

# ISASTRAL PLANE

by

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A TALES OF THE CUL DE SAC PLAY

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### Synopsis:

Benji is a parcel delivery man. He is a master at putting a smile on his face even when he is not happy with a situation. He has been ready to take the next step with his girlfriend Angela but she does not want to commit. Angela is dark and gothic and obsessed with ghosts and monsters and her small dog Pablo (a chihuahua.) She has created a device that lets you peer into the other side and experience being a ghost. Things go south when the invention turns on by itself and traps Benji and Angela in the spiritual astral dimension. Now with only limited time and the help of their spiritual guide Tucker, they must figure out a way back into their bodies.

### Cast:

Angela - A young lady that fancies herself an inventor. She is dark and Gothic on the outside but inside is just scared her boyfriend will find out she is a paranormal fanatic. Afraid to take the next step because she has kept that part of her life from him.

Benji - A young parcel delivery man that adores Angela. He would do anything for her but he keeps getting sidelined and doesn't understand why.

Emily: Angela's friend. Could be slightly older but still lives with her parents. She is more gung-ho about the paranormal than Angela.

Tucker - He was assigned to guide Angela and Benji away from using the invention however he is bad at everything. He has been a screw up his whole life and afterlife.

Ted Grimm JR - The grim reaper in training. Son to the original but kind of just goes with the flow. Friend of Tucker and wants to see him move on.

Seth Pluridon - Paranormal leader. He is a fraud but has gotten his act down. He wishes he could move on to bigger things.

Olive - Seth's agent and assistant. Deeply in love with Seth but can't get him to notice or care.

Morgan - A woman looking for something fun and exciting to do this evening

Parker - Morgan's lazy live in brother. Doesn't believe in Paranormal things but had to come by Morgan's "request."

ACT 1

(Curtain opens to a modest house with a few creepy gothic things scattered around. Stage left there is a front door. Down Stage right there is a door to the kitchen. Upstage right there is a Hallway towards the bedroom. Upstage center there is a window with blackout drapes. Center stage there is a round table on a rug with a few chairs. At the table Angela is sitting with some tools and a smallish device about the size of a clock radio. She is working on it and mumbling to herself)

Angela:

Ok, let's see. Checklist. (Looking back and forth from the machine to a paper on the table) We have good power. Hardware is pristine minus the old capacitor. Frequency is set for departure and return of the physical entity. The only question really at this moment is radius. Normal radio waves would put us at (jots a quick calculation on paper) about 50 feet but we are not using normal radio waves. This may just need additional testing to really lock this down. And then to paint you allllll black because it will look cooler and add a big red button to complete the ensemble. (There is a knock at the door) Hands full! Who is it?

Benji:  
Angela!

Angela:  
No thats my name. (Continues working without hesitation)

Benji:  
I know Angela! It's Benji, your boyfriend. My hands are full too.

Angela:  
Give me a minute. Just double checking some settings on my project.

Benji:  
I may drop these if I wait much longer. Barely holding on with fingertips.

Angela:  
Don't be so overdramatic Benji. Everything is the end of the world to you someday.

Benji:  
Maybe I can find a different way to turn the doorknob.

Angela:  
Like with what?

Benji:

I don't know. My mouth maybe? Teeth?

Angela:  
That's disgusting. Hello! Germs!

Benji:  
(Door swings open and Benji enters on his knees. He carries a large box and a large stack of missing dog fliers. He wears a uniform for a delivery service) Don't worry. I got it. I'm very talented you know. I turned it between my neck and shoulder.

Angela:  
(She stops what she is doing. And makes her way over) Very resourceful. Let me help you now that you've come this far.

Benji:  
It's ok. The giant sized box is lighter than it seems. It's for you by the way. (Angela grabs the box and leaves Benji on the floor. He gets himself up and puts the stack of papers on the table) You're welcome by the way.

Angela:  
I hope this is what I think it is! (She opens the big box and pulls out an extremely small capacitor and walks it to the table with the machine) Perfect! Exactly what I need!

Benji:  
What is it? (Follows her to the table)

Angela:  
A capacitor.

Benji:  
(Picks up the big box and notices nothing else is in it and frowns) That was it?! Just a capacitor? A tiny capacitor at that.

Angela:  
It may be just a capacitor to you, but to me it's important. (Being a little defensive)

Benji:  
I didn't mean just a capacitor! I meant JUST a capacitor (motioning to the giant box)

Angela:  
I don't follow. You just said the same thing.

