road (3W, 1M)*

**Cal:** Male. 18, very caring, has family issues.

**Jane:** Female. 18, comes off as cold and unfeeling but really isn't. For the most part.

**Hazel:** Female. A girl that needs to get home to Mother.

**Mother:** Female. Rather scary, out for vengeance.

### *The One (4W, 2M)*

**Spencer:** Female. Sarah's girlfriend. 17, smart, self-assured, and willing to make tough choices.

**Sarah:** Female. 16, Spencer's girlfriend, the nice one of the group.

**Mark:** Male. 18, the logical one, Liam's best friend.

**Liam:** Male. 15, the goofy one, dating Ava.

**Sophie:** Female. 16, obsessed with horror movies.

**Ava:** Female. 17, very smart but believes there is more out there than can be proven by science or logic.

### *Isolation (5W)*

**Karen:** Female. 18, Cassie's older sister and protector.

**Cassie:** Female. 16, Karen's younger sister, the favorite of the family.

**Marcy:** Female. 17, Karen's best friend, hiding something.

**Taylor:** Female. 17, attacked by Jenny, currently tied up.

**Jenny:** Female. 17, has been attacked, currently running through the woods like some type of crazed animal.

### *David and Delaney's Guide to the Perfectly Nifty Prom (2W, 1M)*

**Kate:** Female. 18, Delaney's best friend and possessor of a well-manicured ancient burial ground.

**David:** Male. 17, Delaney's dedicated boyfriend who doesn't like dirt or gross things.

**Delaney:** Female. 17, David's girlfriend since they were 6, dead.

*Horror Movie 101: Failing Can Be Deadly* was first performed in October of 2016 at Forte Studios in Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin. Here is the original cast.

### **Heirlooms**

**Tara:** Gracie Hamburg

**Dane:** Carter Coon

**Nicole:** Evelyn Santoirre

### **The Girl on the Side of the Road**

**Cal:** Kobi Johnson

**Jane:** Grace Haroldson

**Hazel:** Chloe Stack

**Mother:** Evelyn Santoirre

### **The One**

**Spencer:** Evelyn Santoirre

**Sarah:** Sara Thompson

**Mark:** Carter Coon

**Liam:** Kobi Johnson

**Sophie:** Gracie Hamburg

**Ava:** Camille Ginther

### **Isolation**

**Karen:** Evelyn Santoirre

**Cassie:** Gracie Hamburg

**Marcy:** Grace Haroldson

**Taylor:** Camille Ginther

**Jenny:** Justine Mattson

### **David and Delaney's Guide to the Perfectly Nifty Prom**

**Kate:** Sara Thompson

**David:** Carter Coon

**Delaney:** Justine Mattson

## **Dedication**

Dedicated to Prentiss Alexander Bledsoe

## The One

*Setting: A room in a haunted house.*

*At Rise: SPENCER, SOPHIE, LIAM, SARAH, MARK and AVA are standing behind a body bag on the floor. Silence.*

MARK: Is this weird? I feel like it's weird. *(silence)* It's weird, right?

LIAM: Yeah, it is. And it's like one of the cases we worked.

MARK: We don't work cases.

LIAM: In my mind we do.

MARK: Really? *(LIAM nods and MARK laughs)* In my mind we do too.

*They start having a conversation about various "cases."*

AVA: Stop it. And yes, Mark, this is weird! And unsettling. A body bag with a body in it. Just... lying there.

SOPHIE: An empty body bag would probably not be as effective.

SARAH: It's not that unsettling if you consider the fact—

SPENCER: That we're in a haunted house.

SARAH: And it's one of the many scares.

LIAM: Then how do you explain the fact that we don't know how we got here? We just appeared randomly in a room. *And* how do you explain the lack of noise?

SPENCER: Clearly this is a soundproof room, and the smoke and lights made us confused as to how we got here. And now that we've seen the body bag... let's go.

SOPHIE: Wait, there must be more than a body bag. Let's give it a little more time. Something's got to happen.

MARK: I don't have a long time though. I have to get my dad's cabin ready. Cassie and Karen are coming up with some friends and I promised that it would look nice for them. Right now it looks like crap.

LIAM: How are you and Cassie doing?

MARK: Good. I think she actually likes me.

SPENCER: Shocking. And Sarah and I have dinner plans that we cannot be late for, so we don't have time to watch a fake body in a bag do nothing. Ready, Sarah?

SARAH: Yep. *(they take hands and begin to exit)*

AVA: Wait, you're the only one who drove, Spencer.

