

Scene 3

AT RISE: Dark stage. LIGHT from two flashlights comes onto the stage from the SR window. The lights “search” the room for a moment before JODI enters, climbing through the window, followed by TEPI and RITZ. LIGHTS come up slowly.

TEPI

Whoa! This is crazy.

JODI

Be careful and watch where you step. It feels like some of the floor is – I don’t know, like, soft.

RITZ

Rotted?

JODI

No. Just...well, maybe.

(JODI moves cautiously while TEPI boldly enters the room with a flashlight and looks around. RITZ has stopped just inside the window.)

TEPI

(Coughing, waving a cobweb away.)

There’s gotta be – you know – things living in here.

MELANIE

(From outside the window.)

Move! We want to come in, too.

MADDY

You just gonna stand there?

JODI

Things?

RITZ

(Stepping aside – to GIRLS outside window.)

Sorry.

TEPI

Mice. Rats. Spiders for sure.

RITZ

Aah! I just walked into one!

MELANIE

(Entering.)

What?

RITZ

A spider – well, a spider web.

MADDY

(At the window.)

Ouch! How did you guys get through this window?

JODI

Now I'm creeped out.

TEPI

Now? After ten seconds? I'm impressed it took so long.

JODI

Shut up.

(Searching with her flashlight.)

MELANIE

This place is awesome.

RITZ

It's OK, Jodi. This *is* creepy.

JODI

I'm good.

MADDY

(She is comically backing her way in through the window.)

Seriously – how did you guys fit through this window?

MELANIE

Oh, for crying out loud. Squeeze and wiggle.

MADDY

(She falls in.)

Ooow!

TEPI

(Moving DSC and stomping her foot.)

It's solid over here.

JODI

(Turning around to MADDY and MELANIE.)

You guys doing OK?

MADDY

(Recovering and brushing herself off.)

Oh yeah – great! Just – you know – a typical afternoon of breaking and entering.

JODI

We're not breaking anything. Just entering.

MELANIE

That means it's OK?

RITZ

What? Legally? I don't think so.

MADDY

What did I miss?

RITZ

So far, we've discovered spider webs and the floor is soft in spots.

JODI

(Joining TEPI DSC.)

This room's pretty big. I think it must have been the living room or family room.

TEPI

Looks like it.

RITZ

Parlor. They would have called this a parlor, not a family room or living room.

MADDY

Fancy.

MELANIE

What was this place, anyway? A hotel?

TEPI

Maybe it was just a mansion.

JODI

The façade says "Girolamo House."

MADDY

What's a façade?

RITZ

The face – the front.

MADDY

"Geronimo House" – that's funny...you mean like, "Ge-ro-ni-moooooh!?"

JODI

(Laughing.)

No, not the Indian guy.

MELANIE

(Correcting her.)

You're supposed to say "Native American", not Indian.

JODI

Sorry, no offense. *(to MADDY)* But no, it's not "Geronimo", it's "Girolamo" – like *(at a loss)* I don't know what it's like. But not Indi- Native American.

TEPI

(Searching the room with her flashlight.)

And your mom said it was cool to check out?

JODI

Are you kidding? She'd kill me for being here. The real estate office is – I'm not sure – she got the listing or something. Like I said, she was talking about it with my dad – going on about how great the place was but needs a lot of work.

TEPI

I'll say.

MADDY

So this *is* illegal?

TEPI

Did you see any signs posted?

MADDY

No.

JODI

Anyway, it's this new listing, so we don't have a lot of Time before people start showing up.

TEPI

(Going SL, toward an exit/door.)

Well, spring break starts Friday, so the timing's perfect.

JODI

So it's good?

MADDY

It's awesome –

*(RITZ doesn't say anything, but continues to look around.
MELANIE walks far left and falls.)*

MELANIE

Aah!

MADDY

Are you OK?

MELANIE

The floor is definitely soft over here.

TEPI

(Sending her flashlight towards MELANIE SL.)

Too bad...It looks like a long hallway and a staircase at the end – but...

MELANIE

(Getting up.)

Let's check it out!

TEPI

Nah, this room's good. This will work.

(A loud crash is heard offstage.)

TEPI

Who's there?

JODI

What's that?

(TEPI and JODI shine their lights SR and we see FINN'S face in the window. He is trying to figure out how to climb in but doesn't have a flashlight and becomes blinded by their lights.)

FINN

It's us. Turn off those lights!

(TEPI and JODI look at each other but don't say anything. They remain frozen with their flashlights on FINN.)

FINN

C'mon you guys, we know it's you.

JAY

(From behind FINN.)

We followed you here.

TEPI

Why?

MADDY

Seriously?

FINN

Turn your lights off!

JODI

Why are you here?