Benji:

You know what? Nevermind. I'll just get rid of the box. (Benji heads with the box toward the kitchen and Angela puts the capacitor in the machine) So what does that do-dad thingy do?

Angela:

The capacitor?

Benji:

Yes! That's the one. What is it doing in your machine thing?

Angela:

It stores and releases energy.

Benji:

And what does the machine do?

Angela:

I can't really tell you that. Top secret you know.

Benji:

Dang it! I thought I had you that time.

Angela:

Try harder next time!

Benji:

I always do. (Enters from kitchen) Wooo....(Shivering) Did it just get really cold in here?

Angela:

(Insulted but not enough to move from the table) I'm not being cold! I just can't share that information with you yet.

Benji:

No, I meant really cold. Felt like an arctic blast to my chest and face. Almost like a snowball hit me.

Angela:

I don't feel anything. I thought it was warm in here. Must be a draft somewhere near you.

Benji:

Sure I guess (Crosses over to the stack of papers and picks them up) Anyway, just wanted to update you that there is still no word on Pablo.

Angela:  
(Really entranced with the machine) Oh no...

Benji:  
While I've been out on my deliveries I've been posting fliers around the area though. (Pauses for some reaction from Angela but there is nothing) I printed them and designed them myself. (Pauses again) I also called around to all the dog shelters and made sure that nobody had brought in a Chihuahua. (Pause) No need to thank me. I feel awful that Pablo got out.

Angela:  
Don't blame yourself! You weren't even here.

Benji:  
I mean, I could have been. You could use some help around here. Not that things are bad but they could be better, right? I mean, if I lived here...

Angela:  
(Angela finally is taking notice of the conversation that Benji is trying to start) I think I'm doing fine. I don't think you really want to move in with me. I'm... I'm not all candy canes and sprinkles Benji. I have my dark side too.

Benji:  
(Pacing all over) Yes, the famed dark side that likes to keep a Chihuahua and makes sugar cookies, right?

Angela:  
Hey! I put black icing on them!

Benji:  
I know. It stained my teeth for 3 days. I have pictures to prove it too. (Sniffs suddenly) Do you smell onion rings?

Angela:  
(Looks up momentarily) Onion rings? Are you feeling OK?

Benji:  
I'm fine. At least I think so. I just smell onion rings all of a sudden.

Angela:  
I bet it's the Whitehurst's across the street again. Steve has had a lot of time to grill out lately since he isn't working.

Benji:

That may as well be the answer I guess. I'd rather be smelling the neighbors cooking than my brain going bad.

Angela:

There is nothing wrong with your brain except it keeps telling you we should live together Benji. Even the dog runs away from me!

Benji:

Well I'm working to try and help you with that issue. (Motions to posters)

Angela:

I never asked you to do that. When he is hungry he'll come back home.

Benji:

I know you didn't ask. I'm doing it because I want you to be happy. Also, it's been a week and it's a Chihuahua. If it isn't hungry by now there is definitely a problem.

Angela:

You think it's a lost cause but you keep on trying?

Benji:

Someday you might change your mind and want me to move in. Crazy things happen.

Angela:

Benji! I was talking about the dog!

Benji:

I probably should have known that. (Suddenly the lights flicker inside the house with a slight crackle. Both Benji and Angela look up but the flicker goes away) That certainly says "This wiring is up to code..."

Angela:

It's an old house Benji but its the first time I've seen it do that. If it keeps it up I'll have to call in a professional. Not very good with electrical.

Benji:

You can build whatever you are building but you are not good with electrical?

Angela:

This is just a low voltage hobby. I don't want to be shocked to death because of a little flicker!

Benji:

Point taken. (Pause) How about this? I've had a long day so I'm going to get a drink in the kitchen. When I get back and once you are done... (at a loss for words so he points at the machine Angela is working on) capacitor-ating your machine we will go and walk around looking for Pablo and put up a few more "Lost" signs before I take you out to dinner tonight. Maybe go see the new Shiloh Connors movie?? That should be fun right?

Angela:

(Stops working to think on this) I guess we haven't been out in a while and my brain could use a rest. (Pauses) That sounds good to me.

Benji:

Great! That is a start. (Starts heading to the Kitchen) I am genuinely excited to do this with you. I hope you feel the same way. (Exits)

Angela:

I do feel the same way because I'm excited to do this... (talking about the capacitor being attached) There! It is in there.. Looking goooood. (She puts down her tools. There is a knock at the door. She looks at the kitchen and then crosses to the front door and opens it. At the door stands Emily. Emily is a friend of Angela's but more of a astrology/fortune teller vibe rather than goth) Emily! I didn't know you were coming over.

