

# Usher:

## A TOTALLY TEEN COMEDY

**By Flip Kobler and Cindy Marcus**

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How many nods, nudges, winks and hat-tips to the great Master of Horror  
can you find in the following pages? Hmmmmmm?

## **USHER: A TOTALLY TEEN COMEDY**

By FLIP KOBLER and CINDY MARCUS

### CAST OF CHARACTERS (In Order of Appearance)

<u>THE LIVING</u>		<u># of lines</u>
WILLIAM .....	leader of the group and all-around good guy (but his love for Madeline clouds his judgment)	162
WILSON .....	thinks he's William; acts like, talks like and mimics Will; would give anything to be Will	39
MONTY .....	overly paranoid personality who sees insults in everything and lives for revenge	51
FORTUNATO .....	aristocrat with huge vocabulary; extremely lucky and delights in tormenting Monty	40
VALDEMAR.....	hypnotized guy; a bump on the head has entranced him so he'll do whatever he's told	11
RAVEN .....	valley chick who's always negative; not-so-secretly in love with William	67
ANNABEL LEE .....	sick girl who's been on death's doorstep more than once, which has left her with a love of life	72
ELEONORA.....	bad psychic always looking for a quick buck; turns out she's not so fake, and that freaks her out	51
DUPIN .....	fancies himself a detective; a Sam Spade type	32
SONIA .....	Russian exchange student who's scared of everything	25
PYM .....	highly over-caffeinated one whose blood sugar crashes; convinced none of this is real and all a dream	25
EDGAR .....	guilt-ridden bus driver whose deeds drive him to madness	31
RODERICK USHER.....	suicidally depressed owner of the house; the last of the Ushers	118

MADLINE USHER .....	Roderick’s sister; no-nonsense chick; in love with William	98
<u>THE GHOSTS</u>		
UNA .....	seventeenth-century <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> babe; victim of the time when women were powerless	26
EULALIE.....	romantic Southern belle; sees love everywhere	26
MAILLARD.....	insecure; speaks mostly in questions to seek approval; died in the 50s	16
MANN.....	60s hippie ghost	29
TARR .....	pirate	30
FETHER .....	Tarr’s brother and interpreter	25
TAMERLANE .....	hard-edged cowboy afraid to face his past	73
SWEDE.....	big strong silent guy; doesn’t speak but writes everything on his portable chalkboard	1
AL .....	tiny street urchin newsie	15
THE RED DEATH .....	evil-looking ghost who can’t see in his mask	5

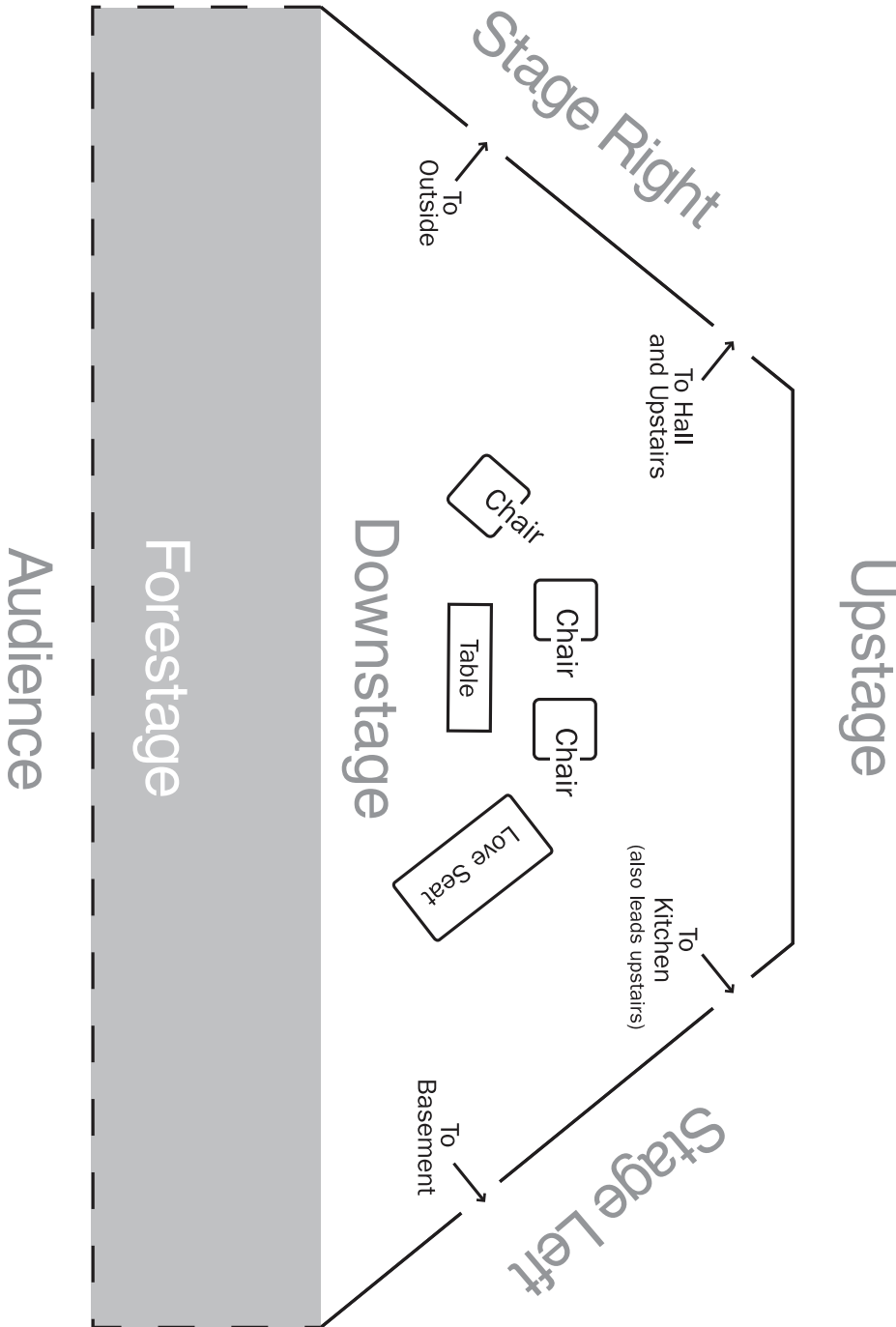
### SET DESCRIPTION

The set can be as simple or complicated as you wish. Two options are presented—the suggested set design on the next page and the original production set at the back of the playbook. The floor plan requires that actors are able to move from RIGHT to LEFT backstage without being seen. There are four main exits—DOWN RIGHT is the front door, UP RIGHT leads down a hall and upstairs, UP LEFT leads to the kitchen and also upstairs, and DOWN LEFT leads to the basement. While working doors are not necessary, opening and slamming doors is always fun.

Furniture is scattered about the room as desired. A few old-fashioned chairs, a loveseat and a small table will do the trick. A chandelier is a nice touch. There should be a light switch somewhere onstage. Use your imagination on how to decorate. Rent some old scary haunted house movies to get inspired.

A fun trick we’ve used is the “Portrait Gallery.” Since every self-respecting haunted house has pictures of the ancestors on the walls, we took digital photos of “The Ghost” cast—Una, Eulalie, et al—and ran them through a computer Photoshop program to get an old-time painted feel. Then we framed and hung them on the walls.

Usher: A Totally Teen Comedy - Suggested Set Design



## USHER: A TOTALLY TEEN COMEDY

### Scene One

1 A dark and stormy night. LIGHTNING FLASHES. SOUND EFFECT:  
THUNDER. Haunted housey stuff. OPTIONAL: The FRONT DOOR OPENS  
in a gale of spooky night. SONIA screams as she, WILLIAM, WILSON,  
MONTY, FORTUNATO, VALDEMAR, RAVEN, ANNABEL LEE, ELEONORA,  
5 DUPIN and PYM ENTER DOWN RIGHT and spread across stage, holding  
flashlights that beam through the darkness.

**WILLIAM:** Come on, everybody in. Let's go.

**WILSON:** Come on, everyone, let's go.

**WILLIAM:** Everybody inside. Everybody in.

10 **WILSON:** Out of the rain. Everybody inside.

**RAVEN:** Hello? Look at this. I'm soaked. My hair is totally gonna spaz.  
This is an almost Donna Karan dress. Ruined. I'm never going on  
another field trip. Nevermore. Nevermore, nevermore—

**WILLIAM:** Raven. Shut up.

15 **WILSON:** Yeah, shut up, Raven.

**WILLIAM:** Wilson.

**WILSON:** Yeah, Will.

**WILLIAM:** Stop copying me.

**WILSON:** Stop copying you?

20 **WILLIAM:** Right.

**WILSON:** Right.

**WILLIAM:** Quit it. I need a head count. Montresor—

**MONTY:** Hey, don't call me Montresor. It's Monty. I don't like Montresor,  
don't call me Montresor. Only my mother calls me Montresor—

25 **FORTUNATO:** Can you do a head count or not?

**MONTY:** Yeah, I can count. What, you think I can't count? You dissin'  
me? Huh?

**FORTUNATO:** I am merely inquiring about your willingness to count, not  
your ability to perform it.

30 **MONTY:** Yeah, I'm willing. What, you think I'm not willing? You raggin'  
on me?

**FORTUNATO:** Don't infer insult where none is implied.

**MONTY:** What's that mean? Is that a put down? Huh?

**WILLIAM:** Monty. Just get a head count. Please. Let's make sure  
35 everyone is safe out of the storm.

**PYM:** (*Jumps around like a jumping bean on Mountain Dew.*) Oooh,  
William. Will. Here, over here, man. Can I do it? I want to do it. I

1 can do a head count, let me do a head count. I'm goin' crazy here, man, I'm standing here for like a minute and I'm bored. Bored out of my skull. Here's me—Here's my skull. Let me count.

**WILLIAM:** Fine, yes, you count.

5 **PYM:** Great. Good choice. Won't be sorry. Here's sorry, here's you, waaaay over here. You want it by age, by height, alphabetical, SAT scores, seating assignment, weight, hair color— (*Begins jumping around, counting people on his fingers.*)

**WILLIAM:** Let's make sure everyone is safe out of the storm.

10 **PYM:** Right, great, good call. That's why you're the man. You are the man.

**WILLIAM:** (*As EDGAR ENTERS DOWN RIGHT.*) Edgar, what's the good word, man?

**EDGAR:** The distributor cap is missing. It must've come off somewhere. 15 The bus ain't going anywhere without it. (*Groans from ALL.*)

**RAVEN:** You are never driving the bus again. Nevermore.

**WILLIAM:** Where's Mr. Allan?

**EDGAR:** He went walking back up the road to look for the distributor cap.

20 **RAVEN:** In this storm? He could be killed. (*SOUND EFFECT: THUNDER. LIGHTNING FLASHES.*)

**SONIA:** AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!

**WILLIAM:** All right, settle down. Easy.

**WILSON:** Settle down. Easy.

25 **WILLIAM:** Wilson. (*At some point, MONTY turns on a floor lamp, and the FULL LIGHTS COME UP.*)

**RAVEN:** (*Looks around the house.*) Where is everybody? I mean, does anybody live here? What is the deal?

**PYM:** William. Everybody's here. Full count. Full boat. Full house, no 30 child left behind. What's next?

**FORTUNATO:** See? He was able to count.

**MONTY:** I could've counted. You sayin' I couldn't have? That a dig? Huh?

**WILLIAM:** Okay, listen up, everybody.

35 **WILSON:** Listen up.

**MONTY:** You're lucky I gotta listen up.

**FORTUNATO:** Yes, fortune smiles upon me. Ooooh, a lucky penny. (*Picks it up off the floor.*)

**MONTY:** Friggin' Fortunato. I'm gonna kill that guy, I swear.



1 **WILLIAM:** Until Mr. Allan gets back, I guess I'm in charge. Here's the stitch. The bus has broken down, so obviously making it to the State Thespian Conference is a bust.

**VALDEMAR:** (*Screams like a zombie.*) No. We have to make it to States.  
5 This is my senior year. I'm dead. That's it. Dead.

**WILLIAM:** Valdemar. It'll be okay. (*VALDEMAR is suddenly in a daze. WILLIAM waves a hand in front of his face, testing for a reaction.*)  
Vald? Hey, Valdemar. You all right?

**DUPIN:** Take a look at the goose egg on his noggin. Indicates he  
10 whacked his head when we went into the ditch. Facts say mild concussion, probably some hypnotic daze.

**MONTY:** What are you, Sam Spade?

**ANNABEL LEE:** No, he's August Dupin. Don't you remember, you sit  
behind him in History class. (*Cough, cough. Those nearby take a  
15 step backward to avoid catching typhoid or whatever from her.*)  
You're on the yearbook staff together—

**MONTY:** I know who he is.

**FORTUNATO:** Then why did you inquire as to his identity?

**MONTY:** You calling me stupid? Is that an insult? I'm keeping track,  
20 you know. (*Whips out a tablet and makes notes.*)

**WILLIAM:** Valdemar. Can you hear me?

**VALDEMAR:** Yes.

**WILLIAM:** Hit your head? (*VALDEMAR starts whacking his head.*) No,  
no, I'm not saying, "Hit your head," I'm asking if you did. Did you  
25 hit your head?

**VALDEMAR:** Yes.

**WILLIAM:** Okay, just relax. (*VALDEMAR collapses to the floor, totally  
relaxed.*) Whoa, not that much. Stand up. (*VALDEMAR rockets to his  
feet.*) I meant just chill out. (*VALDEMAR starts shivering like it's 30  
below.*) What's wrong with him?

**ELEONORA:** If you want, I can read his palm. Let you know if there's any  
brain damage. Only five bucks.

**WILLIAM:** No thanks.

**WILSON:** No thanks.

35 **WILLIAM:** (*Annoyed.*) Wilson!

**ELEONORA:** I can do Tarot cards for three. Three bucks. That's a  
bargain.

**DUPIN:** Looks like he's in a trance.

1 **WILLIAM:** *(Checking VALDEMAR'S head.)* Nasty bump, but that's about all. We'll get him to a doctor if we can get out of here. Does anybody have Triple A?

