

THE  
HAUNTED HANSONS

"Pilot"

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COLD OPEN

INT. SMALL TOWN LIBRARY - NIGHT

The library is dim and silent except for the faint hum of fluorescent lights. Stacks of books loom like tombstones.

TOBY HANSON (12) sits alone at a dusty table, fidgeting nervously in front of an aged Ouija board. He's wide-eyed, sweating bullets, and whispering under his breath.

TOBY

Don't shit your pants again, don't  
shit your pants again...

(deep breath)

Okay... if there's anyone here...  
uh... what's, umm... what's up?

A distant NOISE turns his attention to the shadowy bookshelves. He nervously looks over his shoulder.

TOBY (CONT'D)

You know what, actually, it's  
totally fine if you're just...  
resting in peace. That's cool. You  
just... keep on resting.

He reaches for the board to put it away – when the planchette TWITCHES.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Oh no...

The planchette begins to slide across the board on its own, spelling: G-E-T-...

TOBY (CONT'D)

I'm gonna shit my pants again.

He fumbles a set of hyper-advanced headphones from his backpack – clearly homemade by a mad genius. He slaps them on. They WHIR to life, picking up creepy ghost murmurs and static.

He lowers a pair of goggles – they SNAP into place like a sci-fi HUD. His eyes scan. And then... He sees her.

A semi-transparent GHOST WOMAN in a tattered nightgown, floating beside the table, her fingers struggling to move the planchette. She looks like she died in 1972.

GHOST WOMAN

Get... me... whiskey...

TOBY

I can't. I'm only twelve.

GHOST WOMAN

Hot damn! You... you can see me?

TOBY

Yes. And you need to run or... fly off. Like, now.

GHOST WOMAN

Oh, this is incredible! Wait til Candy hears about you.

TOBY

Listen, lady, you're in danger. My family –  
(glancing around)  
– they're ghost hunters. With like, matching jackets and high kill counts.

GHOST WOMAN

Honey, I'm already long dead. What can they do? Blind me with a laser pointer?

POP! A dart THUNKS into her neck. It sizzles, glowing blue.

GHOST WOMAN (CONT'D)

OH MY GOD IT BURNS!

She thrashes – a stunned deer in spectral headlights.

TOBY

Way worse.

Suddenly, from atop a bookshelf, MARA HANSON (18) drops down like a spider in combat boots, holding a sniper-style ghost rifle still trailing smoke.

MARA

Boom. Neck shot. Take that, ya old bag of smoke.

Toby turns just in time to see his mom, DR. NANCY HANSON (42), casually toss an electrified ghost net over the old woman. Sparks fly. The ghost HOWLS in agony – something she apparently hasn't felt since dying of a heart attack during "The Price is Right."

GHOST WOMAN

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?! I VOTED FOR CARTER!

TOBY  
Mom, wait! She's harmless!

NANCY  
(checking scanner)  
She's also 300% over the legal  
spectral noise threshold, sweetie.  
That's loitering.

TOBY  
She just wanted to talk.

MARA  
So do cult leaders. That's how they  
get you.

And then – FOOTSTEPS. Heavy. Like boots made of meat.

CLIFF HANSON (45) steps into the scene like he's in a Bass  
Pro Shop ad. He's carrying an enormous double-barreled ghost  
shotgun with a bayonet made of holy relics and spite.

He eyes the ghost, who is twitching under the net, still  
sizzling.

CLIFF  
On behalf of the living: you've  
been evicted from Earth. Again.

TOBY  
Dad, no!

BLAM! He fires. A massive burst of spectral plasma blasts a  
hole through the woman, her ecto-guts splattering Toby. It's  
glowing. It's warm. It smells like burnt cigarettes.

NANCY  
This is why we tell you not to get  
emotionally attached to the ghosts,  
sweetheart.

CLIFF  
(sniffing)  
Son... did you shit your pants  
again?

Toby sighs. He did.

**END OF COLD OPEN**

TITLE CARD: "The Haunted Hansons"

ACT ONE

INT. FAMILY MINIVAN - NIGHT

The minivan hums down a foggy road. Toby sits in the back, still dripping in ghost plasma like he lost a Nickelodeon game show in hell. Mara sits next to him, feet up, lovingly polishing her ghost rifle like it's a therapy pet.

Nancy is typing rapidly on a laptop. Scientific diagrams and spectral readouts flash across the screen while Cliff drives, munching jerky.

TOBY

Why am I always the bait?

MARA

Because ghosts are attracted to weak, submissive energy. Like cats. Or sugar daddies.

TOBY

What does that even mean?

MARA

It means if a ghost wanted to enter someone, you're basically standing there with your spiritual legs wide open.

TOBY

What?! What do you mean "enter me?"

CLIFF

Don't read too much into it.

TOBY

I absolutely am, Dad. Are these ghosts trying to... have sex with me?

NANCY

No. Don't be gross.

CLIFF

I mean...

MARA

There was that one creeper in the museum last week who seemed pretty thirsty for a sip of Toby juice.

TOBY

That guy was homeless and not even a ghost.

NANCY

You're not "bait," sweetie. You're more like... a decoy.

TOBY

But why do we have to kill them? What if they're just... lost? Can't we talk to them or, I dunno, help them?

CLIFF

Son, this is America. We got laws. You die, you stay dead. You come back? You're an illegal metaphysical alien.