Emily:

(Comes in the house in a hurry) I know, a heads up would have been nice but even I, Emily teller of the future, didn't know this was going to happen by a long shot.

Angela:

Well, I mean, that's kind of your job though... right?

Emily:

Don't bother me with details about my profession. This is important.

Angela:

You charge people to tell the future and you just said you can't tell the future. That sounds like a pretty important detail of your profession to me.

Emily:

What??!! You'd rather them pay that money to a random 800 number instead of supporting a local business such as myself?

Angela:



I suppose you have a point.

Emily:

(Goes over to Angela and grabs her arms and says quietly) He's here.

Angela:

(No idea who he is) He's here?

Emily:

He's here!

Angela:

That's wonderful.

Emily:

I know, right!

Angela:

It would be more wonderful if I knew who you were talking about though, Emily?

Emily:

You are killing me Angela. (Takes her by the face) Literally, you are killing me to death! Seth!

Angela:

(Suddenly she is very excited as she knows exactly who Seth is) Seth! Seth Pluridon!?

Emily:

You got it! Finally we are on the same page and welcome to the conversation.

Angela:

THE Seth Pluridon...(starts pacing) the national leader of the Association of Spooks, Spectres, Haunts, Apparitions, and Terrors. That Seth Pluridon?

Emily:

Oh yeah. See, as the district representative for the organization (relaxes as if a weight is off her shoulders) I received a call from his receptionist or agent/assistant whatever saying he was coming through town on his book tour and he thought he would make an impromptu stop in and give a special demonstration just for us! You know I couldn't pass that up so I volunteered us to host the soiree.

Angela:

That is unbelievable. Where?

Emily:

Now there is the issue. See, he wants to keep it intimate. Low key. So a small crowd, which is fine with me seeing as our district membership consists of only you and me. Also, as we don't have money to rent a space on short notice AND I'm currently between domiciles...

Angela:

You mean you live with your parents that don't approve of your hobby or profession...

Emily:

Pbbbt! (Says the following the same way) Tomato. Tomato.

Angela:

You just said that the same way.

Emily:

Details, details.

Angela:

(Knows something is up and Emily is beating around the bush) What did you do Emily?

Emily:

I gave them your address (Angela is not surprised but at least reacts as if to say "oh crap"). Oh come on Angela. It's THE Seth Pluridon! What am I gonna say? No, we can't witness your greatness cause it might slightly inconvenience one of our members!?

Angela:

What day is this thing? (Unenthusiastically)

Emily:

Tonight.

Angela:

What?!

Emily:

In about 2 hours (Says uncomfortably)

Angela:

I can't.

Emily:

(Runs over to Angela to convince her) You have to.

Angela:

I have plans with Benji. I can't let him down.

Emily:

I'm your best friend. You can let ME down?

Angela:

You did this!! Wouldn't that be you letting you down or something.

Emily:

Please. Please. Please. Please. Please (ETC. starts getting in Angela's face and giving puppy dog eyes)

Angela:

Fine. (Emily celebrates her victory) What do I have to do?

Emily:

Nothing. Just stay out of their way. You could leave if you want and come back. I told them where you keep your spare key!

Angela:

Stop telling people that! It's supposed to be hidden.

Emily:

Afraid someone is gonna break in and steal your chair? It's a good neighborhood.

Angela:

What if they tried to steal my invention? That would be a tragedy.

Emily:

Your invention?! You got it to work?!

Angela:

No, I haven't even tested it yet. I'm kind of afraid of it.

Emily:

I would be too, but MAN if it did work would we blow the pants off of Seth. Just imagine how crazy that would be. Anyway, its my understanding that Seth and his team are going to show up about 30 minutes before the demonstration to set up, then we all enter and mingle. Make connections. Who knows, maybe we make it into his next book? Eh? (Bumps elbows)

Angela:  
You owe me for this.

Emily:  
You are gonna owe me after the single best night of your life...(pause) look... that came out wrong but I stand by it. I am going back to my apartment...

Angela:  
Parent's basement...

Emily:  
Whatever. I'm going to get changed and I'll meet you back here in 2 hours.

Angela:  
Emily?

Emily:  
(Stops before the door) Yeah?

Angela:  
Promise me it will be worth the upset look on Benji's face when I break this to him.