**ELEONORA:** Wait, William. I'm sensing something. A vibe from another  
5 dimension. Somebody here does have Triple A. Someone whose parents got it for them in case of emergency. Someone who is in this room. They're wet.

**RAVEN:** Put a sock in it, Eleanora. We ALL have Triple A.

**ELEONORA:** I'm sensing hostility... somewhere... *(RAVEN whacks her.)*  
10 Getting closer now.

**PYM:** Ooooh, William, I'll look for a phone. We'll find a phone, boom, dial it, boom, get Triple A and boom—we're out of here. Here's here, and here's us. Waaaaay out of here. Phone right—

**WILLIAM:** Yeah, but we all got— *(Holds up a cell phone, but PYM grabs  
15 DUPIN and runs OUT UP LEFT. EVERYONE digs out a cell phone and dials as ELEONORA wanders the room, picking up vibes.)* I got no signal.

**WILSON:** No signal.

**MONTY:** I can't get a signal.

20 **FORTUNATO:** Perhaps you're standing too far away from the satellite.

**MONTY:** That a cut down?

**RAVEN:** No signal. But I can still take pictures. *(Snaps a phone picture of herself then looks at it.)* Ugh. Generic shampoo. Look. *(Shows it to SONIA.)*

25 **SONIA:** AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!

**PYM:** *(ENTERS UP LEFT with DUPIN.)* William, we found a phone. We did. We looked left, we looked right, we looked up and down, and then—Bam! There it was. Phone, just sittin' there.

**DUPIN:** But it's deader than Marley's ghost.

30 **WILLIAM:** Phone lines are down?

**DUPIN:** Lines seem jake. Judging by the dust on the phone, I'd say they haven't been used in over 319 days.

**WILLIAM:** Three hundred nineteen days?

**WILSON:** Three hundred nineteen days?

35 **WILLIAM:** Wilson.

**MONTY:** You can't know that.

**DUPIN:** Dust fall is as consistent as Republican tax cuts. Doesn't take Stephen Hawking to judge the density of dust and get an accurate reading of usage. Piece of cake. *(ANNABEL LEE coughs. EVERYONE  
40 backs off like she's contagious.)*



1 **WILLIAM:** Annabel Lee, you all right?  
**ANNABEL LEE:** Sure. I think I'm catching a cold. (*Coughs in his face.*)  
**WILLIAM:** All right, people, the bus is broken down. We can't get a  
phone signal, and the roads are washed out. Looks like we're going  
5 to have to stay here tonight.  
**RAVEN:** Where exactly is here? Our genius bus driver was driving in  
circles for an hour.  
**EDGAR:** It was hard to see in the rain.  
**ELEONORA:** I'm sensing we're in a house. For ten bucks I'll see if the  
10 spirit of the home can tell us where we are. (*Dramatic.*) Oh, Great  
Spirit of the Mansion, hear me. Tell us where we are.  
**RODERICK'S VOICE:** (*From OFF UP RIGHT.*) You're in the house of Usher.  
(*RODERICK ENTERS UP RIGHT with a noose around his neck.*)  
**SONIA:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!  
15 **WILLIAM:** Roderick.  
**RODERICK:** William?  
**RAVEN:** (*To SONIA.*) What is with you?  
**SONIA:** I am sorry. I am a little bit—how you say?—scared.  
**RAVEN:** Scared. Just like that.  
20 **SONIA:** Da.  
**RAVEN:** You never got scared in Russia?  
**SONIA:** Nothing to fear in Russia.  
**RAVEN:** Well, the exchange student program lasts a whole semester.  
**SONIA:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!  
25 **RAVEN:** It's not that long.  
**SONIA:** Oh.  
**RAVEN:** So, relax, okay?  
**SONIA:** Right. I am—how you say?—chillin'.  
**RAVEN:** Chillin'. Just like that.  
30 **RODERICK:** William!  
**WILLIAM:** It's good to see you, man. (*They hug. WILLIAM pats RODERICK  
on the back twice.*)  
**MONTY:** William, you know this guy?  
**DUPIN:** Obviously. I'd say they've been pals since kindergarten.  
35 **MONTY:** You can't know that.  
**DUPIN:** Pie easy. Guys don't hug other guys unless they've known each  
other a long time. William patted the guy's back twice. Popular  
move 12 years ago, which means they met in kindergarten.

- 1 **WILLIAM:** Hey, everybody. This is my friend Roderick. I've known him since kindergarten.
- FORTUNATO:** *(To MONTY.)* Ah-ha.
- MONTY:** What's that mean? That's going in the book. *(Marks down this latest insult.)*
- 5 **WILLIAM:** Everybody, this is Roderick Usher.
- RAVEN:** Usher? Like in Madeline Usher?
- RODERICK:** She's my sister.
- RAVEN:** I didn't know Madeline had a brother.
- 10 **ELEONORA:** For ten bucks I could've told ya.
- RAVEN:** For five bucks will you shut up?
- WILLIAM:** He's doesn't hang with us peasants. He goes to some ritzy, cushy boarding school upstate.
- RODERICK:** It's not cushy. And it's without ritz.
- 15 **WILLIAM:** But it is upstate. Everybody say hi. *(EVERYONE ad-libs hellos.)* This is Monty, Eleonora, Edgar, Valdemar, Raven, Dupin, Fortunato, Annabel Lee. Pym. Sonia.
- ANNABEL LEE:** Hey. *(Cough, cough.)*
- RODERICK:** Hey.
- 20 **WILSON:** I'm William Wilson.
- WILLIAM:** No, you're not. You're just Wilson. I'm William.
- WILSON:** It's the same thing.
- WILLIAM:** No, it's not. For the last time, you are not me. Do you understand?
- 25 **WILSON:** Yes.
- WILLIAM:** "Yes" you understand, or "yes" you are me? Not.
- WILSON:** I don't understand.
- WILLIAM:** You don't understand what I just said, or you don't understand that you are not me?
- 30 **WILSON:** What?
- WILLIAM:** No, look, just say it. Just say "you are not me."
- WILSON:** You are not me.
- WILLIAM:** No, I am me. Say "I am not you." Say it!
- VALDEMAR:** I am not you.
- 35 **WILLIAM:** Not you. Him.
- WILSON:** I am not him.
- WILLIAM:** I know you're not him.
- WILSON:** We seem a little confused.



1 **WILLIAM:** There is no we. I'm me. You're you, he's him.  
**DUPIN:** This is my watch. (*SOUND EFFECT: THUNDER and LIGHTNING FLASHES.*)  
**SONIA:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

5 **RAVEN:** What now?  
**SONIA:** I am not liking storm. Or all things—how you say?—spooky.  
**RAVEN:** Spooky. Just like that.  
**WILLIAM:** So what are you doing back?  
**RODERICK:** My sister's been sick.

10 **WILLIAM:** I know, she hasn't been at school for a while.  
**RODERICK:** Yeah. I came back to take care of... her.  
**ANNABELL LEE:** Oh, that is so sweet. (*Takes the noose off RODERICK.*)  
So what's with this?  
**RODERICK:** Nothing. I was just—it's a new fashion. Stupid. I hate it.  
15 (*Tosses the noose aside.*) So what are you all doing here?  
**WILLIAM:** We were on a field trip. Bus broke down. Our teacher is still  
out in the rain, and we can't get any cell reception.  
**RODERICK:** Yeah, can't get a signal here. Looks like you're stuck here  
until the storm passes. (*Groans from the GROUP.*) But don't worry.  
20 Mi casa es su casa. We have plenty of rooms. Make yourselves at  
home. Such as it is.  
**PYM:** Do you have any coffee? Everybody could use a cup of coffee  
right now, I know I could. Let's put that at the top of our list of stuff  
to do. Get coffee. (*Gestures.*) Here's the list—bam—here's coffee,  
25 right up top—  
**DUPIN:** Last thing you need is a cuppa joe.  
**RODERICK:** Rooms are upstairs. (*Moves toward UP RIGHT, ushering  
them out.*) Come on, I'll get you blankets and stuff.  
**WILLIAM:** Come on guys, hop to it. (*VALDEMAR starts hopping OFF UP  
30 RIGHT. PYM follows VALDEMAR OUT.*)  
**RAVEN:** (*As she moves UP RIGHT.*) Sure we're not a problem?  
**RODERICK:** Nice to have the company. I've been here alone for a while.  
Weird that you guys broke down so close to the house.  
**WILLIAM:** I know, what are the odds, huh?

35 **WILSON:** What are the odds?  
**WILLIAM:** Wilson! (*ALL except MONTY, FORTUNATO, DUPIN and EDGAR  
EXIT UP RIGHT.*)  
**MONTY:** (*Picks up a discarded book off the floor. He blows off the dust.*)  
We're stuck in this creepy place for the night. Talk about rotten luck.  
40 (*Throws the book over his shoulder, and FORTUNATO catches it.*)

1 **FORTUNATO:** (*Waves a bill he got from the book.*) Hey look, there was 50 bucks in here. Huh.

**MONTY:** (*Aside.*) I'm going to get that guy, I swear. (*EXITS UP RIGHT, furiously writing in his tablet, leaving DUPIN and EDGAR ONSTAGE.*)

5 **DUPIN:** Something ain't jake here. We drive around in the middle of nowhere and then just happen to break down half a mile from his buddy's house? That seem logical to you?

**EDGAR:** Probably just a coincidence.

**DUPIN:** Yeah. (*EXITS UP RIGHT. EDGAR is left alone. He looks around guiltily and pulls a distributor cap from his pocket. He looks for a place to hide it. Puts it under the sofa and follows the OTHERS OUT UP RIGHT.*)

**RED DEATH:** (*Floats ON DOWN LEFT. SOUND EFFECT: SPOOKY MUSIC. Laughs maniacally.*) Mwuaaha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha. Enjoy the night, foolish  
15 mortals. It'll be the last one you ever see alive. Mwuaah-ha-ha-ha-ha. (*Walks into a door or piece of furniture.*) OW! Son of a—man, that hurts. Ow, geez. I can't see a thing in this stupid mask. (*Staggers OFF UP RIGHT as ELEONORA and RAVEN ENTER UP RIGHT.*)

**ELEONORA:** Did you hear something?

20 **RAVEN:** No.

**ELEONORA:** I thought I heard something.

**RAVEN:** No. Roderick said there's nobody else here. We're all alone in the house. (*They head OUT UP LEFT as MAILLARD, TAMERLANE, EULALIE, SWEDE, AL and UNA come sneaking ON DOWN LEFT in major clumpage. AL carries a satchel of newspapers throughout the play.*)

25 **MAILLARD:** I heard a voice. Who else heard a voice?

**EULALIE:** You think somebody's in our house, darlin'?

**UNA:** Me thinks we should return to yonder basement.

**MAILLARD:** Yeah, that's probably a good idea. How good an idea is  
30 that?

**TAMERLANE:** Heck no, I ain't a-goin' back down there. I ain't hidin' in my own house no more.

**AL:** I'm wit you, bub. (*The GHOSTS EXIT UP LEFT as MONTY and FORTUNATO ENTER UP RIGHT.*)

35 **MONTY:** I wonder if there's a basement in this place.

**FORTUNATO:** All architecture of this period has sub cellars.

**MONTY:** Let's go see it. You and me. Come on.

**FORTUNATO:** I decline.

**MONTY:** No, come on. We'll look in the basement. The basement. Oh,  
40 come on. (*FORTUNATO heads back UP RIGHT, forcing MONTY to follow just as the GHOSTS RE-ENTER UP LEFT.*)

1 **MAILLARD:** I know I heard a voice that time. Anybody else? Show of hands? (*The OTHERS raise their hands.*) Who thinks the basement is sounding like a good idea?

**UNA:** Yes. I fear for our safety.

5 **TAMERLANE:** What could happen to us? Come on.

**AL:** Let's blow dis joint. (*GHOSTS EXIT DOWN LEFT as ELEONORA drags RAVEN back ON UP LEFT.*)

**ELEONORA:** I'm telling you, there's something here. I sense a presence from another dimension.

10 **RAVEN:** I sense serious therapy in your near future.

**ELEONORA:** I'm telling you, my Spidey sense is tingling.

**RAVEN:** Your Spidey sense sucks.

**ELEONORA:** No, I have a gift.

**RAVEN:** No, you don't. Remember the time I paid you 20 bucks to read

15 my palm, and you said I'd ace midterms?

**ELEONORA:** Oh, yeah. How was summer school?

**RAVEN:** And the time you used the Ouija board to predict who'd be prom queen? And Robin Crowe won.

**ELEONORA:** Well excuse me, Raven, if I'm not an ornithologist.

20 **RAVEN:** The point is, you have no talent.

**ELEONORA:** Are you saying I'm just using this whole psychic thing as a way to get attention from my peers and deal with the isolation of teen angst? You think I'm a failure?

**RAVEN:** Yes.

25 **ELEONORA:** Oh, thank god. (*They hug.*) I thought there were ghosts here.

**RODERICK:** (*ENTERS UP RIGHT. He has bandages across his wrists.*) What are you doing down here?

**SONIA'S VOICE:** (*From OFF UP RIGHT.*) Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

30 **RAVEN:** She thought she heard a ghost.

**RODERICK:** Ghosts? That's silly. Ghosts. (*GHOSTS ENTER DOWN LEFT. This time it's the whole gang, including MANN, TARR and FETHER. ELEONORA and RAVEN don't see them, but RODERICK does and tries to cover.*) In this house? Ha. Ha ha. No ghosts here.

35 **RAVEN:** That's what I'm telling her. What happened to your wrists?

**RODERICK:** (*Hiding the bandages.*) Nothing. You should go to bed. Things will look better in the morning. Good night.