(FINN and JAY comically struggle to climb in and fall on the floor as they do so – partly because FINN is holding a football and JAY has a skateboard. The GIRLS have protectively moved into a cluster and lowered their lights, so they aren't shining in the boys' faces.)

FINN

Ow! You *could* help us out, you know.

TEPI

Why? You're not invited!

JAY

(Getting up.)

Oh, this is your place? You...what? Send out invitations when you're expecting visitors?

MADDY

Just tell us why you're here. Why did you follow us?

FINN

Because you were being all hushy-hushy secretive today.

JAY

You're terrible at discretion.

TEPI

Discretion?

JODI

He means keeping quiet about things – and he's right. You guys were obvious all day that we were doing something secret after school.

RITZ

We were not.

MADDY

Give me a break.

JAY

Seriously, we thought you *wanted* us to follow you!

TEPI

(To JODI.)

We were not obvious!

JODI

You were too.

FINN

Actually, it was all of you.

TEPI

Thank you.

JODI

Thank you!?

MELANIE

Whatever, they're here now. Let's just finish the recon mission and stick to the plan.

JODI

The plan didn't include Finn and Jay. The plan doesn't include *any* boys, if you recall.

JAY

What's your "plan?"

TEPI

Forget it.

FINN

Like Melanie said, we're here now...

JAY

(He coasts SL on his skateboard.)

This is pretty cool.

MELANIE

I wouldn't go over there.

FINN

So what's the story with this place?

JODI

There's not a story. It's just an old, abandoned building that my mom's real estate agency is listing. So in other words, I'm going to get killed if we're found here.

JAY

Aah!

(GIRLS laugh as JAY falls where MELANIE fell earlier.)

MELANIE

Told you not to go over there.

FINN

We won't tell anyone else about it.

TEPI

Guys, it's getting late. We have to do this.

MELANIE

Right.

MADDY.

Right.

JODI

What about Finn and Jay?

FINN

We're in.

TEPI

You don't even know what that means.

FINN

Doesn't matter. Whatever it is you're doing, we're in.

TEPI

Fine. Whatever.

JODI

Fine? Can we discuss this? Or vote? Or something?

MADDY

It's fine – they're cool.

MELANIE

Yeah, I mean, who cares? It's just a hang.

JODI

I'm the only one who stands to get in trouble.

TEPI

We can vote, if you want to.

(Pause. ALL look to JODI.)

JODI

(Giving in.)

Fine.

JAY

What about Ritz?

RITZ

What about me?

JAY

I'm just noticing you haven't said anything.

RITZ

I'm good. I just...

FINN

C'mon, Ritz, if the other girls don't care that we're here.

TEPI

I never said that.

JODI

Not really true.

RITZ

I don't care who's here. But just – don't any of you?...None of you?...

MADDY

What?

(Everyone looks at her expectantly.)

RITZ

Have a *feeling* about this place?

(No reaction.)

Like someone else is here?

MELANIE

You mean, like, wild animals?

MADDY

There probably *are* animals here.

RITZ

No, I mean...Never mind.

TEPI

This place is *abandoned*, Ritz.

JAY

(Considering this.)

Well, there could be homeless people living here.

MADDY

Homeless people? In Buttercreek?

JODI

Have you ever seen a homeless person around here?

FINN

Maybe meth heads live here!

JAY

Or drug dealers?

MADDY

You boys watch too much TV.

TEPI

This place is *abandoned!* We walked all around it – everything is all overgrown.

MELANIE

Yeah, it was like fighting to get through the overgrowth of Sleeping Beauty's castle around every window and door.

JODI

Or maybe this is an alternative Narnia?

FINN

Whoa, you girls read too many books.

RITZ

(Shaking her head – embarrassed she said anything)

Never mind.

(There is a pause as everyone looks around the room and at each other. They have all been slightly unnerved by the conversation.)

TEPI

(Breaking the silence)

OK, let's do this. We have to decide how to proceed.

JODI

Right. Let's make the rules.

TEPI

Starting with, nobody else can know about this place.

JODI

So no selfies or pictures or posting about it.

RITZ

And no coming here alone.

MADDY

Good idea – use the buddy system.

JODI

And this is just for a little while. We might not even get a whole week, 'cuz pretty soon they'll start cleaning this place up and showing it to buyers.

FINN

So we have a clubhouse for spring break!

MELANIE

This is so cool! Let's say clubhouse hours are anytime during the day.

JAY

Until at least ten o'clock. We can all stay out 'til 10:00.

MADDY

Ten o'clock?!

RITZ

I can't.

JODI

Let's just say 'til 9:00.

RITZ

At the latest.

MADDY

We need a name for the club.

MELANIE

Girolamo!

MADDY

Yes!

JAY
Girolamo?

FINN
What does that mean?

JODI
It's the name carved onto the front of the building.