Emily:  
If he already knows this part of your life he is going to understand. It's THE Seth Pluridon after all. This is something you just don't pass up.

Angela:  
I don't tell him about this. Ever. I'm afraid he will think I'm strange and leave.

Emily:  
At some point, you're gonna have to let him in. He may surprise you. (Pause) I'll see you very soon. (Walks out the door and lets out a WOOOOHOO)

Angela:  
I hope you are right.

Benji:  
(Enters from the kitchen.) Oh good, you're done with your machine. I thought I was gonna have to pry you off with a crowbar and WD40 but you didn't have that so I was going to substitute it for a long stick and some Pam spray. Anyway, I think I left a change of clothes in your bedroom, I'm gonna change so we can go out.

Angela:  
Actually can we have a rain check on that Benji?

Benji:  
(Benji stops right in his tracks and turns back to Angela) A rain check? Is something wrong? I mean we can stay in if you would like...

Angela:  
No. Nothing is wrong. Something just came up and some people are coming over here unexpectedly.

Benji:  
Oh, uh, sure. Yeah. That's ok. No sweat. (He is incredibly let down but trying to put on a smile)

Angela:  
(Shows immediate relief) I'm so glad that you are fine with this.

Benji:  
I mean, fine, is a bit of a four letter word here. I'm still a little upset. But, I mean I can just hang around while the other people are here and we can just relax.

Angela:  
(Relief is gone and now it is just awkward) Actually, no. I'm gonna.... Need you to leave.

Benji:  
(Is now taking it very personal and paces a bit) Oh, they don't want me here?

Angela:  
(Defensive) No, that's not it, Benji.

Benji:  
So, YOU don't want me here?

Angela:  
No! (Thinks about it) I mean technically... That is a trick question! I don't have to answer that!

Benji:  
What is this all about? Does this have something to do with your machine you are working on?

Angela:  
No! Well, they are related subject matter but one doesn't affect the other.

Benji:

(Starting to get aggravated) So the secret people and the secret project are related but I can't know about it and they don't know about each other? Sounds about right. I've never been allowed to meet your friends, family, or know what you are doing. You are always keeping me sidelined.

Angela:

I do it because....

Benji:

You're embarrassed of me, right? The delivery boy. Better hide him away. Don't let anybody see.

Angela

Not you! I'm not embarrassed of you! I'm embarrassed of me?

Benji:

You? For what!? You're perfect!

Angela:

Because (long pause and a sigh) because I'm a member of a local chapter of a national ghost hunters organization.

Benji:

A what now?

Angela:

I'm...(Clears throat) the vice president of the local chapter of the Association of Spooks, Spectres, Haunts, Apparitions, and Terrors. (pauses) yeah. I told you. Embarrassing.

Benji:

Um... (starts holding stomach) All of a sudden I don't feel so well. I need to sit down. (Sits at the table.)

Angela:

I knew you would react this way. I mean I knew you would be surprised but not really fake illness.

Benji:

NO! No. It's not that news. I don't care about that. I'm just glad to know now. Its my stomach. It just decided to do cart wheels. Might have had some bad turkey in my lunch or something.  
(Suddenly better) Huh... all of a sudden that feeling is gone. Crazy.

Angela:

You're not embarrassed of me? Of my hobby?

Benji:

I've heard crazier things. Your group doesn't sacrifice goats or anything, right?

Angela:

I mean, not in our district. (Benji doesn't know how to take this) Relax. That was a joke.

Benji:

Of course it was. So you hunt ghosts, huh?

Angela:

Me? No, I'm just a believer in the astral plane and the unexplainable. It's not like I believe in Squirrel-Men or anything. We all just get kind of lumped together. My friend Emily made me join the group. She is obsessed with the leader. Buys all of his crap. Books, merchandise, even a soft drink he claims could potentially knock you into the astral plane.

Benji:

What does that mean? Into the astral plane?

Angela:

I guess that it's "out of this world"? At least that is the slogan.

Benji:

Doesn't that mean that it kills you?

Angela:

See, that is what we call a gray area. Some people believe that if you are open minded enough you can enter the astral plane. Others say you have to die.

Benji:

What do you believe?

Angela:

Funny that you should ask that. Look, this is really hard for me to let you in to see this side of me and I really need you to be supportive of what I'm about to say, ok.

Benji:

I will do my best, but how crazy can it get. You already told me you're in a ghost club.

Angela:

Vice president thank you very much.