**RAVEN:** Night. (*Leads ELEONORA OFF UP RIGHT as RODERICK turns to the GHOSTS.*)

1 **RODERICK:** What are you doing? They almost saw you.  
**TAMERLANE:** I knew we had a posse of freeloaders.  
**AL:** Now you're on de trolley.  
**RODERICK:** You're ghosts. Can't you stay invisible?

5 **MADLINE:** (*ENTERS DOWN LEFT and crosses to RODERICK.*) What's going on?  
**RODERICK:** Hey, sis.  
**MADLINE:** Who are you talking to?  
**RODERICK:** Our ancestors.

10 **MADLINE:** Hey, guys.  
**EULALIE:** Evenin', sugar.  
**AL:** Hi-ya, bub.  
**TARR:** Yaaaargh. (*SWEDE holds up his chalkboard and writes "Hi."*)  
**MADLINE:** I thought I heard someone else.

15 **RODERICK:** Yeah, get this. William and a busload of his friends broke down. They're stuck here for the night.  
**MADLINE:** You're kidding.  
**RODERICK:** No.  
**MADLINE:** What a coincidence. (*SOUND EFFECT: THUNDER. LIGHTNING FLASHES.*)

20 **SONIA:** (*Runs IN UP RIGHT, across the stage and OUT UP LEFT, oblivious to the OTHERS.*) Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!  
**MADLINE:** You better go check on 'em.  
**RODERICK:** Can't I stay here with you guys? I feel better when I'm around you. (*SOUND EFFECT: THUNDER. LIGHTNING FLASHES.*)

25 **SONIA'S VOICE:** (*From OFF UP LEFT.*) Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!  
**MADLINE:** Go, I'll be right behind you. (*RODERICK EXITS UP RIGHT. To GHOSTS.*) All right, listen. I don't want any of you guys making yourselves visible. They're our guests. No spooking them.

30 **Agreed?**  
**TAMERLANE:** We don't need a posse of freeloaders crowdin' up the penderosa.  
**TARR:** Yarrgh.  
**MANN:** Yeah, who invited them here, man?

35 **UNA:** I knowest t'was not I. (*SWEDE draws a question mark.*)  
**EULALIE:** Me neither, darlin'.  
**AL:** I ain't holdin' the bag.  
**MAILLARD:** Who did?



1 **MADLINE:** (*EVERYONE looks at her. Gulps.*) Okay, technically speaking, it wasn't an invitation.

**TAMERLANE:** You asked them here?

**MADLINE:** No. No, pfft. I sort of arranged it is all.

5 **EULALIE:** What are you thinkin', sugar?

**MADLINE:** Look, I know that you are all my ancestors. (*They ad-lib agreement.*) And Roderick and I were raised to respect our elders. (*More agreement.*) But I think you're looking at this the wrong way.

10 **MAILLARD:** (*Bends over and looks through his legs.*) She's right. Hey guys, if you do this, it looks like the chandelier's on the floor. How cool is that?

**MADLINE:** Maybe this is your chance to break the curse? (*SOUND EFFECT: THUNDER. LIGHTNING FLASHES.*)

15 **SONIA:** (*Runs IN UP LEFT and across stage, still oblivious to the OTHERS, and EXITS UP RIGHT.*) Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

**TAMERLANE:** Reckon she's gonna do that a lot?

**UNA:** What sayest thou about breaking.... THE CURSE?

**MADLINE:** What do you all have in common?

**MAILLARD:** Other than the fact we're all dead?

20 **MADLINE:** Yes, other than that.

**TARR:** We're all related, says I.

**EULALIE:** What'd you say, darlin'?

**FETHER:** We're all related, says he.

**TARR:** Yarrrrrgh.

25 **FETHER:** Yaaaargh.

**MADLINE:** Yes, you're all Ushers. What else?

**UNA:** Oooh, I am good at games. Canst thou give me a hint?

**EULALIE:** We all died very young, darlin'.

**MADLINE:** Exactly.

30 **UNA:** That was not a hint. Thou guessed it.

**MADLINE:** You were all robbed of your life and are doomed to wander the house. You can't leave here until we break the Usher curse.

**AL:** You're some kind of dame, you can do that.

**MADLINE:** I think we have a chance.

35 **UNA:** To be free from this house. I've been here nigh on 200 years. We can finally move on.

**MADLINE:** Will you help me? (*SWEDE writes "Heck yeah!"*) Don't show yourselves to the others. Don't scare them in any way. We need them here. Just make sure they don't leave.

1 **WILLIAM'S VOICE:** *(From OFF UP RIGHT.)* Maddy? Is that you?  
**MADELINE:** Go, go, go. *(Shoos the GHOSTS OFF DOWN LEFT as WILLIAM ENTERS.)*  
**WILLIAM:** *(Lights up at the sight of MADELINE.)* Madeline?

5 **MADELINE:** William!  
**WILLIAM:** *(Runs to her, scoops her up and kisses her.)* Oh man, I missed you. You haven't been to school in like weeks. Are you okay?  
**MADELINE:** Oh, I'm feeling much better now.  
**WILLIAM:** You've been really sick, huh?

10 **MADELINE:** I was. But I'm past it now.  
**WILLIAM:** Was it a cold? Flu?  
**MADELINE:** I don't know, but I'm not contagious. *(They kiss again.)* You brought everyone here.  
**WILLIAM:** Just like I promised. Now you want to tell me why I did it?

15 **MADELINE:** Because you love me and would do anything for me.  
**WILLIAM:** Yeah, but besides that. I faked the bus breaking down like you asked. I got everyone here like you asked. I didn't ask like you asked. Now I need to ask.  
**MADELINE:** It's my brother.

20 **WILLIAM:** Roderick?  
**MADELINE:** I'm very worried about him.  
**WILLIAM:** Okay. But what does that have to do with us?  
**MADELINE:** He needs to meet someone. I thought this would be a great way for him to meet someone.

25 **WILLIAM:** And this was the easiest way you could think of?  
**MADELINE:** It's complicated.  
**WILLIAM:** More complicated than making a bus break down and practically kidnapping a bunch of kids? You didn't think MySpace might've worked?

30 **MADELINE:** You know my brother. He's so dark and gloomy. Will you help me?  
**WILLIAM:** Of course. I'd die for you.  
**MADELINE:** Don't say that. I'll bring Rod in here—you get... Raven. We'll start with her and see what happens.

35 **WILLIAM:** Okay.  
**MADELINE:** And don't tell either of them what we're up to. He gets nervous enough. He'll freak out if he knows we're trying to hook him up.  
**WILLIAM:** My lips are sealed.



1 **MADELINE:** Let's see. (*Kisses him.*) Right back here, okay? (*EXITS UP RIGHT, leaving WILLIAM alone ONSTAGE. After a beat, EDGAR ENTERS UP RIGHT, checking to see if the coast is clear.*)

**EDGAR:** William, pssst. Come here.

5 **WILLIAM:** Edgar?

**EDGAR:** Do you know what you're doing?

**WILLIAM:** I think so.

**EDGAR:** I could get fired, you know. Lose my license. Sabotaging a bus is a serious crime.

10 **WILLIAM:** I know, and I owe you. But it was the only way to get everybody here.

**EDGAR:** You hear that? (*Looks around to find the unheard sound.*)

**WILLIAM:** What?

**EDGAR:** I hear something. I don't know what, but something.

15 **WILLIAM:** I don't hear anything. But listen, dude, you can't tell anyone that the bus isn't broken. We gotta stay here the whole night. By tomorrow, everything will be fine.

**EDGAR:** All right, but if I get caught, I'm telling everyone you made me do this.

20 **WILLIAM:** Fair enough.

**EDGAR:** What is that noise? (*EXITS UP LEFT to investigate. WILLIAM EXITS UP RIGHT.*)

**RED DEATH:** (*ENTERS UP RIGHT.*) Foolish mortals. You can hide here in this house, but you will not escape the Red Death. The Red Death comes for everyone. No one is— (*Pulls up the mask and gulps for*  
25 *breath.*) Dang man, how does Spiderman breathe in this thing? I gotta get a different mask. (*Staggers OFF DOWN LEFT.*)

End of Scene One

## Scene Two

Immediately following. ANNABEL LEE is dragged ON UP RIGHT by ELEONORA, PYM bouncing behind.

30 **ELEONORA:** I'm telling you, this house is haunted. I know these things.

**ANNABEL LEE:** I'm sure (*Cough, cough.*) everything is fine.

**ELEONORA:** It's not. We have to get out of here. (*She and ANNABEL EXIT DOWN RIGHT.*)

35 **PYM:** Wait. Don't worry, I have it all figured out. I'm on it. (*Gestures.*) Here's it—this is me. Bam. On it. (*We hear the DOOR OPEN and STORM SOUNDS—pouring rain, thunder, howling winds, etc. DOOR SLAMS.*)

1 **ELEONORA:** (*RE-ENTERS DOWN RIGHT with ANNABEL LEE.*) It is way too dangerous out there in that storm. We're trapped. In a haunted house.

**PYM:** See, now that's the thing. It's not a haunted house. There's not  
5 really a storm happening—I know exactly what's going on. There's something going on, and I'm the one that knows what it is. It's so obvious. It's like, duh. Duh. Bus breaking down, creepy old mansion. Stormy night, know what it is? Huh? Do ya?

**ANNABEL LEE:** What?

10 **PYM:** It's a dream. That's all. I'm having a dream. I'm dreaming. I'm dreaming big time.

**ELEONORA:** You think you're dreaming.

**PYM:** Absolutely. Right now I'm on the bus, sound asleep, and this is just my imagination. My subconscious, my Id doin' its iddy thing.  
15 I'm snoozin', and you're all part of my dream. How cool is that? You are a dream within a dream.

**ELEONORA:** How can you be asleep, you drank like six venti espressos.

**PYM:** Caffeine doesn't affect me at all. Not at all. Zero effect, none.  
20 Nada. Zippo. (*Rubs his head and starts to lose energy.*) Although... I am getting a headache. And my blood sugar feels a little low. They didn't have any coffee. You have any candy or anything? Snickers? No. I should find some. Just a little sugar lift. Yeah. (*EXITS UP LEFT, leaving ELEONORA and ANNABEL LEE to stare after him.*)

25 **ANNABEL LEE:** I'm sure there's nothing to be scared of.

**TAMERLANE:** (*ENTERS DOWN LEFT with the other GHOSTS, who still can't be seen.*) BOOO!

**ELEONORA:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

**SONIA:** (*ENTERS UP RIGHT running across stage.*) Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!  
30 (*EXITS DOWN LEFT.*)

**TARR:** Getting on my nerves, by thunder. (*SWEDE writes "YARGH!"*)

**TAMERLANE:** What now?

**FETHER:** Getting on his nerves, says he.

**TARR:** By thunder.

35 **FETHER:** Yarrrrgh.

**ELEONORA:** Did you hear that?

**UNA:** What art thou doing?

**TAMERLANE:** (*To the other GHOSTS.*) Relax, ya'll. We're ghosts. They can't see us lessen we want 'em to. (*Speaks right into ANNABEL LEE'S face. She doesn't respond.*) Boogity-boogity nya-nay-  
40 oooooeeuuuuuuwww hangana.

1 **ANNABEL LEE:** I didn't hear anything.  
**TAMERLANE:** See?  
**MANN:** Far out, man. (*Stands on one side of ELEONORA with TARR on the other and clucks like a chicken. TARR makes stupid donkey sounds.*)

5 **ELEONORA:** Are you telling me you can't hear that? It sounds like a barnyard.  
**MANN:** I think the chick knows I'm here.  
**TARR:** It's not you, says I. It's me, says I.  
**MANN:** What?

10 **FETHER:** Not you, says he, it's him, says he.  
**TARR:** Yarrrrgh.  
**FETHER:** But it's not you, says I, it's me, says I.  
**MANN:** Oh, right. Like she'd hear you.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** You don't hear anything.

15 **MANN:** See.  
**TARR:** I could be heard, by thunder. (*SOUND EFFECT: THUNDER.*)  
**SONIA:** (*ENTERS DOWN LEFT.*) Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah. (*Runs across stage. ANNABEL LEE and ELEONORA follow her OFF UP RIGHT. EULALIE and UNA turn on TAMERLANE and crew.*)

20 **EULALIE:** Have you lost your mind, dumplin'? We DON'T want to scare them. They might all go runnin' off. We want to KEEP them here.  
**AL:** 'Atta girl!  
**UNA:** Me thinks we best follow, lest they find another escape.  
**AL:** Let's scam.

25 **EULALIE:** You four, stop haunting the living! (*She, AL, UNA, SWEDE and MAILLARD EXIT DOWN LEFT, leaving MANN, TARR, FETHER and TAMERLANE ONSTAGE.*)  
**TAMERLANE:** (*Turns to the OTHERS.*) Mann, see if you can find some chain. Anything loud. Tarr, get some old sheets or something to  
30 make us scary.  
**MANN:** I'm a little confused here, man.  
**TARR:** Yarrrrgh.  
**FETHER:** Yarrrrgh, says he.  
**TAMERLANE:** Yeah, I got that one. We're gonna scare the molasses  
35 out of the living.  
**MANN:** Whoa, man, didn't they just say we DON'T want to scare the living, man?  
**TAMERLANE:** That's what they said, 'cause I reckon it's what they want. That what you want, Mann?

1 **MANN:** I don't know, man.

**TAMERLANE:** How about you, Tarr? Fether? You want the living to stick around?

**TARR:** It'll break the curse, by thunder.

5 **FETHER:** Break the curse, says he.

**TAMERLANE:** Exactly. Put a mind to it. What d'ya reckon'll happen if we break the curse?

**MANN:** We won't be trapped in the house, man.

**TARR:** We can finally move on, says I.

10 **FETHER:** We can move on.

**TARR:** Yarrgh.

**FETHER:** Yarrgh.

**TAMERLANE:** Move on to where? *(That idea stops the OTHERS.)* The big ponderosa in the sky? I don't reckon' I'll be too welcome. I didn't exactly lead a good life while I's alive. What about you, Tarr?

15

Fether? How'd you boys die?