SPENCER: No worries, we'll call you a cab. Later.

*SARAH and SPENCER exit. Silence.*

LIAM: All right. They left, which leaves us to... what?

MARK: We could you tell you guys about our—

GIRLS: No.

MARK: That's a little rude.

LIAM: That's to be expected. Well, from Sophie. Ava, you know how good my stories are.

AVA: Do I?

LIAM: Well, you said you did last night.

AVA: I was just—

*SPENCER and SARAH return.*

SARAH: There's a problem. A rather large one.

AVA: Which is?

SPENCER: There's no door. Anywhere. Just walls.

AVA: There has to be a door. We got in here, so—

MARK: Maybe it's a hidden door.

SPENCER: Do you remember going through a hidden door, Mark?

MARK: I don't remember going through any door, so—

SOPHIE: This is awesome! Now, not only do we get to figure out what's up with this body bag, we get to figure out what happened to the door! Or if there ever was a door. Greatest haunted house ever. *(they all look at her)* C'mon, guys. We wanted to be scared and now we are.

SPENCER: I'm not. This is boring. Although I must admit that I am slightly intrigued about how they got us into the room. Not about

the body bag with a body in it, though. It's just stuff bought on Amazon.

AVA: I don't think so. I don't like this. Not anymore. I don't think this is part of a haunted house. Something is wrong here.

SOPHIE: And I know what it is. (*They all look at her. Very dramatic.*) We're all dead.

SARAH: That's kind of a leap.

SPENCER: We're clearly not dead.

SOPHIE: Oh, we are. We're all dead! It's Horror Movie 101. Put the pieces together, smart girl. We go to a haunted house that we randomly find on the side of a dark road in the middle of nowhere that's packed with people. We enter, separate, and then somehow end up together in a room without sound, with a body bag and, wait for it... no door. Why is all of this happening? Because we're dead.

*During the above, MARK inspects the body finds a letter.*

LIAM: So why just one corpse, Sophie? Shouldn't there be 6?

SOPHIE: No, the corpse is just to throw us off. From thinking that we're dead. But me and Ava are too smart.

AVA: It's Ava and I.

SOPHIE: I didn't say I was smart in grammar.

LIAM: So how did we die?

SOPHIE: I don't know. But we will know at some point. One by one, we'll have a memory or something that will gradually put the story of our demise together and then there will be a montage that shows all of our deaths.

SARAH: This is not a horror movie, Sophie.

SOPHIE: I know it's not. Because it's real. And I hope our deaths were super gruesome.

LIAM: (*to SOPHIE*) What is wrong with you?

SOPHIE: Nothing. It's Halloween. What would be better than all of us getting murdered gruesomely?

SARAH: Pretty much anything. Horror Movie 101 also says that you don't want to be thrown into some psychopath's elaborate game that ends in your death.

SOPHIE: I guess. If you're lame.

SPENCER: Mark? Don't you have something to add to this ridiculous conversation?

MARK: I think Sophie's right. Sort of. (*they turn to him and see that he's holding a note*)

AVA: What do you mean?

MARK: There's a note. (*silence*)

SPENCER: And are you going to share the contents of this note?

MARK: I'm pausing for dramatic effect. (*silence*) It says "Welcome Sarah, Spencer, Mark, Liam, Sophie, and Ava."

SARAH: How did the note know our names?

SOPHIE: The note didn't. The writer of the—

SARAH: You know what I meant.

MARK: Guys, there's more.

SPENCER: Most letters are more than the salutation.

MARK: Thank you, Spencer. May I continue? (*reading*) "Inside this bag lies one of you. See who it is, and only the one who's seen will die. Refuse to look, and you all will. You have six and a half minutes."

*A clock is heard ticking.*

LIAM: Ticking clock. Rather ominous. The first sound, besides our voices, since we got here.

MARK: And an odd time choice, right? I would have guessed something like 10 minutes.

SARAH: Don't think that matters. This is creepy.

SOPHIE: And even more amazing, right?

AVA: Do you think the letter's real?

SPENCER: Of course not. Think about where we are. At a haunted house. This is clearly part of the scares.



MARK: I would agree, but how do you explain all of our names on the note?

SARAH: Maybe they heard us say each other's names.

LIAM: Doubtful.

SPENCER: Trust me: the body, the ticking clock, they're all just cheap tactics to build suspense... which I have grown weary of. I'm ready to go. I'm just going to pull the zipper back and— (AVA stops her) What are you doing, Ava?