Benji:

My mistake.

Angela:

Ok. (Carefully continues) As I said, this machine I'm working on is related to the ghost club but not connected to the group. The only reason for that is that it hasn't been tested.

Benji:

So, it sniffs out ghosts or something?

Angela:

It does a bit more than that.

Benji:

More than that?

Angela:

Yeah. You remember what I told you about that soft drink...

Benji:

That it could knock you into the astral plane or something? Right?

Angela:

Well, (Picks up the machine) this can really do it.

Benji:

(In shock) Pardon? (Pause) Mind running that by me again?

Angela:

It can transport you to the ghost plane theoretically

Benji:

It can kill you

Angela:

No, I said transport.



Benji:  
This machine kills you. (Continually becoming more worried)

Angela:  
Remember, you said you'd be supportive.

Benji:  
I said I would do my best, but you literally just told me you created a death machine and you are holding it in your hands like a clock radio! (Suddenly a book falls off a shelf behind Benji and hits the ground and he screams) Holy crap!

Angela:  
Quit getting so worked up. You are causing a mess (motions to the book with one of her hands)

Benji:  
I didn't do that and PLEASE keep two hands on that thing!

Angela:  
Calm down! It's not even on!

Benji:  
That does make me feel a little better. (Faking relief)

Angela:  
It does!?

Benji:  
No! Of course it doesn't. That just means it doesn't want to kill me YET!

Angela:  
You're acting like a child. (She takes her hand off the machine again to scold him)

Benji:  
Stop taking your hand off of it!

Angela:  
It's SOOOO heavy too... (acts like she is going to drop it)

Benji:  
What are you doing? (Keeps acting like he might have to dive after it)

Angela:

Relax! (She takes a step forward and Benji takes a step back) Oh really. That bad? (Starts chasing him around the room with it) I'm gonna get you!

Benji:

Are you kidding me?! (Runs away)

Angela:

I'm gonna get ya (Playfully. She is now loving this)

Benji:

I'm gonna die! I'm gonna DIE!!

Angela:

(Stops running by the table) You are NOT going to die. It does not kill you! It pushes your PHYSICAL body into the astral plane as well. That means... no body. So there!

Benji:

Great! A serial killers best friend! It kills them AND disposes of the body. No muss, No fuss right!? Can't wait to see that infomercial.

Angela:

Are you really that afraid of a little machine?

Benji:

I do like living. I mean, how are you so calm? I don't even understand how it works.

Angela:

I am calm BECAUSE I know how it works. Would you feel better if I told you?

Benji:

No, but try anyway I guess.

Angela:

Well it sends out a pulse at the correct frequency to push the physical form of a person into the astral plane without harm at an "estimated" 50 ft.

Benji:

Estimated 50ft?! How do you know that? How can I trust "estimated?"

Angela:

You don't have to. You just have to trust that I do. (She puts the machine on the table and walks over to comfort Benji) I'm sorry this frightens you, but this is my passion and quite frankly a huge breakthrough in the field. (She hugs Benji. Suddenly a loud electrical squeal and hum is heard)

Benji:

(Still holding on to Angela) Angela, what is that sound? You hear it too, right?

Angela:

(Not freaking out or letting go) That is the sound of my machine powering on and getting primed to send a pulse that knocks us into the astral plane.

Benji:

Of course it is. (There is a sound of a deep bass boom, the lights flicker and then everything is normal again. The two continue their hug for a few seconds before anyone speaks. They are still embraced) Are we alive?

Angela:

I don't know.

Benji:

Are we dead?

Angela:

I don't know that either. (They slowly let go of each other and are touching their appendages to see if they are alive)

Benji:

I mean, I don't feel dead.

Angela:

Me either. Maybe the capacitor was bad? (Starts heading toward the machine)

Benji:

(Grabs Angela's arm) Whoa there! Don't go near that thing!

Angela:

I have to. I made it. (Goes to go to machine again and is again stopped by Benji)

Benji:

That thing set itself off. It's not safe. You can't go over there.

Angela:

Would YOU rather go and investigate it yourself?

Benji:

Heck no... but you shouldn't either!

Angela:

Watch me (She shakes loose of his grip and walks over and is looking the machine over but not touching it) Hmm...