**TARR:** Plunderin' a Spanish Galleon.

**FETHER:** Shanghai'd was we.

**TAMERLANE:** Plunderin'? That sound like you were ridin' north? What about you, Mann?

20

**MANN:** Oh, man, I just fell in with the wrong band, man. I didn't know they were gonna hold up that gas station, man. I just thought we were gonna make groovy music.

**TAMERLANE:** And I's younger than Billy the Kid when I stuck up my first train. I didn't wanna, but them Drucker Boys was some bad hombres. I figgered it was easier to be with 'em than against 'em. We done some bad things. Boys, I think we're headin' south.

25

**MANN:** Oh, man.

**TARR:** Yarrgh.

30 **FETHER:** Yarrgh, says he.

**TAMERLANE:** Which is why I reckon we can't move on. An afterlife here ain't perfect, but I figger it's a mite better than fire and brimstone.

**MANN:** Oh, man, I don't even know what brimstone is, man.

**TAMERLANE:** And I don't figger to burn. So we can't let the curse be broken.

35

**TARR:** How do you figger to scuttle their plans?

**FETHER:** How you figger to scuttle their plans, says he.

**TARR:** Yarrgh.

**FETHER:** Yargh.

1 **TAMERLANE:** We get rid of the mortals.  
**MANN:** Right, man. How do we do that, man?  
**TAMERLANE:** By usin' our unique talents.  
**FETHER:** You want me to tie 'em in a double shank knot?  
5 **TARR:** Blow them down?  
**MANN:** Man, I can play the organ solo from "Ina Gadda Davita" over  
and over.  
**TAMERLANE:** No. Our NEW talents. We're ghosts, right?  
**MANN:** Right on.  
10 **TARR:** Yargh.  
**TAMERLANE:** So we act like ghosts. We haunt them.  
**MANN:** Oh, man, I've always wanted to do that, man.  
**TAMERLANE:** We scare the grits outta them, and they go running into  
15 the night.  
**MANN:** Oh, man, and this place gets a killer rep as a haunted house.  
Nobody will ever come back, man.  
**TAMERLANE:** And our problem is solved. Gentlemen, start your  
haunting.  
20 **TARR:** Yarrgh.  
**FETHER:** No, like this. OooooooooOoooooOooooh.  
**TARR:** Yarrggggghh.  
**FETHER:** No, OooooOooooOooooh.  
**TARR:** YaaaAAAAARGggggh.  
25 **TAMERLANE:** Better. We'll work on it. *(They EXIT DOWN LEFT.)*  
**SONIA:** *(RE-ENTERS UP RIGHT, peers around. From OFFSTAGE we hear  
TARR scream "YARRRRRGGGGH!")* Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah! *(EXITS UP RIGHT  
again.)*  
**MADELINE:** *(ENTERS with RODERICK UP LEFT.)* Why did you have your  
30 head in the oven?  
**RODERICK:** I was trying to dry my hair.  
**MADELINE:** You could've been killed.  
**RODERICK:** But I wasn't.  
**MADELINE:** Because I came in.  
35 **RODERICK:** Yeah, lucky me.  
**MADELINE:** Next time I might not be there. It's dangerous.  
**RODERICK:** I know. I thought I smelled gas, which is why I was checking.  
You're overreacting. Yeesh. *(WILLIAM ENTERS UP RIGHT with a  
confused RAVEN in tow.)*

1 **MADELINE:** Look, there's a girl over there.  
**RODERICK:** Oh, no.  
**MADELINE:** No, I'm not hooking you up. She ah... needs help. Right.  
She ah... um.... sprained her ankle. Yeah, and she needs you to  
5 look at it.  
**RODERICK:** Why me?  
**MADELINE:** You were a boy scout. Just give her some tender, loving  
attention.  
**RODERICK:** I'll go get some bandages.  
10 **MADELINE:** NO! Don't leave... she's—scared of bandages. Childhood  
trauma thing. Tragic "Mummy on Halloween" accident. Oh, look, here  
she comes. *(EXITS DOWN LEFT with a thumbs up to WILLIAM.)*  
**WILLIAM:** Here we go.  
**RAVEN:** Here we go, what?  
15 **WILLIAM:** Just wait here for me. I'll be right back. Oh, look, here's  
my friend Roderick. Hi, Roderick, this is Raven. Bye. *(EXITS DOWN  
LEFT, leaving them alone in awkwardness.)*  
**RAVEN:** So, hi.  
**RODERICK:** Hi.  
20 **RAVEN:** *(Refers to the silence.)* This is painful, huh.  
**RODERICK:** Let me see it. *(Meaning her ankle, he advances, trying to  
help with what he believes is an injured ankle. But since she doesn't  
have one, it becomes a runaway train of misunderstandings.)*  
**RAVEN:** Excuse me?  
25 **RODERICK:** Show it to me.  
**RAVEN:** Get away from me.  
**RODERICK:** Oh, don't be such a baby.  
**RAVEN:** Hello? I've been a teen, sans bopper, for a while now.  
**RODERICK:** Then you're old enough to handle this.  
30 **RAVEN:** What kind of girl do you think I am?  
**RODERICK:** A scared one.  
**RAVEN:** I'm not scared.  
**RODERICK:** You need this.  
**RAVEN:** I do not!  
35 **RODERICK:** It won't hurt.  
**RAVEN:** Get away.  
**RODERICK:** I've done it lots of times.  
**RAVEN:** How romantic.



1 **RODERICK:** The longer we wait, the worse it'll get.  
**RAVEN:** Are you threatening me?  
**RODERICK:** It's for your own good.  
**RAVEN:** Get out of here.

5 **RODERICK:** Look, if we don't get on this, you might not ever be able to use it again.  
**RAVEN:** Back off, freak.  
**RODERICK:** I don't want to force you—  
**RAVEN:** Oh, just try—

10 **RODERICK:** But if I have to, I'll get Ace and wrap you up. (*Drops to his knees and grabs her ankle. She stomps down hard on his fingers.*)  
Yeeeeeeow!  
**RAVEN:** Come on, tough guy, let's see what you got. (*Gets into Karate attack position. RODERICK just stutters in pain and quickly EXITS UP LEFT. That's when WILLIAM RE-ENTERS DOWN LEFT.*)

15 **WILLIAM:** Rod. Wait. (*To RAVEN.*) So... how'd it go?  
**RAVEN:** Your friend is whacked.  
**WILLIAM:** No, he's a good guy. You just have to get to know him. Give him a chance.

20 **RAVEN:** He doesn't need a chance. He needs a padded room.  
**WILLIAM:** I think you'd really like him.  
**RAVEN:** He's not my type, Will.  
**WILLIAM:** What is your type?  
**RAVEN:** (*Flirts like a maniac.*) I like strong guys. Compassionate guys.

25 Guys who know what they want. You know what you want, don't you?  
**WILLIAM:** Yeah, Raven, I do. (*She leans in for a kiss, but—*) Her name is Madeline.  
**RAVEN:** Right. Haven't seen her around.

30 **WILLIAM:** She's been sick.  
**RAVEN:** At least she's not stupid. (*Lovingly pats his cheek and EXITS UP RIGHT.*)  
**MADELINE:** (*ENTERS DOWN LEFT.*) Well, Roderick didn't handle that very well.

35 **WILLIAM:** Don't worry. I think I have another girl who's not quite as stable.  
**BOTH:** Eleonora.  
**WILLIAM:** Right, I'll go get her.

1 **MADELINE:** I'll be in the kitchen. (*EXITS UP LEFT as WILLIAM EXITS UP RIGHT. FORTUNATO ENTERS UP RIGHT.*)

**MONTY:** (*Rushes IN after him, clutching a bottle of wine.*) Hey, hey, Fortunato. Look what I found in the cellar.

5 **FORTUNATO:** I don't think the Usher hospitality extends to you spelunking in the lower catacombs.

**MONTY:** What? Is that a dig? (*FORTUNATO walks on, but—*) No wait. Look at this.

**FORTUNATO:** (*Takes the offered bottle and reads the label.*)  
10 "Amontillado."

**MONTY:** Yeah, there's a whole cask of it in the basement. Come on, I'll show you.

**FORTUNATO:** No, thank you.

**MONTY:** No, wait. Wait. That's Amontillado. That's like really, really,  
15 rare, right?

**FORTUNATO:** Yes.

**MONTY:** So don't you want to see my cask of Amontillado?

**FORTUNATO:** No.

**MONTY:** Wait. I really, really want you to come see it. It's in the  
20 basement.

**FORTUNATO:** I have no affection for wine. I don't imbibe of wine. I'm too young to drink wine. Thanks all the same. (*EXITS UP LEFT.*)

**MONTY:** (*Chases after him.*) Wait. This isn't how it's supposed to work, you know. I'm insulted. I'm writing this down. (*EXITS UP LEFT.*)

25 **ELEONORA:** (*ENTERS UP RIGHT with WILLIAM.*) No, you're not listening to me. I'm telling you, there's something wrong with this house.

**WILLIAM:** Maybe the floors squeak. I bet Roderick could fix it.

**ELEONORA:** It's not the floors.

**WILLIAM:** Roderick is a great carpenter.

30 **ELEONORA:** It's like a spooky noise.

**WILLIAM:** Maybe it's Roderick. He plays music. What kind of music do you like?

**ELEONORA:** I don't like music.

**WILLIAM:** Neither does Roderick. He hates it.

35 **ELEONORA:** It's not music I hear.

**WILLIAM:** And it's probably not Roderick playing it, so you guys would have a lot to talk about.

**ELEONORA:** I feel something in the air.

**WILLIAM:** I'll bet Roderick has a sweater you could put on.



1 **ELEONORA:** I'm not cold.  
**WILLIAM:** Maybe Roderick could help you take off—never mind.  
**ELEONORA:** I know you think I'm a fake—  
**WILLIAM:** You know who doesn't think you're a fake? Roderick. He  
5 believes everything. He's really gullible.  
**ELEONORA:** Are you saying you don't believe me?  
**WILLIAM:** I'm saying Roderick will believe you.  
**ELEONORA:** Do you know what you are?  
**WILLIAM:** I know I'm not Roderick. He's great.  
10 **ELEONORA:** And you're a jerk. There's something wrong and I'll prove  
it. (*Storms OFF UP RIGHT as WILLIAM sinks in defeat.*)  
**EDGAR:** (*ENTERS UP LEFT.*) Shh, shh-sh. Listen. You hear that?  
(*WILLIAM, doesn't hear anything.*) That rrrr-rrr-rrr sound.  
**WILLIAM:** I don't hear it.  
15 **EDGAR:** I must be goin' nuts.  
**WILLIAM:** Come on, you need to get some sleep. (*They EXIT UP RIGHT  
as RODERICK ENTERS UP LEFT trying to get the cap off a huge  
bottle of pills. He can't because his fingers hurt. Just as he's about to  
rip it open with his teeth, ANNABEL LEE ENTERS UP RIGHT.*)  
20 **ANNABEL LEE:** Want some help with that?  
**RODERICK:** Yeah. (*Hands her the bottle.*)  
**ANNABEL LEE:** You have to push and turn quick.  
**RODERICK:** You make it look easy.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** I got a lot of experience. Is this Triptomon?  
25 **RODERICK:** Yeah.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** What are you taking it for?  
**RODERICK:** Um... allergies.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** Have you tried Benodoxin? It's great for drying up your  
nose, but I get so thirsty. Zanthall is great, but my eyes still water.  
30 Pancidin works well, but I prefer the liquid form. The pills are just  
too big and it comes in bubblegum flavor. Here you go. (*Hands him  
the bottle.*)  
**RODERICK:** Thanks.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** (*Smiles and starts to EXIT then realizes and stops  
suddenly.*) Triptomon isn't for allergies. Just how many of those  
35 were you planning on taking?  
**RODERICK:** W-w-what?  
**ANNABEL LEE:** Don't do it.  
**RODERICK:** What are you talking about?

- 1 **ANNABEL LEE:** You know what I'm talking about.  
**RODERICK:** It's none of your business.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** I opened the bottle, that makes me an accessory, so it is my business. It's not the answer.
- 5 **RODERICK:** Depends on the question.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** What are you asking?  
**RODERICK:** Why go on?  
**ANNABEL LEE:** Why not?  
**RODERICK:** I hate it here.
- 10 **ANNABEL LEE:** But you have like tons to look forward to.  
**RODERICK:** Yeah? Like what?  
**ANNABEL LEE:** Well, your senior year, for one.  
**RODERICK:** (*Scoff.*) Right. High school. It's not a place, it's a battlefield. You don't have friends, only allies or enemies. You tiptoe through  
15 the mine field of what's popular, what's right, what's in, who's hot, where's cool. And if you're wrong, you end up in exile. Alone. I'm always alone.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** Except for right now.  
**RODERICK:** But this moment won't last.
- 20 **ANNABEL LEE:** No moment lasts.  
**RODERICK:** You don't get it.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** Explain it to me.  
**RODERICK:** I can't. You'll never get it. You're a real "glass is half full" kind of girl.
- 25 **ANNABEL LEE:** And you're a real "glass is half empty before somebody stole my glass broke it and now I'm stuck in the rain without anything to drink and I'll probably die of thirst" kind of guy.  
**RODERICK:** Yeah, I guess. But I've had a lot of tragedy in my life.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** You ever had your mom push your bed to the window  
30 so you could watch the other kids play while you had pneumonia? Or sit on the bleachers in gym class doing homework because your asthma was acting up? I've been sick. My whole life. But you think I'm going to chuck it all? Life's hard. You just have to learn to deal.
- 35 **RODERICK:** How?  
**ANNABEL LEE:** You just have to find a good place.  
**RODERICK:** I was trying before you stopped me.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** A good place. Here, close your eyes. (*He does.*) Imagine with me. We're on a beach. The waves are gently washing on the



1 sand. You can feel the warm sun on your face. We're walking with our bare feet in the cool water.

**RODERICK:** OW!

**ANNABEL LEE:** What?

5 **RODERICK:** I stepped on a shell.

