

DIALOGUE SAMPLE ONLY

Play title: Ghosts

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BOBNO

Look. We have the whole rest of the evening. Wanna do something?

MADDIE

You serious?

BOBNO

Absolutely.

[MADDIE grins, pulls book out of her purse.]

BOBNO

Oh, come on. No, no, not that.

MADDIE

I want to do this. It looks like fun.

BOBNO

A ghost tour? Oh, come on, Maddie! Those things are such a rip-off!
They're for tourists.

MADDIE

We are tourists!

BOBNO

It's all mumbo jumbo and lies. Boogie Man bullshit.

MADDIE

[Reading] It says here that New Orleans is the most haunted city in America.

BOBNO

Oh, brother.

MADDIE

“There are hundreds of homes and establishments that boast ghost sightings. These places were scenes of great emotional trauma, and the lingering auras of those who were involved continue to manifest themselves.”

BOBNO

There's a no-brainer. Considering the history of this place, it's less than elementary.

MADDIE

Explain.

BOBNO

History, Mad. New Orleans is supposed to have been settled on an area of Native American burial grounds. A sacred place. So, first off, you've got a few thousand extremely pissed-off Native American spirits. Plus, this place is a swamp. They call it a bayou, which is Cajun for “huge fucking wetland.” Picture a giant petri dish for all sorts of thriving unfriendly micro-organisms.

Malaria, TB, influenza, whatever. Thousands of people died here from disease and the environment. Add to that all the murders, massacres, pirate and buccaneer killings, not to mention the two times the whole French Quarter burned down, taking most of the population with it... In the early 1900s, when they built their first canal, the death rate for the Irish workmen was estimated, according to whom you believe, somewhere between 8 and 20 thousand. That was from cholera. I wouldn't be surprised if this town's got a haint or two. Maddie, if spirits could walk again due to emotional trauma, this place would be spook central of the known galaxy.

MADDIE

How do you know so much about New Orleans?

BOBNO

I read a lot of history. [*MADDIE gives him a look.*] I do.

MADDIE

Mm-hmm.. I love ghost stories. I used to listen to them at camp and then stay awake all night with a baseball bat in case the deranged murderers with hooks for hands came to molest our tent.

BOBNO

You loved your tent that much?

MADDIE and BOBNO

Shut up.

BOBNO

No, truly, Maddie, you come up with the most...unique things sometimes. I never knew you were a closet spiritualist.

MADDIE

You'd be amazed what I am. Anyway, there are lots of places here, Bobno. Most of them look like they're close by. We can just walk around and I'll read to you. Hey! Our hotel is listed!

BOBNO

Holy reservations, Batman. What a surprise.

MADDIE

This is so cool! This place is haunted! Listen to this. It says here that in 1859, this house was bought by a local cotton trader named Armand du Olivier. Isn't that a great name? Armand...du...Olivier. "He lived here with his invalid wife, their six-year-old boy, and many servants. The boy had a governess, a beautiful raven-haired girl of nineteen named Genevieve. One day while the governess and the boy were playing, the boy ran out to the parlor terrace and crashed through..." Oh my god...

BOBNO

And fell to his death, right?

MADDIE

"He crashed through the terrace, and impaled himself on the spiked railing that ran along the back courtyard." Bobno! [*Runs to terrace*] This is where he fell! Right here! He must have come right through this room!

BOBNO

I'd really give anything to open up to you, kiddo. I know having you here with me is more than I could ask for. As much as I can, I love you, Maddie.

MADDIE

What did you say?

BOBNO

I said don't run on the terrace.

MADDIE

"The governess committed suicide by hanging herself from the rafters of the parlor." That's this room! The parlor suite! Oh my god, Bobno! She committed suicide right here!

BOBNO

Right where you're standing? Well, that's cheery.

MADDIE

"It is said that people have heard a child crying through the building. When they go to investigate, the sound fades away. Frequently, a woman dressed in black has been seen running along the second-floor corridor, only to vanish through the north wall into what used to be the parlor. She is believed to be the ghost of the young governess, dressed in the cerements of the grave, rushing to save her young charge. Furniture, especially chairs, placed in the center of the room, has been found toppled over."

BOBNO

There's a door here. Behind the sideboard. This must be where she's supposed to come through.

MADDIE

This is creepy. "After the tragedy, several servants either ran away or quit. A few claimed to have heard strange noises coming from the parlor room and seen shadowy figures running along the second-floor halls. Olivier lived only four more years, succumbing to grief and alcohol." Isn't this creepy?

BOBNO

Honestly. You say creepy as if you meant "groovy."

MADDIE

Cuh-ree-e-e-e-p-e-e....

BOBNO

We can change rooms if you want.

MADDIE

No way! This is —

BOBNO

Pure bullshit.