

EAST WIND ROAD

by

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FADE IN:

INT. MAZZIE'S BAR - NIGHT

STRETCH, MELANIE and CAMERON, early-20s, sit in a corner booth, drinking cheap beer.

MELANIE
(to Stretch)
She won't come.

STRETCH
You called, right?

MELANIE
You know how she gets at finals.

CAMERON
Man, I know you got a thing for her,
but...

Cameron raises an eyebrow at Melanie. Melanie clears her throat, sighs and leans in.

MELANIE
You know people think she started that
fire, right?

STRETCH
Cheap speculation.

MELANIE
She hasn't been the same.

STRETCH
She's too reserved to be dangerous.

CAMERON
I don't know, man. Her whole fam...hey,
Hanson.

ALIYAH HANSON, early-20s, stands next to the booth, silent and still. Her big brown eyes are sad and knowing. Melanie jumps up to give her a hug.

MELANIE
You made it! How long have you...

ALIYAH
Long enough.

CAMERON
Decide to get out of your head for once?

Aliyah slides into the booth next to Stretch.

ALIYAH
Finals, jackass.

Cameron cocks a sly smile. Aliyah shoots a saucy grin at Stretch.

ALIYAH (CONT'D)
You know you are the only guy who makes me feel short, right?

Stretch nods and turns to hide his flushed cheeks.

MELANIE
Cameron was just telling us about some creepy house with evil spirits.

ALIYAH
There's no such thing.

MELANIE
Don't mind her. It's the psychology of evil class talking.

STRETCH
So, you don't believe in evil?

ALIYAH
Nope. It's a subjective experience. Which house?

CAMERON
You know, the one over in North East?

ALIYAH
With the doll hung in the attic?

CAMERON
Yeah. Some lady killed her baby up there.

ALIYAH
I heard someone hung themselves.

MELANIE
That doesn't explain the doll.

STRETCH
Seriously, who hangs a doll?

ALIYAH
Cruel joke.

STRETCH

That doesn't mean the house is haunted.

ALIYAH

It's not-just creepy. Probably has squatters or junkies in it.

MELANIE

Cam suggested we explore it. You in?

ALIYAH

Brilliant, let's add trespassing to my tarnished reputation.

CAMERON

Awe, come on. You know we love you. Have an adventure. I dare you.

STRETCH

Can't pass up a dare from Cam-he'll never let you live it down.

Cameron raises and shakes his beer bottle.

CAMERON

Maybe you can redeem that alleged tarnished rep of yours.

Melanie bounces in her seat.

MELANIE

Oh, come on. You never have fun with us anymore. Please.

ALIYAH

Fine, just to prove it's not haunted.

Cameron wraps one arm around Melanie and fist-bumps Stretch with a gleam in his eye.

EXT. THE NE HOUSE - LATER

Aliyah shines her cell flashlight across the house buried beneath snarled and wilting vines. The porcelain of the doll's face is weathered and cracked.

MELANIE

God. It's even swinging.

They step onto the porch and open the door. CREAK.

INT. THE NE HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

The dark wood panels and floor are caked in dust. Cobwebs flap in the breeze.

ALIYAH

Hello? Anybody in here?

Cameron knocks into Aliyah's shoulder as he pushes past.

CAMERON

See. No squatters. It's totally empty.

Cameron wanders down the hall as the others tip-toe around the entryway, examining photos and knickknacks.

MELANIE

Aliyah, look at this.

Melanie picks up an old photo frame.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Was the house a sorority?

ALIYAH

Huh, those people look like us. Weird.

CAMERON

Guys! Come check out the basement!

MELANIE

I hate basements.

ALIYAH

It's probably just full of more cobwebs.

The three follow Cameron down narrow wooden stairs that bow and MOAN under the weight of each footstep.

INT. THE NE HOUSE - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

The group explores small rooms in the concrete cavern.

MELANIE

Look! A window leading to dirt. S'pose that's where the dead bodies are?

Melanie shivers.

CAMERON

Maybe they chopped them into pieces?

STRETCH

I thought you said one death and in the attic.

CAMERON

Urban legends, man.

ALIYAH

Hey, an old coal chute.

A book corner sticks out from under piles of dirt, soot and ash. Aliyah kneels down, pulls it out and dusts it off. "*The Hallows*" is the title.

"Do Not Read" is scribbled across the cover. Melanie snatches the book, opens it and reads.

MELANIE

Beware the buried secrets.