**ANNABEL LEE:** All right, forget the beach. We're in a forest. You can smell the pine. The birds are chirping. It's cool and wonderful in the leafy shade. (*RODERICK starts itching and jitterbugging.*) What now?

10 **RODERICK:** Poison ivy.

**ANNABEL LEE:** Okay. No forest. We're on a cloud. Floating high in the sky. Drifting lazily...

**RODERICK:** Ack—I think I swallowed a bug.

**ANNABEL LEE:** You are pathetic.

15 **RODERICK:** (*Eyes open now.*) This is what I was telling you.

**ANNABEL LEE:** Wow, you should be writing country western songs. All you need is your dog to get killed while stealing your pick-up. (*RODERICK smiles.*) Oh. What was that? Was that smile?

**RODERICK:** Might have been. Forgotten what they feel like.

20 **ANNABEL LEE:** Yeah? How's that feel?

**RODERICK:** Nice.

**ANNABEL LEE:** And it looks great, too. (*Sticks out a hand, and he puts the bottle of pills in it.*) Good choice. (*Winks at RODERICK and EXITS UP RIGHT. RODERICK is stunned a moment when the GHOSTS ENTER DOWN LEFT and surround him.*)

25 **UNA:** Why, Roderick, is that a smile which plays upon your lips?

**EULALIE:** Sugar, I think you may be right.

**MAILLARD:** All right, who knew Roderick had teeth? Anyone? Show of hands.

30 **MANN:** Far out, man.

**TARR:** Shiver me timbers.

**FETHER:** He's cold.

**TAMERLANE:** Hey, pardner. What's ticklin' ya?

**RODERICK:** Annabel Lee.

35 **AL:** She's a hot tomato.

**UNA:** A girl. Roderick, didst thou meet a girl?

**RODERICK:** Maybe.

**MAILLARD:** Maybe? Was she not a girl? Was she a duck?

**EULALIE:** Is she pretty?

1 **RODERICK:** She's an angel.  
**UNA:** 'Tis most lovely.  
**AL:** Ab-so-lute-ly. (*SWEDE writes "YEAH!!"*)  
**RODERICK:** I should do something for her. Something nice.

5 **EULALIE:** Flowers are always nice.  
**TAMERLANE:** What if she's allergic? (*SWEDE writes "Oatmeal?"*)  
**RODERICK:** Nah, I don't think so.  
**UNA:** I have always fancied candy.  
**TAMERLANE:** No fat broads.

10 **EULALIE:** (*Pulls TAMERLANE aside.*) What are you doin', darlin'?  
**TAMERLANE:** I'm helping.  
**EULALIE:** No, you're not.  
**TAMERLANE:** Yes, I am.  
**EULALIE:** No, you're not.

15 **RODERICK:** Yes, he is.  
**TAMERLANE:** See. Yes.  
**RODERICK:** She deserves something really special.  
**TAMERLANE:** No.  
**RODERICK:** No?

20 **TAMERLANE:** Yes.  
**RODERICK:** Yes to no?  
**TAMERLANE:** Yes.  
**EULALIE:** Why doesn't she deserve something special?  
**TAMERLANE:** I don't know.

25 **RODERICK:** You don't know?  
**TAMERLANE:** Yes.  
**RODERICK:** Yes to know?  
**TAMERLANE:** Yes.  
**RODERICK:** Well, I know.

30 **EULALIE:** Yes.  
**RODERICK:** She deserves a song. No, a poem. No, a sonnet. I need some paper. And a pen. A good pen. (*EXITS UP LEFT to find paper and pen.*)

35 **MAILLARD:** Anyone think this girl could be the one? (*SWEDE writes "ME!"*)  
**EULALIE:** We might have a chance of breakin' the curse, darlin'.  
**UNA:** Let us help find some good paper. (*EXITS UP LEFT with SWEDE, AL, EULALIE and MAILLARD.*)

1 **TAMERLANE:** Boys, I reckon we might be in a peck of trouble.  
**TARR:** Didn't think Roderick had it in him, by thunder.  
**FETHER:** Didn't think Roderick was a stud, says he.  
**TAMERLANE:** We best turn the heat up on these mortals. *(They EXIT*  
5 *DOWN LEFT.)*

End of Scene Two

Scene Three

SOUND EFFECT: A BUS TRYING TO START.

**EDGAR:** *(Runs ON UP RIGHT, dragging DUPIN and a still dazed VALDEMAR.)* There! There, I know I heard it. You hear that?

**DUPIN:** I don't hear nothin', pally.

10 **EDGAR:** You gotta hear that. That rrr-rrr-rrrr. It's so loud. How can you not hear it?

**PYM:** *(ENTERS UP LEFT with no energy due to a major sugar crash.)* All I hear is the blood pounding in my brain. Dreams aren't supposed to have sugar crashes.

15 **EDGAR:** All right, Valdemar, tell me you hear that.

**VALDEMAR:** I hear that.

**EDGAR:** Ha! See.

**DUPIN:** Valdemar, do a booty dance. *(VALDEMAR "booty" dances.)* See?

**EDGAR:** What does that prove?

20 **DUPIN:** He's still in a trance. Mesmerized. He'll do whatever you tell him. *(SOUND EFFECT: BUS TRYING TO START.)*

**EDGAR:** Then tell me what that sounds like?

**VALDEMAR:** A bus trying to start without a distributor cap.

25 **EDGAR:** Oh, man. Yeah. That's exactly what it sounds like. *(SOUND EFFECT: THUNDER. LIGHTNING FLASHES.)*

**SONIA'S VOICE:** *(From OFF UP RIGHT.)* Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

**EDGAR:** Mr. Allan hasn't come back yet. *(Rushes to the DOWN RIGHT door. SOUND EFFECT: THUNDER. LIGHTNING FLASHES.)*

**DUPIN:** *(Stops him.)* You can't go out there, pal.

30 **EDGAR:** But he could be hurt.

**DUPIN:** Hey, Mister Allan is a grown man. He can take care of himself. He's probably holed up somewhere, safe and dry right now.

**EDGAR:** Yeah, maybe. But this is getting out of hand. I never meant for this to happen.

35 **DUPIN:** The bus broke down. You didn't sabotage it and deliberately hide the distributor cap. Right?

1 **EDGAR:** Right.

**DUPIN:** Then there's no reason to feel guilty.

**EDGAR:** I don't feel guilty. Who said anything about guilt?

5 **PYM:** If it's a dream, then I can make it do whatever I want. I command that there be coffee! Ta-da! *(But no coffee materializes.)* Coffee! I command thee! *(No coffee.)* Oh, my god, it's not a lucid dream, it's a nightmare!

**SONIA:** *(Runs ON UP RIGHT with ELEONORA and RAVEN in tow.)*  
Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah! *(EXITS UP LEFT. RAVEN and ELEONORA stop.)*

10 **ELEONORA:** I think I just saw a ghost. This place is haunted!

**DUPIN:** Relax, sister. There's no such things as ghosts.

**RAVEN:** Well, there's something in the air making my hair all frizzed out!

**ELEONORA:** How do you know there's no such thing as ghosts?

**DUPIN:** It defies logic. Everything's fake.

15 **ELEONORA:** Are you sure?

**DUPIN:** Absolutely. There's a reasonable explanation for everything. We'll find it together.

**ELEONORA:** Really?

20 **DUPIN:** There are no ghosts. *(That's when TARR, FETHER, MANN and TAMERLANE ENTER DOWN LEFT in a rush, draped in sheets and rattling chains. They scream and howl and say BOOOOOO! Basically all things ghostly. The LIVING, except VALDEMAR and PYM, EXIT UP RIGHT screaming in chaos. As he EXITS.)* Valdemar, run! *(VALDEMAR does, running around before finally EXITING. But PYM just stands calmly in the middle of it. Now the three GHOSTS circle him, dancing like they're trying to make rain.)*

25 **TAMERLANE:** Boooooooo!

**TARR:** OooooooooOOOohh La la. Ooooh la la.

30 **PYM:** No, no, no. I didn't ask for French Ghosts. I asked for French Roast. What kind of a nightmare has typos? *(EXITS UP RIGHT calmly as the three GHOSTS stare, dumbfounded.)*

**TAMERLANE:** What does it take to scare a body these days?

35 **MANN:** I'm tellin' you, man, Scooby Doo and Wes Craven have desensitized these guys. It's not fair. *(They EXIT UP RIGHT following PYM, still trying to freak him out. A few moments later, RED DEATH ENTERS DOWN LEFT.)*

40 **RED DEATH:** Muwh-ha-ha-ha. The Red Death comes when you are sleeping. The Red Death comes when you are awake. The Red Death knows if you are bad or good, so be good—wait. No, that's not it. What is it? Dang, I just had it. Wait, it was on the tip of my



1 tongue. Arrrgh. Muwha-ha-ha... (*EXITS UP RIGHT, embarrassed, as  
WILSON ENTERS UP RIGHT. He walks DOWNSTAGE. He's dressed  
exactly like WILLIAM, so it's no wonder that MADELINE, who ENTERS  
UP LEFT, mistakes WILSON for WILLIAM, especially since his back is  
5 to her.*)

**MADELINE:** There you are. You did it. You actually DID it. (*Runs up  
behind him, wrapping her arms around him.*)

**WILSON:** Huh?

**MADELINE:** You got them talking. My shy brother is actually talking to  
10 a girl.

**WILSON:** He is?

**MADELINE:** Yes.

**WILSON:** Good thing?

**MADELINE:** This is a great thing! (*Now neither of them realizes that  
15 WILLIAM ENTERS UP RIGHT, seeing all this.*) And you are a great  
man.

**WILSON:** I am?

**MADELINE:** Yes. And I love you.

**WILSON:** What?

20 **MADELINE:** Don't pretend you can't hear me. You want me to say it  
louder? I love you. I LOVE YOU. And no matter what happens, I want  
you to know I always will. Even if we can't be together, you'll always  
have my heart.

**WILLIAM:** What?!

25 **MADELINE:** (*Turns to see him.*) William?!

**WILSON:** What?

**WILLIAM:** What?

**MADELINE:** (*Turns to see WILSON'S face.*) AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!

**WILLIAM:** Madeline?

30 **MADELINE:** William!

**WILSON:** What?

**WILLIAM:** You love him?

**WILSON:** Yes.

**MADELINE:** No.

35 **WILLIAM:** I heard you.

**WILSON:** I heard you, too.

**MADELINE:** (*To WILSON.*) Oh, no, you can see me! (*Starts to EXIT UP  
LEFT in a panic and barrels into FORTUNATO and MONTY as they  
ENTER UP LEFT.*)

1 **MADELINE:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!  
**MONTY:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!  
**MADELINE:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!  
**FORTUNATO:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

5 **ALL THREE:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah! (*MADELINE EXITS UP RIGHT.*)  
**WILLIAM/WILSON:** (*To MADELINE.*) Stop. Wait. (*To each other in unison.*) Quit it. You quit it.  
**WILLIAM:** I am going to kill you, I swear to God.  
**WILLIAM/WILSON:** (*As they EXIT UP RIGHT, following MADELINE.*)

10 Wait!!  
**FORTUNATO:** That was rather disquieting.  
**MONTY:** Yeah, yeah, whatever. Come on, I want to show you something.  
**FORTUNATO:** And where is this expedition taking us?

15 **MONTY:** Into the basement. I found something down there.  
**FORTUNATO:** Something grander than a cask of Amontillado?  
**MONTY:** Yeah. A case of Red Bull.  
**FORTUNATO:** Really?  
**MONTY:** Oh, yeah. But it's down in the catacombs. Behind this wall.

20 Let me show you.  
**FORTUNATO:** Really? An entire case?  
**MONTY:** Yeah. This must be your lucky day. Come on. (*They EXIT DOWN LEFT.*)

**RODERICK:** (*ENTERS UP LEFT with AL, SWEDE, UNA, EULALIE and MAILLARD. They're reading from a notebook.*) So what do you guys think? (*SWEDE writes "Sucks not."*)

25 **UNA:** Me thinks 'tis a lovely poem.  
**AL:** It's a real humdinger.  
**RODERICK:** Do you think she'll like it?

30 **EULALIE:** Darlin', what's not to like?  
**MAILLARD:** I can't think of anything. Who can? Anyone?  
**TAMERLANE:** (*ENTERS UP RIGHT with TARR, FETHER and MANN.*) I can.  
**RODERICK:** Really?

35 **UNA:** Pay him no mind.  
**EULALIE:** What are you doin', sugar? We don't want to shake Roderick's confidence, now, do we?  
**TAMERLANE:** I'm just sayin', what if she hates it?



1 **UNA:** She won't.  
**TAMERLANE:** How do you know? Yer only gonna git one shot. You want to risk it?  
**RODERICK:** I'm not sure.

5 **TAMERLANE:** I am. If I's you, I'd forget about that girl. She's only gonna git yer hopes up and dash 'em.  
**EULALIE:** Can I talk to you, darlin'? (*She and MAILLARD huddle with TAMERLANE, TARR, FETHER and MANN.*) What are you doing? You're acting like you don't want the curse to be broken.

10 **TARR:** Yarrrrgh.  
**FETHER:** Yarrgh, says he. (*SWEDE writes "YARGH."*)  
**TAMERLANE:** I'm just lookin' out for Roderick. I don't want to see him git hurt.  
**MAILLARD:** What about the rest of us? You want us stuck in this house

15 forever?  
**TAMERLANE:** I guess I'm not as selfish as you. I'm thinkin' of Roderick's best interests.  
**UNA:** (*Listens OFF UP RIGHT.*) Yonder she comes.  
**EULALIE:** You make sure she can't see you. She can't see any of us, all

20 right? Now promise. (*OTHERS ad-lib their promises. EULALIE pulls them aside as ANNABEL LEE ENTERS UP RIGHT.*)  
**RODERICK:** Annabel Lee.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** Hi.  
**RODERICK:** Hi. Um, I was wondering if I could read you something.