Benji:

(Walks over too but as if any move he makes could set the machine off like a bomb) Hmm what? I don't know if this is such a good idea. (As they are talking Tucker enters the room from in between Upstage and Downstage Right where there is an unseen break in the wall either with flats staggered to hide it or with a fabric covering so that people can slip through. Tucker is a slob and walks around in boxer shorts. He is a super slacker content with coasting by. He walks to the window in upstage center, scratches his butt and walks back to where he came from during the next few lines)

Angela:

If what is such a good idea? The person that built the machine looking at it to figure out what happened and how to make sure it doesn't happen again?.

Benji:

Perhaps nobody should be near it.

Angela:

It looks like it's still technically on. The light is still on. So it is getting power.

Benji:

Obviously, of course.

Angela:

(Bothered by the "obviously") Are you an expert on my invention now Mr. What's-a-capacitor?

Benji:

Sorry. So what does that mean?

Angela:

I'm not really sure yet.

Benji:

Is it gonna blow up?

Angela:  
It can't blow up. It is very efficient.

Benji:  
Yes, that's what I was concerned about. The efficiency of the death box.

Angela:  
It's not a death box and I don't know why you are still so scared. It obviously didn't work. (By now Tucker has left the stage)

Benji:  
Obviously.

Angela:  
Obviously!!

Benji:  
I have a small slightly silly question.

Angela:  
Brilliant. What is your question?

Benji:  
Did a man in boxer shorts just walk through the wall, scratch his butt, and walk back through the wall or am I hallucinating?

Angela:  
I'll be honest. I saw it and hoped I was hallucinating.

Benji:  
Huh, Great. (Freaked out) I'm just gonna go home now. (Walks to front door but can't open it)  
Angela, (Nervous chuckle) I can't open the door. My... uh... hand is going through it.

Angela:  
Really. (Stuck in a shocked state) That is unfortunate Benji.

Benji:  
Try turning the machine off!

Angela:  
(Nervously) I can't. I can't touch it!

Benji:  
Are we dead now?

Angela:  
I don't think dead is the right term. (Pacing back and forth) Maybe "Physically Displaced?"

Tucker:  
(Pops back into the living room) Hey, can you guys keep it down for a bit. It's like really loud and I am concentrating on watching the neighbors.(Angela jumps into Benji's arms. Angela and Benji scream and point at Tucker and embrace out of fear) Stop it. That is like the opposite of what I just asked for. I mean, I guess I should have expected that from you two though. You guys don't listen to each other. Why would you listen to little old me? (There is a pause as Benji and Angela are stricken with silence) OK, good talk. I'm gonna go spy on the neighbors now.

Angela:  
Wait. (Stepping toward him speaking slow and deliberately) Who are you?

Benji:  
(To Angela) That ghost was just speaking to us clearly and pretty fast. I don't think you have to talk like that.

Angela:  
Why would you call him a ghost? You don't know what he is!

Tucker:  
This is gonna be a whole 'thing' isn't it. There goes my afternoon.

Benji:  
Sorry to inconvenience you, sir.

Tucker:  
I guess that helps. Anyway, I'm Tucker. You can call me Tucker, Tuk, Tuk-man, T-money, um... Busy B... basically anything as long as there is eye contact. Eye contact is very important.

Benji;  
Are you an Angel?

Tucker:  
Excuse me?

Benji:

Like a Guardian Angel or something?

Tucker:

Guy.... My man... Benji-matic... I'm in boxer shorts and have a 5'o clock shadow. No, I'm not an Angel. Besides, do you know how the good book describes Angels? Terrifying. One is a bunch of wheels covered in eyeballs. No thank you.

Angela:

What are you doing here?

Tucker:

Well, I am supposed to guide you but it's too late for that.

Benji:

Guide us to what? A light? Did we miss it?

Angela:

I'm confused

Tucker:

Not that important. Why don't we just relax for a bit. Take a load off. You've got nowhere to be.

Benji:

We are dead then! (Freaking out)

Tucker:

Technically no...

Angela:

Ha! (To Benji)

Tucker:

But also frighteningly yes.

Benji:

Ha! (To Angela. Pauses) Wait... I don't want to be right about that!

Tucker:

Ok I guess relaxing ain't gonna happen.

Benji:

You think?!

Tucker:

Well let's get down to it. Angela. Angela... banana-fana-fo-fangela. Your invention worked just as you wanted but you didn't install a way to turn it off once you arrive to the spiritual astral plane. Now, you are stuck and we are not 100% on what that means just yet. When I know I will let you know... in like a reasonable amount of time.

Angela:

And we can't turn it off because....