AVA: You're not pulling that back.

SPENCER: Nothing's going to happen if I do.

AVA: But what if it does?

SPENCER: Your intellect is second only to my own, so you should know that it's not. And I get that you have this odd spiritual side that sometimes trumps your intellectual side, but—

MARK: You don't know that it's not real, Spencer.

SPENCER: Come on. (*looks around*) Seriously? Do the rest of you believe it too? (*silence*) Sarah, even you?

SARAH: I don't know, but I would rather you didn't—

SPENCER: Okay, I won't pull it back. But think for a moment. Say all of this is real. If we don't look, after 6 and a half minutes we all die.

*Worried conversation starts. LIAM cuts them off.*

LIAM: Before we do anything, let's look at all our options. Option one, we could leave.

MARK: Well, when Spencer and Sarah tried to leave, there was no way out.

SARAH: And if we look, one of us dies.

SOPHIE: But if we don't, all of us will.

MARK: Unless it's not true. So we just wait the five or so minutes and then I bet somehow the door appears and we go home.

SPENCER: Mark, if that's the case, there's no reason that we wouldn't look now and get out of here faster.

LIAM: I would agree, but then again if it is true, we'll be killing one of us.

SPENCER: And if we don't, we're killing all of us. Both choices suck, so let's just get it over with.

LIAM: (*crosses away*) This is like *Star Trek II* where Spock... spoiler alert... sacrifices himself for everyone else. Which is what one of us needs to do right now. Be Spock. And that person... is me. I'll do it. I'll sacrifice myself.

MARK: You might not be sacrificing yourself. It could be any of us. It could be me.

LIAM: Ah yes, I can see the problem with my train of thought. (*to everyone*) I don't want to sacrifice Mark.

AVA: What about your girlfriend?

LIAM: I was about to say that. I don't want to sacrifice Mark or Ava.

SOPHIE: You would be okay with sacrificing the rest of us though?

LIAM: Well, more than I would Mark and Ava. (*silence*) Look, I really don't want to sacrifice anybody. Including myself.

SARAH: So what do we do?

SOPHIE: Let's do it. Let's look. This might sound morbid, but wouldn't it be cool if one of us was really in that bag?

AVA: No. It wouldn't. Especially if it meant that person was dead.

SARAH: That would be awful.

SOPHIE: But cool on some level, right?

LIAM: No. Look, I don't even like haunted houses. Ever since I was 6 and peed myself at the haunted house at the church carnival... (*realizes what he just said*) I just came so that when Ava got scared, she would find me.

AVA: So sweet. And I think you meant that when *you* got scared, you could find *me*. Anyway, I've had enough of this. I'm done. I'm leaving. With or without you guys. And yes, Spencer and Sarah, I know that you didn't find a door. But I'm going to find a way out. Somehow. (*exits*)

LIAM: (*following*) Ava, hey, wait up. (*But AVA is gone. Then she screams.*) Ava!

*LIAM runs off to find AVA. The others look off for them without speaking. Tension is growing. Moments*

*pass. Then AVA enters, followed by LIAM, despair on their faces.*

AVA: There's nothing there. Nothing at all. No walls. Nothing. Just darkness.

SPENCER: What are you talking about?

LIAM: She's right. I can't explain it. It's like some type of abyss or something.

SARAH: Stop messing around.

AVA: We're not. We should never have come here. I told you we should have driven by and gone to the most popular haunted house in St. Claire like we always do. But no, none of you would listen. And now we're...

*AVA sits down in front of the body. LIAM sits down beside her. The others look at each other.*

SPENCER: I don't believe it. C'mon, everybody, they're messing with us.

SARAH: And if they aren't?

SPENCER: We've got some decisions to make. Let's go.

*SPENCER, SOPHIE, SARAH, and MARK leave as LIAM and AVA stare at the corpse. MARK turns.*

MARK: You guys coming?

AVA: Why would we, Mark? We already know we're screwed.

*MARK considers it and then exits with the others, leaving AVA and LIAM staring at the body. After some moments of silence, the others re-enter, looking scared.*

MARK: What's going on?

SPENCER: This must be fake.

AVA: How is it fake, Spencer?

SPENCER: I don't know. I don't create haunted houses nor study them. I'm only saying, things like this don't happen in the real world. It's got to be a trick.

AVA: So somehow they designed a place that makes worlds disappear except for one room that none of us remember getting into



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