TOBY

What laws are you talking about?

CLIFF

The laws... of nature. And probably South Dakota. They're pretty strict over there.

MARA

And it's fun. Making a ghost scream like a dial-up modem... that sound? Pure serotonin.

NANCY

We're not killing them, Toby. Not really.

TOBY

We're not?

CLIFF

They're already dead, kiddo.

NANCY

We're helping them... move on.

TOBY

To where?

NANCY

Well, that depends. Could be the afterlife. Could be an eternal void of nothingness. Could be they're just evaporating into cosmic soup.

NANCY (CONT'D)

The science is unclear and honestly kind of upsetting when you think about it.

MARA

Or maybe they go to Hell, Toby. You ever think of that? You might have just personally banished little Grammy to flaming ghost Hell.

TOBY

No, I didn't! Did I? Why would you say that?? Mom!

NANCY

We also could have sent her to heaven.

CLIFF

She didn't scream like someone going to Heaven.

The van drives off into the night, headlights cutting through the fog. The glowing remains of the Elderly Ghost are tied to the roof of the minivan by blue ropes like a big game buck.

INT. HANSON HOME - NIGHT

A modest, cluttered home filled with a chaotic mix of family life and high-tech ghost-hunting gear. Plasma canisters on the mantle. Holy water next to the cereal. A ghost trap doubling as a Roomba whirs by, dragging something screaming from under the couch.

INT. HANSON HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The family sits at a dinner table covered in fast food bags, glowing ghost goo samples in mason jars, and a half-built weapon that looks like a waffle iron with wires and syringes sticking out.

Toby sits between Cliff and Mara, still splotched with ectoplasm, nervously poking at his chicken tenders. Nancy tightens a bolt on the device in front of her.

NANCY

If I recalibrate the flux dampener, the D-20 Extractor should eject anything possessing the occipital lobe without frying the brainstem. Theoretically.

TOBY

Hey Mom... how does someone actually get possessed?

MARA

Kinda like this.

She makes a slow, invasive probing gesture with two fingers.

TOBY

Oh my God, eww, what's wrong with you?

NANCY

Mara, be nice to your brother.

MARA

I am. I'm teaching him how not to become a human puppet for spectral perverts.

CLIFF

She's got a point, buddy. They slip in while you're distracted. Lonely. Weak. Like watching a Minion movie alone on a Friday night.

TOBY

That was one time! And I had the flu!

NANCY

It's not that dramatic. The D-20 will be able to exorcise whatever slips inside of you while keeping your innocent little soul right where it belongs.

CLIFF

It even has a setting for poltergeists, demons, and clergy, if necessary.

TOBY

May I be excused?

Toby slinks from the table.

INT. HANSON HOME - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mounted ghost specimens line the hall like supernatural taxidermy.



Some are asleep, snoring softly, translucent and twitching. Others stare at Toby, mouthing "Kill me" silently behind their display glass as he passes by.

INT. HANSON HOME - TOBY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Toby lies stiff in bed, blanket pulled up to his chin, eyes wide open like he's seen some things (because he has). The room is dimly lit by a glowing night light shaped like Jesus giving a thumbs up. There's a jar of holy water on his nightstand next to a bottle of children's melatonin gummies.

A faint moaning echoes from the hallway – one of the mounted ghosts is sobbing again.

HALL GHOST

The light... please... send me to  
the light...

Nancy comes in and sits at the edge of the bed, pushing aside a book titled "When Dead Things Want You."

TOBY

Mom, I don't think I'm cut out for  
this. Maybe I can be something safe  
and easy instead. Like a barista.  
Or a podcast host.

Nancy shifts uncomfortably. Glances toward the door, lowers her voice.

NANCY

First off, never let your father  
hear you say that. He cried when  
you got your first ghost bite.  
Called it your "afterlife bar  
mitzvah."

TOBY

He framed the medical bill.

NANCY

When I was your age, I wanted to be  
a molecular biologist. Maybe  
discover a new element. Instead, I  
built a plasma rifle that makes  
ghosts relive their worst memory  
until they dissipate.

(softens)

Point is, I found a way to be  
happy. You will too.

TOBY

You don't think it's wrong?  
Torturing them? Mounting them on  
walls like a moose?

NANCY

I know it looks a little...  
murdery. But we're doing good.  
Really. These ghosts? They're  
trapped. They're confused.  
Sometimes horny. Always moody.  
(beat)  
We help them move on. Or explode.  
It's really a 50/50 shot, but  
either way, we give them closure.

TOBY

I don't want to give closure. I  
want to be a kid.

NANCY

And you are. You're a beautiful,  
sensitive, spiritually penetrable  
kid. That's why the ghosts love  
you. And us. We need you, sweetie.

She gives him a warm, genuine smile. Toby sighs, defeated but  
still craving approval.

TOBY

Okay. I'll... try. I'll give it one  
more shot. But if I get plasma in  
my mouth again, I'm calling Child  
Protective Services.

She leans in and gives him a kiss on the forehead, ignoring  
the faint sizzling sound from where some ghost goo still  
lingers.

NANCY

Goodnight, sweetheart.

She tiptoes out, flicking the lights off. The ghost trap-  
Roomba zips by again with a ghost arm sticking out of it,  
flipping Toby off.