Tucker:

I mean, you did just see me walk through the wall, am I right. See, that's why I am here, to answer your most dire of questions! You can just fire away on those bad boys. Rapid fire. Final Jeopardy this thing.

Angela:

If we can't touch things and can go through solid objects, why don't we go through the floor.... Or the earth itself. What keeps us in our position on the earth since the earth is revolving? Does the earth exist in both the physical and astral plane simultaneously?

Tucker:

Pass.

Benji:

If our body got pushed along with us to the astral plane, why isn't it here so we can interact with things?

Tucker:

Pass

Angela:

How long have you been watching me? Have you seen me naked?

Tucker:

Maybe this was a bad idea to start with. Nevermind the questions. You are obviously just feeling stressed right now. Do you guys ever meditate? (Suddenly there is a sound of a small dog barking by the window) Saved by the dog...

Benji:

What dog?

Tucker:



Duh, Pablo. The dog you've been looking for! Do I get the reward? (Laughs to himself)

Angela:

He finally came back!? Where are you boy? (Makes kissy noises)

Tucker:

Finally? He comes back all the time but for some reason will never come inside. I guess he hasn't figured out he can walk through walls.

Angela:

He's dead..?

Tucker:

Yeah, from what I hear. He was half eaten and buried under a tree in one of your neighbor's yards. Which is just (Laughing until he realizes he is the only one laughing and awkwardly stops) just horrific and shame on who or whatever did it to such a sweet animal.

Benji:

Guess I can stop posting fliers.

Tucker:

Hey, it is commendable that you put so much effort in. Good on you, cause I NEVER would have done that.

Angela:

So your job here was to guide us, right?

Tucker:

Pretty much

Angela:

Guide us to what?

Tucker:

More like guide you away from. You follow?

Benji:

I'm a little slow on the uptake. Could you clarify that?

Tucker:

Dude! I mean, we can't just have living people come here and kick it with the dead you know! It would cause chaos. I was supposed to just suuuuubtly nudge you away from the project.

Benji:

Well safe to say you kind of stink at completing your objective.

Tucker:

You two are just too thick to see the signs that I dropped you!

Angela:

What signs?

Tucker:

Oh how about "I feel like I just had an arctic blast to the face"

Benji:

That was you?! (By now, Angela has blocked Benji and Tucker out and is trying to formulate a plan of attack)

Tucker:

From this side we can only interact so much. But it is fun to do. And fun to hear how people rationalize it. You remember that sick feeling you had in your stomach?

Benji:

Let me guess, that was you too.

Tucker:

Truth!

Benji:

Why did you do all the uncomfortable stuff to me?

Tucker:

You are way more fun to watch squirm.

Angela:

(Snaps out of thought) I've got it! I have got it figured out!

Benji:

Please be talking about how to get out of this mess!

Angela:

Of course. And it is so simple, we literally have to do nothing at all.

Tucker:  
My kind of plan.

Angela:  
The power source on this machine is not that big. Once the battery dies it turns off and stops sending the pulse keeping us here. Boom! We return back to the physical plane.

Benji:  
That's all?

Angela:  
That's it.

Tucker:  
I like this plan. I've got good feelings about this plan.

Benji:  
So we can just relax and everything will be ok?

Angela:  
It is kind of fool proof. As long as the machine turns off we are in the clear.

Tucker:  
Well I guess my job here is done (Takes a stance like he is about to go to heaven only for it to be shown he is just stretching. He cracks his back and then turns back to Benji and Angela) You guys wanna play 20 questions or something? Charades?! Oh, how about "Never have I ever?"

Benji:  
I think we'll pass. (Concerned about Tucker) Uh... Tucker is it ok if I ask you something?

Tucker:  
Yeah, of course. It's my job. It is fully in the description that I am supposed to answer the questions, well, unless you ask why you don't go through the floor. That.... That one is gonna bother me for quite a while.

Benji:  
It's just that you said your job was done and we just assumed once your job was done you would... you know... move on.

Tucker:  
You mean, like, move on and see the big guy upstairs or something. Yeah, I don't think that is entirely in the cards for me.

Benji:

You don't think you deserve to? Doesn't it get lonely here all by yourself?

Tucker:

Deserve to? I mean I'm having fun right now. Just because people don't see me doesn't mean I'm lonely. I've got friends. I'm not the only ghost wandering around out here.

Angela:

So you can go where you want? You are not stuck here in the house?

Tucker:

Stuck here? Why would I be stuck here in your house?