25 **ANNABEL LEE:** Sure.  
**TAMERLANE:** Don't do it.  
**RODERICK:** What?  
**ANNABEL LEE:** I said sure!  
**EULALIE:** Stop that.

30 **TAMERLANE:** She can't see me or hear me.  
**RODERICK:** I took your advice. It's not a country western song or anything. Just a poem, but it brought me to a happy place.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** I'm glad.  
**RODERICK:** Okay, here goes. (*Reads from the notebook.*) "It was many

35 and many a year ago in a kingdom by the sea, that a maiden there lived whom you may know by the name of Annabel Lee."  
**UNA/EULALIE/MAILLARD/AL:** Awwwwwwwww.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** (*Very close and very flattered.*) I'm liking this.

- 1 **RODERICK:** And this maiden she lived with no other thought than to love and to be loved by me. (*Drops the notebook. Now the TWO are about to kiss. It's very romantic.*)
- UNA/EULALIE/MAILLARD/AL:** Awwwwwwwwwwww. (*SWEDE writes "AWWWWWWW!"*)
- 5 **MAILLARD:** (*To TAMERLANE.*) See, she liked it. Who thinks she liked it? Anyone? Anyone? (*UNA, EULALIE, AL, SWEDE and MAILLARD EXIT DOWN LEFT, leaving TAMERLANE to simmer.*)
- ANNABEL LEE:** That's beautiful.
- 10 **TAMERLANE:** That's terrible.
- TARR:** Yargh. I kind of liked it, by thunder.
- FETHER:** I liked it, too, says I.
- MANN:** It's got a really good groove, man. (*Picks up the notebook, grabs a pencil and begins scribbling.*)
- 15 **RODERICK:** I was inspired.
- ANNABEL LEE:** I'm glad. (*As she leans in—*)
- TAMERLANE:** NO! (*Blows in ANNABEL'S face.*)
- ANNABEL LEE:** (*Cough, hack, sputter.*) Oh, man, sorry.
- RODERICK:** Are you all right?
- 20 **ANNABEL LEE:** Yeah, I'm coming down with something.
- TAMERLANE:** That was close. Too close.
- ANNABEL LEE:** You were saying? (*As they drink from each other's eyes, TAMERLANE leans down and goes eye to eye with RODERICK.*)
- TAMERLANE:** Roderick. You don't want to kiss this gal.
- 25 **RODERICK:** (*To TAMERLANE.*) I do, too.
- ANNABEL LEE:** (*Oblivious to TAMERLANE.*) Do too what?
- RODERICK:** Want to kiss you.
- ANNABEL LEE:** Yeah?
- RODERICK:** Oh, yeah.
- 30 **TAMERLANE:** She could be contagious.
- RODERICK:** (*To TAMERLANE*) No.
- ANNABEL LEE:** (*Really confused now.*) You don't want to kiss me?
- RODERICK:** Yes. With every fiber of my being.
- ANNABEL LEE:** Really?
- 35 **MANN:** Oh, man, this is bad, man.
- RODERICK:** (*To MANN.*) Shut up.
- ANNABEL LEE:** I didn't say anything.



1 **RODERICK:** I was talking to myself. Shut up me. Just kiss her. (*MANN throws the notebook down with a bang.*)  
**ANNABEL LEE:** (*Notices the notebook and picks it up.*) Hey, look. You didn't read it all, you cheat.

5 **RODERICK:** What?  
**ANNABEL LEE:** There's more to your poem.  
**RODERICK:** I didn't write any more.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** Oh, right, Mr. Negative. (*Reads.*) "A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling my beautiful Annabel Lee."

10 **TAMERLANE:** What did you do?  
**MANN:** Listen, man, it's a thing of beauty, man.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** (*Reads.*) "So that her highborn kinsman came and bore her away from me. To shut her up in a sepulcher in this kingdom by the sea."

15 **RODERICK:** What?!  
**TAMERLANE:** That's powerful devious.  
**TARR:** Yargh.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** This whole Emo thing was kind of quirky, but now it's just sick. You want me in a tomb?

20 **RODERICK:** I swear I didn't write that.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** How about in a glass coffin where you can see me rot away?  
**RODERICK:** No. No, listen.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** You may like thinking about death, like it's a hobby or something. Some of us are forced to face it, and I don't need to be mocked.

25 **RODERICK:** I wasn't.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** Why don't you go make fun of the handicapped.  
**MONTY:** (*He and FORTUNATO ENTER DOWN LEFT, both covered in plaster dust and panicking.*) William!

30 **FORTUNATO:** (*To ANNABEL and RODERICK.*) There's a dead body in the basement.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** That's it.  
**RODERICK:** Wait.

35 **ANNABEL LEE:** Stay away from me.  
**RODERICK:** I can explain.  
**ANNABEL LEE:** You can explain a dead body in the basement?  
**RODERICK:** Yes.

1 **ANNABEL LEE:** What do you mean yes? You can explain a dead body in the basement?

**RODERICK:** Yes. I mean no.

**ANNABEL LEE:** Is there or is there not a dead body in the basement?

5 **MONTY/FORTUNATO:** Yes.

**ANNABEL LEE:** *(To RODERICK.)* You know what, you're sick.

**RODERICK:** Let me explain.

**ANNABEL LEE:** Don't bother. You're one of those whacko macabre guys who revel in death and pain like it's some kind of badge of coolness.

10 **RODERICK:** No.

**ANNABEL LEE:** But the truth is, you're just a big stupid coward. Afraid to look stupid, afraid of making a stupid mistake. Afraid to actually live. Stay away from me. Stupid! *(EXITS UP LEFT.)*

15 **RODERICK:** Wait. *(EXITS UP LEFT chasing after her.)*

**TAMERLANE:** I reckon that went pretty well. But I ain't takin' any more chances. *(He, TARR, FETHER and MANN EXIT UP RIGHT. RAVEN, ELEONORA, EDGAR, DUPIN, PYM and VALDEMAR ENTER, dragging WILLIAM ON UP RIGHT.)*

20 **ELEONORA:** I'm telling you the house is haunted.

**WILLIAM:** Oh, the house is not haunted.

**RAVEN:** Oh, it is so totally haunted. *(SOUND EFFECT: BUS STARTING. HONK, HONK!)*

**EDGAR:** Do you hear that? It's a bus. It's our bus.

25 **WILLIAM:** There's nothing there.

**EDGAR:** I can hear it.

**RAVEN:** He can hear it.

**ELEONORA:** Haunted. This house is full of ghosts!

**PYM:** Hit me!

30 **WILLIAM:** What?

**PYM:** Hit me! I want to wake up! Hit me! Hit me! Hit me! Hit me!

**WILLIAM:** Listen to me, you are all overreacting. There is nothing wrong here.

**MONTY:** William. There's a dead body in the basement!

35 **SONIA:** *(ENTERS UP LEFT.)* Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

**WILLIAM:** What?

**MONTY:** *(Condescending, like he's talking to a three year old.)* There's a dead body in the basement.

**WILLIAM:** There's no dead body in the basement.

1 **MONTY:** Were you in the basement?  
**WILLIAM:** No. What were you doing in the basement?  
**FORTUNATO:** He was trying to brick me up behind a wall.  
**MONTY:** Okay, funny story.

5 **FORTUNATO:** He lured me there with a case of Red Bull.  
**PYM:** They have Red Bull?  
**FORTUNATO:** No, it was a ruse.  
**PYM:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!  
**SONIA:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah! *(She and PYM connect for a moment.)*

10 **FORTUNATO:** *(Refers to MONTY.)* But the third degree mason there  
didn't know how to build a wall.  
**MONTY:** Like they teach that in shop.  
**FORTUNATO:** So while I was helping him mix the concrete—  
**ELEONORA:** You were helping?

15 **MONTY:** It's dark down there. I couldn't read the instructions, could I?  
**WILLIAM:** *(To MONTY.)* You did not see a body.  
**FORTUNATO:** He's not stupid or blind, William.  
**MONTY:** Thank you.  
**FORTUNATO:** We did indeed discover a dead body in a glass coffin.  
20 *(SOUND EFFECT: THUNDER. LIGHTNING FLASHES.)*  
**SONIA:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!  
**WILLIAM:** Who is it?  
**MONTY:** I don't know. It was all covered up in a shroud.  
**FORTUNATO:** A death shroud.

25 **MONTY:** "Death" shroud. Hello.  
**SONIA:** Aaaaaaaah!  
**WILLIAM:** Enough. This is stupid. It's just a storm. There are no ghosts.  
This house is not haunted. There are no dead bodies!! *(Opens*  
*one of the doors STAGE RIGHT and WILSON, bound and gagged,*  
30 *topples to the floor. [WILSON can tumble out from the wings instead*  
*if desired.]*)  
**SONIA:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah! That is—how you say?—Wilson.  
**WILLIAM:** Wilson.  
**SONIA:** I was right.

35 **MONTY:** *(To WILLIAM.)* What did you do?  
**WILLIAM:** Me? I didn't do anything.  
**FORTUNATO:** You killed him.  
**WILLIAM:** I didn't kill him.

1 **MONTY:** We heard you say it.  
**FORTUNATO:** It's true. We heard you say you were going to kill Wilson.  
**WILLIAM:** Why would I do that?  
**DUPIN:** Because he was imitating you. We all knew you hated it. You  
5 had the motive. Opportunity.  
**WILLIAM:** But if I killed him, why would I show you the body?  
**DUPIN:** To throw off suspicion.  
**WILLIAM:** This is crazy. You make it sound like I'm some mastermind  
who orchestrated this whole thing. I'm not.  
10 **EDGAR:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah! I can't take it anymore. Here. Here it is!  
(*Digs the distributor cap out of the couch and shoves it at WILLIAM.*)  
William made me sabotage the bus. He arranged all this. He  
brought us all here!  
**WILLIAM:** Dude, your timing sucks. (*SOUND EFFECT: THUNDER.*  
15 *LIGHTNING FLASHES. EVERYONE looks at WILLIAM, surrounding him*  
*suspiciously.*) I can explain.  
**RAVEN:** Murderer.  
**WILLIAM:** I didn't kill anybody.  
**MONTY:** Tell that to the dead body in the basement.  
20 **ELEONORA:** I think it knows.  
**PYM:** Maybe he's not dead. Maybe he's just asleep. Maybe this is all  
his dream. Hit him! Hit him. Wake him up!! (*Starts choking WILSON.*  
*WILLIAM pries him free, and WILSON moans.*)  
**WILLIAM:** He's not dead! He's not!  
25 **FORTUNATO:** (*Checks.*) He's right. He's alive.  
**WILLIAM:** See?  
**MONTY:** What about the one in the basement?  
**FORTUNATO:** We didn't check it.  
**RAVEN:** Maybe it's alive.  
30 **MONTY:** Let's go see. (*ALL except WILLIAM and WILSON EXIT DOWN*  
*LEFT.*)  
**WILLIAM:** (*Pulls the tape off WILSON'S mouth and puts a pillow under*  
*his head. Turns, nearly runs into MADELINE as she ENTERS UP*  
*RIGHT.*) Madeline! Where've you been? Come on.  
35 **MADELINE:** No.  
**WILLIAM:** We have to go. Somebody may be hurt.  
**MADELINE:** They're not hurt.  
**WILLIAM:** They may need our help.  
**MADELINE:** They're beyond help, Will.



1 **WILLIAM:** What do you mean. Wait, are you saying there really is a  
dead body in the basement?  
**MADELINE:** Yes.  
**WILLIAM:** Who is it?  
5 **MADELINE:** It's me.  
**WILLIAM:** What?  
**MADELINE:** It's me, Will.  
**WILLIAM:** What do you mean it's you?  
**MADELINE:** I mean the body in the basement is me.  
10 **WILLIAM:** You?  
**MADELINE:** Me.  
**WILLIAM:** You don't mean you. You mean like a metaphorical you.  
**MADELINE:** No, I mean me. The real me. I died. A few days ago.  
**WILLIAM:** You can't be dead. You said you were feeling better.  
15 **MADELINE:** No, I said I wasn't sick anymore. I'm beyond that now.  
**WILLIAM:** I can see you and hear you.  
**MADELINE:** We're ghosts. We can be seen and heard if we want to.  
And vanish if we don't want to. *(Snaps her fingers, and suddenly he  
can't see her.)*  
20 **WILLIAM:** Maddy? Where'd you go?  
**MADELINE:** *(Snaps her fingers and he sees her again.)* Right here.  
**WILLIAM:** That's wicked sick. *(Now it hits him.)* Oh, Maddy. You're really  
dead?  
**MADELINE:** As a... a...  
25 **WILLIAM:** Ghost? This is something you couldn't tell me before?!  
**MADELINE:** I wanted to.  
**WILLIAM:** When? This isn't a leavey-outty kind of thing.  
**MADELINE:** I was trying to find the right time.  
**WILLIAM:** How about when I said, "Hi, Maddy." You could've said, "Hi,  
30 William, guess what happened to me?" *(Folds his arms over his  
chest, closes his eyes and lets his tongue droop.)*  
**MADELINE:** I didn't want to freak you out.  
**WILLIAM:** Oh, yeah, this is so much better. Thanks for that.  
**MADELINE:** I'm so sorry. I am. But my ancestors and I are trapped in  
35 this house. We can't leave until we break the curse.  
**WILLIAM:** Is that why you asked me to bring everyone here?  
**MADELINE:** Yes, it was our only chance. We have to get my brother to  
ask someone to prom.

1 **WILLIAM:** You're kidding.  
**MADLINE:** No.  
**WILLIAM:** That's the curse?  
**MADLINE:** Yes.

5 **WILLIAM:** That's the stupidest curse I've ever heard of. Ask someone to prom. Curses are like "Get the mummy back into consecrated ground," or "Find true love before the last petal falls." Ask someone to prom is dumb. That's like "to break the curse, you must eat a bowl of Fruit Loops."

10 **MADLINE:** It's a metaphor.  
**WILLIAM:** It's stupid.  
**MADLINE:** It's just a symbol.  
**WILLIAM:** It's a stupid symbol. On a one to ten scale of stupid, this is like a negative three.