MADDY
(Knowingly.)
The "façade."

MELANIE
It says, "Girolamo House".

FINN
Cool.

TEPI
So the rules are –

MELANIE
Wait. What if one of us chickens out about this or doesn't want to come back and decides to tell about it?

JAY
We should pay dues.

MADDY
Pay dues?

TEPI
What for?

JODI
Why would I pay anything? I'm the one who found this place, remember?

JAY
I'm just saying we should all leave something here that we care about. You know, so we have to come back. The dues are a deposit...like insurance.

JODI
Oh, OK. I get it. That's cool.

TEPI
Fine. The rules are: Everyone has to leave a deposit, no coming to the clubhouse alone, no posting about it and no new members - just us. Everyone agree?

(They all variously nod and voice their agreement.)

TEPI
Good. We meet back here tomorrow.

JODI

(Looking at the boys.)

And seriously, if you two bring anyone else...we'll kill you.

MADDY

'Til you're dead.

TEPI

Now get your deposits out and leave them here – on this sofa.

(ALL take out an item, considering and discussing what they are leaving behind.)

RITZ

(Taking the necklace from around her neck and putting it down.)

I'll leave this necklace - but it better still be here tomorrow.

MADDY

(Taking off her baseball cap and setting it next to the necklace.)

My hair must look awful.

MELANIE

(Taking off her jacket and setting it down.)

What are you doing, Jodi?

JODI

(Pulling off her socks.)

It's either my socks or my phone. But these are really nice, fuzzy socks, so they count.

JAY

(To FINN.)

Put your football down.

FINN

I'm not leaving my football.

JAY

Yes you are. It'll be right next to my skateboard.

(As JAY takes FINN'S football and sets it on the sofa next to his skateboard, he sees that TEPI has a handful of beef jerky, which he reaches for.)

JAY (cont.)

Hey, is that beef jerky?!

TEPI

(Slapping his hand as she sets it on the sofa.)

It's my insurance!

MADDY

What now?

TEPI

(Putting her hand out.)

To Girolamo.

GIRLS

(Putting their hands on hers.)

Girolamo.

BOYS

(Putting their hands in as well.)

Girolamo.

(LIGHTS flash.)

RITZ

What was that?

JAY

I thought the electricity was off in this place?

JODI

Let's get out of here!

(ALL head for the window. BLACKOUT.)

END OF SCENE

Scene 4

AT RISE: LIGHTS up to reveal ALL WITCHES standing, amazed, in the middle of the room.

LAYTHA

(With obvious irritation.)

Well? Who dares disturb us?! Mayliss, Glennay, Fellwyn, search the house.

(They exit UL.)

LAYTHA (cont.)

What can you tell me, Calamee?

CALAMEE

(Looking with interest at something she sees on the floor.)

Ooh! Spider!

(CALAMEE gleefully grabs the spider and eats it.)

LAYTHA

Focus, Calamee. I want answers.

CALAMEE

(Sniffing as she walks around the room.)

Air hangs heavy with the taste of youth...

LAYTHA

Youth? I hate children.

CALAMEE

(Walking to where the floor is soft.)

The wood is singing of a hunger denied.

LAYTHA

But why are we called back to our ancestral home? What mortals still know of us?

(Calling off.)

Sisters!

(MAYLISS, GLENNAY and FELLWYN re-enter, flustered.)

LAYTHA

Well?

(They shake their heads.)

Can none of you be helpful? Calamee has discovered that we were summoned here by children. *Children!* Can you imagine?

FELLWYN

(Aside to GLENNAY and TRIENNE)

Do you think she'll hurt them?

MAYLISS

Be quiet!

GLENNAY

Don't make her more angry than she already is.

LAYTHA

The question is why?

FELLWYN

Why would children summon us?

LAYTHA

Why would anyone summon us?

GLENNAY

Maybe it was an accident?

LAYTHA

Don't be clever! This will take some careful witchcraft. Don't worry, sisters, I won't allow our skills to be wasted on the ignorant.

MAYLISS

But why do you think –

LAYTHA

(Interrupting her.)

Why the incantation? I don't know. They must have –

CALAMEE

Wanton words of a fortune misunderstood.

LAYTHA

Of course. Calamee is right; it was stupid luck. We must be very careful. The spell of the incantation requires us to be here – but only until –

CALAMEE

(Looking at the seven items and picking one up, she interrupts LAYTHA.)

Until waxing visages clarify the needs of the Order.

(She picks up the lipstick, sniffs it, and is about to put it into her mouth when they all are stopped by a noise offstage. The WITCHES look at each other in alarm.)

LAYTHA

(In an urgent whisper to MAYLISS and GLENNAY.)

I told you to search the house! GO! Find out who made that noise and bring them to me.

END OF SELECTION