Melanie slams the book shut with a shudder.

ALIYAH

It's just a story by Elizabeth Mason.

Aliyah points to the author name on the spine.

CAMERON

That's the novelist who vanished.

STRETCH

Never heard of her. How do you know that?

CAMERON

Google, man. Google knows everything.

Aliyah rolls her eyes. Cameron grabs the book. The ground shakes. Dust falls through the floorboards above like flour through a sifter.

MELANIE

What was that?

Cameron looks up, his face wrinkles with worry.

CAMERON

Let's just go back upstairs.

ALIYAH

What's the matter? Too creepy for you?

CAMERON

Shut up.

INT. THE NE HOUSE - MAIN FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Stretch emerges first and moves toward a nearby door.

STRETCH
(imitating Crypt Keeper)
What's behind door number 2?

Stretch pushes the door open, CREAK, steps inside and turns up his nose. The others follow. Melanie gags.

INT. THE NE HOUSE - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MELANIE
Ugh, what's that smell?

CAMERON
Ah, guys...

Cameron points to a putrid, decomposing body slumped over a desk in front of an ancient desktop computer, circa early 2000s.

Aliyah holds her nose, leans over, and pulls a silver Zippo from the body's rigid hand. CRUNCH.

ALIYAH
Ewe. It's oozing.

The initials "AH" are etched on the side. Aliyah examines it as she gags.

Stretch picks up a plaque on the floor next to the desk.

STRETCH
Cam, isn't this your author lady?

Stretch turns around.

STRETCH (CONT'D)
What the hell? Where'd you go?

Stiff, long, lacy curtains expand like inhaling lungs.

MELANIE
(hushed)
Umm, the curtains are, ah, breathing.

Aliyah observes dust-film covered books and papers.

INSERT - A NOTE ON THE DESK, HALF UNDER THE CORPSE

Cleanse the souls. Baptism by fire.

BACK TO OFFICE

ALIYAH

(distant)

The window's open. Just close it.

Melanie inches near the flapping lace. Cameron pops out and LAUGHS diabolically.

Melanie jumps and SCREAMS, then punches his shoulder.

STRETCH

Not cool man, not cool.

Cameron buckles over, continuing to LAUGH hysterically.

CAMERON

Let's see that thing. That's the writer all right.

ALIYAH

(softly to self)

How could they've missed that?

The group exits the office and Stretch closes the door.

INT. THE NE HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The group sits at a long, rickety formal dining table. Cameron shines his cell flashlight on the book, opens it and reads.

CAMERON

Terror bounds as the phantom corpse pours the scribe's soul into the hallows.

Footsteps POUND across the floor above. Everyone looks up and then dart eyes at each other with consternation.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

C'mon Mel, let's check it out. Hanson, catch.

Cameron shoves the book across the table to Aliyah.

STRETCH

Guys, we should stick together.

CAMERON

It'll give you lovebirds time alone.

Cameron and Melanie exit. Stretch's cheeks flush red. Aliyah shakes her head and pages through the book. A folded note drops out. Aliyah crinkles her face.

STRETCH

The suspense is killing me. What's it say?

ALIYAH

It's hard to read, but looks like it says possession and/or death may occur if the book is read.

STRETCH

Some marketing ploy.

ALIYAH

That's strange. I don't think this was written by Elizabeth Mason.

Stretch cocks an eyebrow.

STRETCH

Who then?

ALIYAH

I'm not sure, it says she died typing the final words.

Stretch CHUCKLES.

STRETCH

What, like, scared herself to death?

Aliyah flips the note over. "AH" in courier font is typed in the corner. Stretch sits at attention.

STRETCH (CONT'D)

What's that on the back? It has your...

A high-pitched, guttural SCREAM echoes. Aliyah and Stretch scramble to the foyer and race up the stairs.

INT. THE NE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Cameron stands dazed and points to the mirror.

CAMERON

It just, it just grabbed her.

STRETCH

What?

CAMERON

Arms, long, dead arms. It pulled her in.

STRETCH

Did you smoke up before we came in?

CAMERON

No, man. Seriously? You were with me.

Cameron and Stretch argue MOS. Aliyah looks into the cracked mirror. A DECAYING GRAY FEMALE face appears.

Aliyah looks behind her. Nothing. She gazes back into the mirror. Melanie appears, terrified and screaming MOS.

ALIYAH

Oh, my god! Mel! Stretch, come look.