15 **MADLINE:** You can't have negatives.  
**WILLIAM:** The Incas had negatives.  
**MADLINE:** You're being silly.  
**WILLIAM:** The Incas were a great people. Don't diss the Incas.  
**MADLINE:** I'm not dissing the Incas. I'm just saying the prom is a talisman. A way to gauge life. See, none of the ancestors wandering this house ever really lived life.

20 **WILLIAM:** You were alive.  
**MADLINE:** Yes, but I didn't live. I was too afraid of looking stupid. I did what was popular, not what I wanted. None of the Ushers were ever brave enough to grab life and live it. Roderick is the last of the Ushers. If he can find the courage to do what his heart tells him, the curse will be broken and we can move on.

**WILLIAM:** To where?  
**MADLINE:** Someplace wonderful, I hope.

30 **WILLIAM:** I don't want you to go.  
**MADLINE:** I'm not afraid anymore. My mom died when I was born. Now I'll finally get to meet her.  
**WILLIAM:** What about us?  
**MADLINE:** We had our chance.

35 **WILLIAM:** That's it? But I love you.  
**MADLINE:** William.  
**WILLIAM:** And not in some stupid High School puppy love crush. I mean I love you.



1 **MADELINE:** I love you, too. (*AL, SWEDE, UNA, EULALIE and MAILLARD ENTER DOWN LEFT.*)

**MAILLARD:** Madeline!! The living were in the basement and they found your body and— (*Sees WILLIAM.*) Whoa!

5 **WILLIAM:** Who are they?

**UNA:** He sees us.

**AL:** Hide.

**MADELINE:** It's okay. He knows all about you. William, my ancestors.

**WILLIAM:** Hey.

10 **EULALIE:** Hello, honey.

**UNA:** Pleased to meet you.

**MAILLARD:** Hi.

**AL:** Hi-ya, bub. (*SWEDE writes "HELLO."*)

**RAVEN:** (*ENTERS DOWN LEFT in a rush with ELEONORA, DUPIN, MONTY, FORTUNATO, SONIA, PYM, EDGAR and VALDEMAR.*) William. There really is a body in the basement. And it's Madeline! (*They FREEZE at the sight of MADELINE.*) But you know that.

15 **SONIA:** Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

**RAVEN:** So you're really dead?

20 **MADELINE:** Yes.

**RAVEN:** Oh, that so sucks for you. Guess I know why I haven't seen you around school.

**MADELINE:** Yeah.

**ELEONORA:** Who are these other people?

25 **DUPIN:** (*To ELEONORA.*) Judging by the outdated clothing, I'd say they are your ghosts. (*The GHOSTS and LIVING exchange greetings.*)

**ELEONORA:** You mean I'm not a fake?

**WILLIAM:** No.

**ELEONORA:** Whoo-hoo! Oh, baby, I am so doubling my prices.

30 **RAVEN:** Maddy, I'm so sorry. (*To WILLIAM.*) You knew she was dead?

**WILLIAM:** No.

**RAVEN:** (*Whacking him on every word.*) Then, why did you bring us here?

**MADELINE:** He did all this for me. For all of us. To break the curse.

35 **ELEONORA:** What curse?

**MAILLARD:** Who wants to know about the curse? Show of hands. (*The LIVING raise their hands. The GHOSTS take them into a huddle to explain, leaving WILLIAM and MADELINE alone. WILSON is still passed out on the floor.*)

1 **MADELINE:** We still have a chance to break the curse.  
**WILLIAM:** No.  
**MADELINE:** What?  
**WILLIAM:** I'm not helping you. I'm not.

5 **MADELINE:** We need you.  
**WILLIAM:** And I need you. I help you break the curse, and you move on.  
No. This way we can still be together.  
**MADELINE:** No, William.  
**WILLIAM:** Look, you want to break up with me, fine. But don't expect  
10 my help.  
**MADELINE:** I am not breaking up with you.  
**WILLIAM:** You are so dumping me.  
**MADELINE:** I'm a ghost.  
**WILLIAM:** Oh, right. The old, "It's not you, it's me," routine.

15 **MADELINE:** I'm dead.  
**WILLIAM:** And you're killing me. Forget it. I am not helping you leave  
me. (*MADELINE stands hurt, then EXITS UP LEFT. Stunned silence  
for a moment as EVERYONE stares at WILLIAM. Then WILSON starts  
moaning on the floor. MONTY, FORTUNATO and WILLIAM rush to  
20 him.*)  
**WILLIAM:** Wilson! You okay, buddy?  
**WILSON:** Don't call me buddy. I'm not your buddy. Not after what you  
did.  
**MONTY:** See, I knew he did this.

25 **FORTUNATO:** You may not be as dumb as you appear.  
**MONTY:** Hey, thanks, man.  
**DUPIN:** Valdemar. Get him. (*VALDEMAR grabs a struggling WILLIAM in a  
bear hug.*) Don't sweat it, Wilson. We'll square it with the coppers  
for what William did to you.

30 **WILSON:** What? He didn't do anything to me.  
**DUPIN:** But you just said—  
**WILSON:** What he did to Madeline. (*Moves away.*)  
**WILLIAM:** Wilson?  
**WILSON:** It's "Steve," Will. I don't want to be like you anymore. (*That  
35 hits WILLIAM hard. He soaks in the eyes drilling into him when  
TAMERLANE, TARR, FETHER and MANN ENTER UP RIGHT in the  
sheets and rattling chains. They scream and do the whole boogity-  
boogity thing. But the LIVING just smile happily at the show.*)  
**RAVEN:** Hey, look. It's the others.



1 **ELEONORA:** That is so cool.  
**RAVEN:** You saw 'em first. You got a gift, girl.  
**TAMERLANE:** Booo! OoooOOOoh. Why ain't they scared?  
**EULALIE:** They know all about us, darlin'.

5 **TAMERLANE:** You told 'em we're ghosts?  
**UNA:** Indeed.  
**TAMERLANE:** What'd ya wanna go do that fer?  
**WILSON:** Hey! That's the guy that ambushed me!  
**TAMERLANE:** Uh-oh. *(Tries to escape but UNA, EULALIE, SWEDE, AL and*

10 *MAILLARD block his path.)*  
**MAILLARD:** Who here thinks you're leaving? Anyone? *(SWEDE writes "NO.")*  
**TAMERLANE:** Let me go, Maillard.  
**EULALIE:** What are you up to, darlin'?

15 **TAMERLANE:** Nothin'.  
**UNA:** Tamerlane, dost thou wish me to kick thy butt?  
**MAILLARD:** What did you do?  
**TAMERLANE:** *(To TARR, FETHER and MANN.)* Hey, pardners, you want to lend a hand?

20 **MANN:** No, man. Not this time, man.  
**TAMERLANE:** We're in this together.  
**TARR:** No, says I.  
**FETHER:** No, says he. We agreed to help scuttle the plans to break the curse. Not to add to me sins.

25 **MANN:** You crossed the line, man.  
**TARR:** Yarrrrgh.  
**MANN:** You hurt this guy, man.  
**FETHER:** Yarrrrgh.  
**RAVEN:** Hello? Anybody know what's going on?

30 **ELEONORA:** Ooooh. I do. Fifty bucks and I'll tell you.  
**RAVEN:** El.  
**ELEONORA:** All right, fine, I'll just tell you. Cowboy, Hippie and Blackbeard here don't want the curse broken.  
**TAMERLANE:** You told her?!

35 **ELEONORA:** No, I'm psychic, genius. Whoo-hoo. They don't want the curse broken 'cause they don't want to go... *(Points down.)*  
**THE CAST:** *(They get it now.)* OooooOOOOOooooooh.  
**MANN:** But we never agreed to hurt anybody.

1 **TAMERLANE:** We said we was gonna do whatever it took. Get 'em  
fightin', maybe even get the sheriff down here and they'd drag 'em  
all away. We'd have the hacienda to ourselves again.

**TARR:** Tain't right, says I.

5 **FETHER:** Tain't right, says he. And I.

**MANN:** They're right, man. We lived our lives. Made our choices,  
man. But I ain't gonna add to all the stuff I messed up by hurtin'  
somebody else. Sooner or later, we all deal with what we done.

**TAMERLANE:** I say later! *(Shoves VALDEMAR, who goes down hard with  
a thunk. TAMERLANE tries to escape, but TARR and MANN grab  
10 him and jam him against the wall. After a moment, DUPIN helps  
VALDEMAR to his feet.)*

**DUPIN:** Valdemar. You okay?

**VALDEMAR:** *(Rubs his head.)* Yeah. Where are we?

15 **DUPIN:** Hey, Valdemar. Cluck like a chicken.

**VALDEMAR:** You feelin' all right, Dupin? You didn't hit your head or  
anything, did ya?

**DUPIN:** I think he's okay.

**WILSON:** So all that's left is to break the curse. We have to get Roderick  
20 to ask Annabel to the prom.

**RAVEN:** We'll go get her. *(EXITS with ELEONORA UP RIGHT)*

**FORTUNATO:** How do we propose to do this?

**VALDEMAR:** We could hypnotize them.

**DUPIN:** We could forge a letter, say it was written by Roderick.

25 **UNA:** Perhaps we could create an atmosphere most romantic.

**AL:** Dat idea is de berries.

**MAILLARD:** Maybe we just force him to ask her. Who likes that idea?  
Hands?

**MONTY:** No, no. *(Now it breaks into an argument, EVERYONE talks about  
30 the best way to get RODERICK to ask. EVERYONE'S so busy arguing,  
they don't notice RODERICK ENTER UP LEFT. He's in a loud Hawaiian  
shirt, a tutu, a scuba mask with snorkel and stupid bunny slippers  
on his feet. He couldn't look more ridiculous. MADELINE follows him  
ONSTAGE worriedly. When the CAST sees him, silence falls like an  
35 axe.)*

**THE CAST:** Oh... my... God.

**SONIA:** *(Slowly turns to see him.)* Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

**MADLINE:** Roderick, you don't know what you're doing.

**RODERICK:** I haven't known what I'm doing for a long time, sis.

40 **MADLINE:** This isn't the way to win a girl's heart.

1 **RODERICK:** I'm not trying to win a heart, I'm saving a soul.

**TAMERLANE:** Don't do this, Roderick—

**RODERICK:** Shut up, Tamerlane!

**ANNABEL LEE:** *(Dragged ON UP RIGHT by RAVEN and ELEONORA.)*

5 What? I don't see what the emergency is— *(Sees RODERICK.)* Oh, my. *(Turns to leave, but RAVEN and ELEONORA won't let her.)*

**RODERICK:** Please don't go. There's so much I want to tell you, and I know you don't know anything about me and have no reason to trust me, but you have to know a couple things. First, you were  
10 right about me. About everything. Except the part about the poem. I didn't write that. I would never wish you dead. The last thing I would ever want is a world without you in it.

**ANNABEL LEE:** You look ridiculous.

**RODERICK:** I know, ain't it cool? I've never tried this stuff before. I  
15 think I'm going to eat sushi. Listen to opera. Play the drums. I might want to be a cheerleader, I don't know.

**ANNABEL LEE:** And you're not afraid?

**RODERICK:** I'm terrified. But so what. Everyone is, I think. Life is scary. But even when it's bad, maybe there's something great, too. I didn't  
20 think things could get darker, then there was you. So it doesn't matter what happens next. Things will get better. And worse. And different. Anyhow, that's all I wanted to say.

**ANNABEL LEE:** That's all?

**RODERICK:** Yeah. That and... thanks. *(Turns and walks across STAGE. ALL FREEZE for one moment, no one knows what to say. Turns.)* Oh, one  
25 more thing. Will you go to prom with me? *(SOUND EFFECT: BIG MUSIC SWELL. ANNABEL nods. Suddenly the LIGHTS FLICKER and SHIFT. A BRIGHT GLOWING WHITE LIGHT floods the STAGE from OFF LEFT.)*

**UNA:** It is time. *(Runs OFF LEFT into the light. Then comes running back ON.)* Thou must try this. *(MAILLARD and EULALIE slowly EXIT LEFT, enveloped in the light. UNA goes and gently leads TAMERLANE, TARR, FETHER and MANN OFFSTAGE toward the light.)*  
30

**MANN:** *(As he EXITS.)* Oh man. I'm a little scared, man.

**UNA:** *(As she EXITS.)* Fear not. It gets better. *(She's OUT.)*

35 **AL:** Twenty-three skidoo.

**SWEDE:** Well... bye-bye. *(EXITS LEFT with AL in a WHIRL OF MUSIC. Then MADELINE starts to go, but WILLIAM stops her.)*

**WILLIAM:** Maddy. I'm sorry. I didn't mean... I just didn't want to lose you.

40 **MADLINE:** You won't. Remember me, Will. Mourn for me. Miss me. But don't live for me. Live for you. *(One last kiss, then she EXITS)*

1       *LEFT into the light with one last wave to RODERICK. The moment she's gone, LIGHTS BLACKOUT. In the DARKNESS, we hear ad-libs of "What happened?" and "Who turned out the lights?" There are a few moments of general confusion, then ONE LIGHT COMES UP on the other side of the stage. DAYLIGHT STREAMS IN DOWN RIGHT. It illuminates the entire place. SOUND EFFECT: BIRDS CHIRPING.)*

**SONIA:** Look, the storm is—how you say?—past.

**OTHERS:** Past.

**ANNABEL:** *(Takes ROD'S hand.)* Yeah, it's a brand new day. *(She and ROD walk OUT DOWN RIGHT, hand in hand. RODERICK stops for a moment and looks back where his sister left before he EXITS.)*

**FORTUNATO:** Is it morning already?

**MONTY:** Figured that out on your own, did ya? *(Hands over his tablet to FORTUNATO, then runs OUT DOWN RIGHT.)*

15 **FORTUNATO:** Was that an insult? *(Chases him like a game of tag.)*  
You're dead. You're a dead man. *(EXITS DOWN RIGHT.)*

**PYM:** You mean this wasn't a dream?

**EDGAR:** No.

**PYM:** You mean it was all real?

20 **EDGAR:** Yeah.