Stretch leans in, then steps back and clasps his mouth.

STRETCH

Who's...what's behind her?

ALIYAH

It's pointing to the book.

CAMERON

Don't, don't read it!

Stretch and Aliyah fixate on the mirror, their backs turned away from Cameron. A black smoke snakes down the hall and then constricts Cameron.

Cameron's feet SCRAPE across the floor, his nails dig into the wall as he CLAWS and SCRATCHES desperately. Aliyah and Stretch crunch up their faces and turn around.

STRETCH

Where the hell did he go now?

ALIYAH

Cameron! This isn't funny!

The deathly reflection spills out as a mist. Aliyah stands transfixed as it circles around her.

STRETCH

(panicked)

We need to get out of here. Right now!

The mist transforms into the gray woman from the mirror. She scowls, then knocks Aliyah and Stretch down the stairs and over the banister. They crash into the foyer.

INT. THE NE HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Aliyah's forehead is gashed. Blood gushes down her face.

Stretch grabs Aliyah's arm and bolts to the front door. The door SLAMS. Aliyah's eyes widen as she pulls back.

ALIYAH

A note in the office-it said we need to burn the evil spirt.

STRETCH

(mystified)

You don't believe in evil.

Aliyah breaks away and rushes into the living room.

INT. THE NE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Aliyah drops the book, THUD, rips out a few pages, plucks the Zippo from her pocket, eyes the initials again, and ignites the paper. Stretch notices the etching.

STRETCH

When did you get your initials carved into a lighter?

Aliyah shrugs.

ALIYAH

(sarcastic)

Maybe when I burned up my family.

Aliyah sets her torch to the ratty and torn curtains. Stretch's mouth drops.

STRETCH

For the record, I never said that.

ALIYAH

Oh my god. I got it off the dead body.

Stretch backs out to the foyer as the curtains ignite.

INT. THE NE HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Aliyah enters the foyer.

STRETCH

You are freaking me out right now.

ALIYAH

Don't you get it? We weren't suppose to read the book.

Aliyah bolts down the hall to the next rooms, each door slams in her face just as she reaches it.

ALIYAH (CONT'D)

We have to burn everything.

STRETCH

You're losing it.

ALIYAH

(terse)

Losing it?

The apparition GROWLS and SCREECHES as the flames punch into the ceiling.

STRETCH

Don't bust my balls. Let's just go!

The lower level billows with thick, black, smoke.

ALIYAH

(choking and coughing)

You go. I have to finish this.

POPS and SCREAMS bellow. The house shakes.

ALIYAH (CONT'D)

Get out!

Aliyah scales the stairs. Stretch bolts for the front door. He pulls and jiggles the lock.

STRETCH

It won't budge!

ALIYAH (O.C.)

Break a window! Just go!

Stretch breaks a window next to the door. Glass shards slice into his arms, torso and legs as he squeezes out.

EXT. THE NE HOUSE - SUNRISE

Stretch collapses to his knees to catch his breath. Blood covers his shirt and pants. He lifts his heavy head and watches with horror as flames shoot from every window.

EXT. THE NE HOUSE - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY - ESTABLISHING

People filter in and out of the pristine sorority house.
A dim light flickers in the attic.

INT. THE NE HOUSE - ALIYAH'S ROOM - ATTIC - CONTINUOUS

Dozens of candles on Aliyah's desk flicker. She closes
her laptop with a smile and picks up her cell.

INSERT - CELL SCREEN

Melanie

BACK TO ATTIC.

A SHADOWY, MISTY FIGURE looms behind Aliyah undetected.

ALIYAH

Novel finished...yeah, it's called *The
Hallows*...absolutely, let's celebrate.

Skeletal fingers burst out from the shadows and grip her
shoulder.

Aliyah's eyes pop as her jaw sags like a broken hinge.
Her skin turns greyish-blue as it melds to her
cheekbones.

The candles fizzle out.

INT. THE NE HOUSE - ALIYAH'S ROOM - ATTIC - LATER

KNOCK, KNOCK. Melanie enters. The room is pitch black.

MELANIE

Aliyah?, Aliyah?

She flips a light switch, then lets out a blood-curdling
SCREAM.

EXT. THE NE HOUSE - ATTIC WINDOW - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY -
CONTINUOUS

Melanie's CRIES reverberate and die out. Cracked,
decaying, grayish-blue Aliyah swings on a noose as smoke
billows around her and fire consumes the attic.

FADE OUT.