**PYM:** Why didn't anybody tell me?

**EDGAR:** I can fix the bus! *(Grabs the distributor cap.)* I gotta find Mr. Allan. *(EXITS DOWN RIGHT.)*

**PYM:** Is there a Starbucks on the way? Does Mr. Allan like Starbuck's?  
25 *(EXITS after EDGAR.)*

**SONIA:** I could use—how you say?—a triple venti marble mocha macchiato extra hot, no whip. *(EXITS DOWN RIGHT after PYM. EVERYONE stares OFF after her for a beat.)*

**DUPIN:** You okay, big guy?

30 **VALDEMAR:** I had the weirdest dream. *(As they EXIT DOWN RIGHT.)* I had to do a booty dance... *(They're OUT.)*

**WILSON:** You know what I think?

**ELEONORA:** That you'd love pancakes?

**WILSON:** How'd you know?

35 **ELEONORA:** I'm psychic.

**WILSON:** Oh, yeah. Well, what am I thinking now?

**ELEONORA:** You're thinking you'd like to see—Oh. *(Slaps him playfully.)* Perv. *(Laughs and chases him OUT DOWN RIGHT. WILLIAM stands in place. He hasn't moved since MADELINE walked away. He stares at*



1        *the empty space she left behind. After a beat, RAVEN walks up and puts an arm around him.)*

**RAVEN:** She's gone, Will.

**WILLIAM:** Yeah.

5 **RAVEN:** Bummer.

**WILLIAM:** I would have died for her.

**RAVEN:** Huh. Always thought love was living for someone. My mom and dad have been together 30 years.

**WILLIAM:** Eeew.

10 **RAVEN:** I know, huh. But he still looks at her like she hung the moon. I asked him how hers can still be the name he goes to bed whispering. He said, "Of all the guys in the world, she chooses to be with me."

**WILLIAM:** I choose to be with her.

15 **RAVEN:** She didn't choose you, Will. Now me, I want someone who chooses to be with me. That's living. *(And they EXIT DOWN RIGHT. We hold on a blank stage a moment, then RED DEATH ENTERS UP RIGHT.)*

**RED DEATH:** Muh-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha. *(BLACKOUT.)*

END OF PLAY

## PRODUCTION NOTES

### PROPERTIES

ONSTAGE: Wingback chair, loveseat, various standing or wall mounted lamps, optional portraits on the walls, optional chandelier, dusty old book with bill taped inside.

BROUGHT ON, Scene One:

Distributor cap (EDGAR)

Cell phones (WILLIAM, WILSON, RAVEN, MONTY, FORTUNATO, ANNABEL LEE, SONIA)

Small notebook (MONTY)

Noose, bandages (RODERICK)

Chalkboard, chalk (SWEDE)

Satchel of newspapers (AL)

Flashlights (ALL OF THE LIVING)

BROUGHT ON, Scene Two:

Bottle of wine (MONTY)

Bottle of pills [breath mints work well] (RODERICK)

Chalkboard, chalk (SWEDE)

Satchel of newspapers (AL)

BROUGHT ON, Scene Three:

Large school notebook and pen (RODERICK)

Sheets, chains (TAMERLANE, TARR, FETHER, MANN)

Chalkboard, chalk (SWEDE)

Satchel of newspapers (AL)

### SOUND EFFECTS

Thunder, wind, rain, scary music sting, bus trying to start, honking, birds chirping, big music swell, optional other haunted housey stuff you want to throw in (creaking stairs and hinges are fun, as is an amplified heartbeat over RED DEATH to add an ominous feel).

### COSTUMES

Costumes range from street clothes to full on period costumes. Most of THE LIVING are in street clothes. Since this is a perfect Halloween show, we've tried to give the costumes an Autumn feel. Jackets and sweaters, fall colors.

WILLIAM and WILSON need to be dressed very similarly. They don't have to be twins, but close enough that you could mistake them from the back.

It helps if EDGAR has some kind of costume piece to distinguish him as the bus driver. A bus driver hat works well.



ELEONORA works well in flowing gowns and capes.

DUPIN in a Sam Spade trench coat and fedora is fun.

THE GHOSTS are represented by costumes from the time period in which they died. Think of UNA as a Jane Austin character.

EULALIE was inspired by the Southern belles of *Gone with the Wind*.

MAILLARD is a 50s character—either a poodle-skirted girl or Oxford bow-tied boy.

MANN is straight out of tie-dyed 60s. TARR and FETHER, pirates of old.

TAMERLANE is pure cowboy or cowgirl.

AL is a newsie of the early 1920s with knickers, vest and newsie cap.

SWEDE can be whatever you choose. Our versions have included a silent film comedian or silent screen heroine.

THE RED DEATH is a traditional scary red-devily costume. He can dress in flowing crimson. A skull and crossbones on his chest. A mask over his face.

At the end of the play, RODERICK wears a loud Hawaiian shirt with a tutu, a scuba mask and snorkel and bunny slippers. Whatever crazy outfit you can muster up, go for it!

## LIGHTING

Lighting is also very flexible. We feel it works best when lighting is kept very moody. Lots of dark shadows. Changing lighting styles between the LIVING and the GHOSTS can also be a great way to distinguish between the groups. Bright warm colors for the LIVING. Cool blues for the GHOSTS. Lightning flashes frequently.

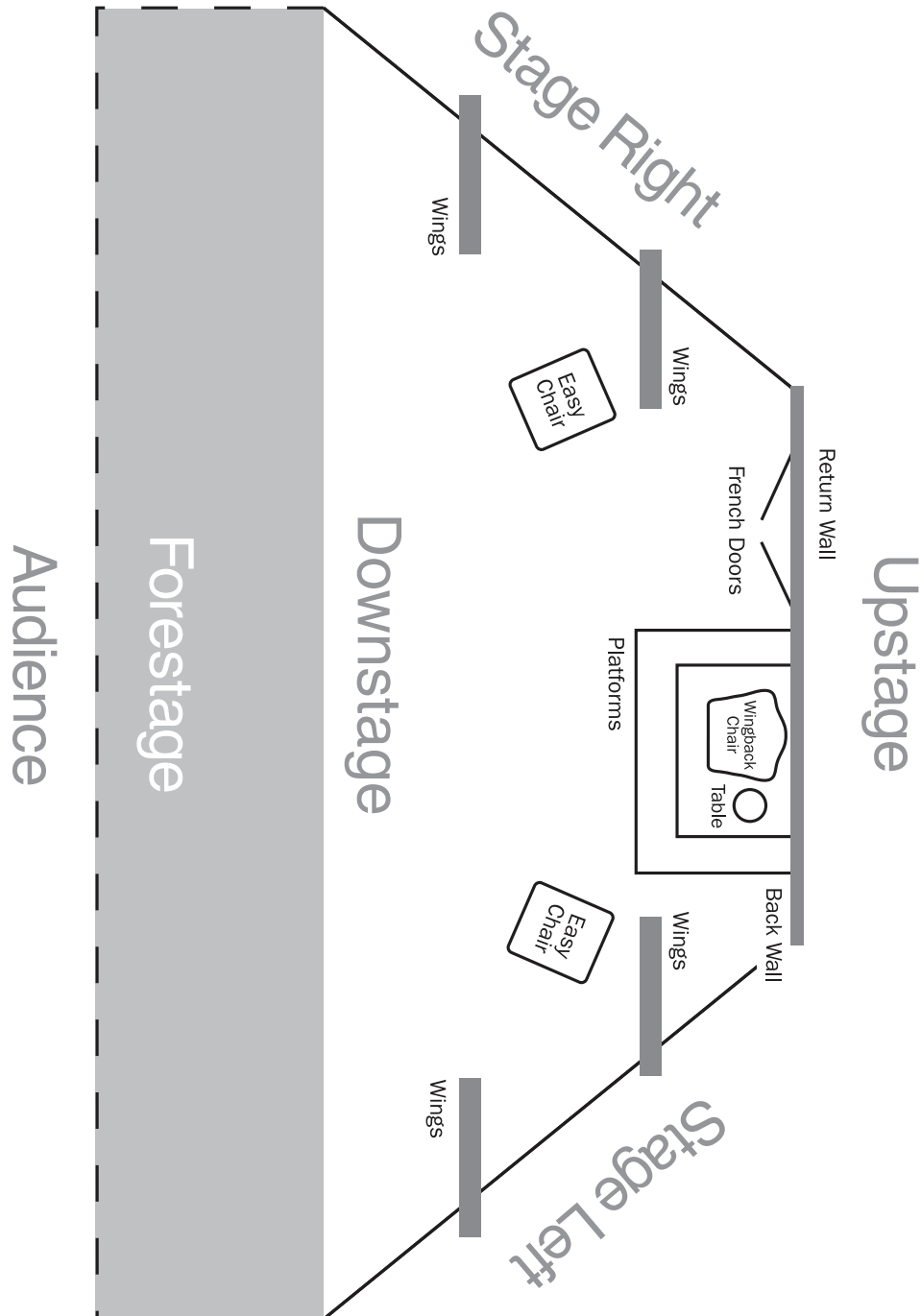
The end of the show requires a large white light to represent “heaven.” Hung low and in the wings, this light works well when it casts shadows of the actors as they approach it. If this is not possible, any single white light will work—simply bring down all the other lights. A warmer stream of daylight is also necessary at the close of the show to signify the end of the storm.

## “TOTALLY TEEN” MATERIAL

This show is designed for teens, with teens and about teens. Having no adult roles means students don’t have to put on a shawl or dye their hair to play Aunt Priscilla or Uncle Bert. Teens can finally act like teens. If you wish to tone down some of the “teen” behavior and dialogue, permission is given for you to adjust lines and stage action as desired. For instance, the kisses can be construed as pecks on the cheek or hand, or taken out entirely.

Set was constructed by the students of The Showdown Theater Academy. Costumes by Samantha Sacks. Original Music composed by Dennis Poore. The Hub's Artistic Director is Rich Crater. Stage Manager was Ann Harris. Produced by Rebecca Reed and directed by Cindy Marcus.

### Usher: A Totally Teen Comedy - Original Set Design



## THE CHARACTERS

Since characters are only very loosely based on Poe's characters—some only in name—there is a lot of flexibility in terms of gender. MONTY, FORTUNATO, VALDEMAR, DUPIN, MAILLARD, MANN and even FETHER (done as kind of an Ann Bonny Pirate) have all been played female as well as male. TAMERLANE has been performed as either a Billy the Kid type guy or a Calamity Jane type gal. SWEDE has been performed as either sex as well as THE RED DEATH. Simply adjust gender references (he/she, his/hers) in the dialogue.

## CHARACTER BACKGROUND

**WILLIAM and WILSON:** From "William Wilson," Poe's story about a man who meets another with the same name, build and personality. William ends up killing his imitator.

**MONTY and FORTUNATO:** From "The Cask of Amontillado," Poe's story about a man who seeks revenge upon the guy he feels insulted him. Luring him into the basement to taste an Amontillado, Montresor bricks the guy up alive behind a wall.

**EDGAR:** Name taken from Poe's first name, of course. Plot idea taken from "The Tell-Tale Heart," Poe's story about a murderer whose guilty conscience makes him hear his victim's heart still beating under the floorboards.

**VALDEMAR:** From "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar," Poe's story about a terminally ill man hypnotized at the moment of death and kept alive 8 months in a hypnotic stupor.

**RAVEN:** Name taken from "The Raven," Poe's most famous poem.

**ANNABEL LEE:** From "Annabel Lee," Poe's most haunting poem.

**ELEONORA:** Name taken from the short story "Eleonora."

**DUPIN:** From "Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "The Purloined Letter." Both credited as the first detective novel. The precursor to Sherlock Holmes.

**MADLINE and RODERICK USHER:** From "The Fall of the House of Usher," Poe's story about a brother whose sister dies and is buried under the house. But the sister comes a-haunting and the family house finally collapses into dust.

**PYM:** Name taken from "The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket." Theme of the fragility of reality taken from the poem "A Dream Within a Dream."

**UNA:** Name taken from "The Colloquy of Monos and Una."

**EULALIE:** Name taken from the blond, blushing bride of the poem "Eulalie."



MAILLARD, TARR and FETHER: Names taken from “The System of Doctor Tarr and Professor Fether,” Poe’s story about an insane asylum where the staff is locked up and inmates take over.

TAMERLANE: Name taken from the poem, “Tamerlane.”

THE RED DEATH: From “The Mask of the Red Death,” Poe’s story about a bunch of aristocrats who quarantine themselves during the plague, only to have the Red Death find them and kill them all.

A few characters—SONIA, AL, MANN and SWEDE—are original creations and not based on any Poe character.

#### ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

This show made its debut at The Hub Theater in Los Angeles’ NoHo Arts district in the summer of 2006 with the following cast:

WILLIAM .....Chris Dane  
WILSON.....James Kozeluh  
MONTY.....Alex Iglesias  
FORTUNATO .....Annie Horak  
EDGAR .....Josh Albrecht  
VALDEMAR.....Cameron Shim  
RAVEN.....Michelle Muldoon  
ANNABEL LEE .....Leah Radel  
ELEONORA.....Haley Merker  
DUPIN .....John Pinkers  
SONIA .....Emily Christenson  
PYM .....Lauren Cassie  
RODERICK .....Adam Bouziane  
MADELINE .....Rachel O’Rourke  
UNA .....Virginia Pinkers  
EULALIE.....Brooke Bovee  
MAILLARD.....Zoie Pulkka  
TAMERLANE.....Nicholas Grimes  
MANN.....Amanda McWorter  
TARR .....Ian Shin  
FETHER .....Rachel Odle  
SWEDE.....Johnny Green  
AL .....Robert Murphy  
THE RED DEATH .....Micah Keefer  
UNDERSTUDY .....Alison Reed

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