Angela:

I assumed that's why the same ghosts haunt the same places for years. I thought that they were stuck where they died.

Tucker:

Chyeah, like I died here?! No way ma'am!

Benji:

How did you, if you don't mind me asking?

Tucker:

That's a little personal but, I'll allow it. (Then he dodges the question)

Angela:

So are you going to tell us or keep us in suspense?

Tucker:

Tell you what?

Angela:

How you died.

Tucker:

I just did, didn't I?

Benji:

No, you just said you'd allow us to ask.

Tucker:  
Potato. Potato.

Angela:  
Why do people keep doing that? Just tell us. I'm way too curious now.

Tucker:  
Oh... well, it was only the most awesome way ever. Sky diving... through like flaming hoops. Should have been there. It was amazing. I could feel my cheeks flapping like this (Pinches his own cheeks and flaps them about making a strange noise.

Angela:  
You went skydiving... in your boxers?

Tucker:  
What can I say? I like a breeze. (Suddenly the lights begin to flicker and there is a thundercrash and sound of lightning followed by a creepy laugh. Benji and Angela are in a scared embrace again only for a grim reaper to show up on the stage. They scream. The reaper's hand slowly lifts as if to point at the couple only to quickly remove the hood and mask from its face)

Ted:  
I'll tell you what. Could they make this crap less breathable? I mean, I can't die but I imagine this is what asphyxiation feels like. You know what... I'm going to write a letter to management about this. Official letter head and everything. I kid you NOT!

Tucker:  
What is happening Teddy!! (Ted and Tucker share an elaborate handshake and hug)

Ted:  
What up Tuk-boat captain? Are you and your little friends doing well?

Tucker:  
Angela and Benji may I introduce you to Ted Grimm Jr. the current working grim reaper

Ted:  
And may I add best looking to that as well?

Angela:  
Current working? Do you do shifts or something?

Ted:

What he means is that my Dad, Ted Grimm SR, was the original. I'm trying it out for a hundred years to see if it's a good fit. Honestly though, most days I end up here just kickin' it with my bro Tucker.

Benji:

Most days? Tucker, how long have you really been here?

Tucker:

What do you mean? Dead?

Benji:

No, here in Angela's house.

Tucker:

Who really keeps track of how long they are on assignment?! Like I have places to be, am I right?

Angela:

We assumed the assignment started today. You know, when the warnings started.

Tucker:

Awe, that is adorabl-ly naive. Let's not get bogged down by the logistics of it all. We are here and have a plan. Smooth sailing from here on out. All is well.

Angela:

Well, welcome to my home Mr. Grimm... again apparently.

Ted:

Pleasure is all mine. (Ted pulls out a chair and sits and Benji and Angela gasp excitedly)

Benji:

You moved the chair!

Angela:

Yeah he moved the chair!

Ted:

If you are impressed by that just wait until I move out the table and show off my mean dance moves. Ever see someone in a full length robe do the worm? It's a sight.

Angela:

No! You can move things in the physical plane! That means...

Benji:  
You can turn off the deathbox and save us

Angela:  
Not a deathbox.

Benji:  
What do you want me to call it!?

Angela:  
(Struggles with finding a new name to call it for a moment before giving up) Fine. You can call it  
Deathbox for now... patent pending.

Ted:  
Sorry there, thing one and two, I am unable to interfere in the affairs of the living or in this case  
the living dead or any combination of the two words. I only deal in dead dead people. If I were to  
flip that switch I'd be terminated. That's not just a cute nickname for being fired. No, no. That's  
cease to exist anymore. Capiشه!

Benji:  
You were able to do stuff in A Christmas Carol...

Ted:  
Did this bag of bones just bring up A Christmas Carol! Boy don't make me deliver you to the  
gates right now! That's the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come. I'm the Grim Reaper pal. Not the  
same. The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come couldn't hold the sweat from my scythe.

Tucker:  
(Gets inbetween Ted and Benji) Everybody simmer down. They didn't mean anything by it Ted.  
They are having a rough day. They need some nurturing!

Ted:  
I don't go to him and tell him how to deliver packages better. Which I could! I deliver souls all  
day everyday you know. Oh and speaking of nurturing... that neighbor Holly was getting ready  
to water her plants next door. If you hurry you can catch her.

Tucker:  
Yes! I've been waiting. Those hydrangeas aren't going to deadhead themselves. (Turns to Benji  
and Angela) Sorry, but she is so particular about how she waters and the temperature and all  
these details. I find it fascinating. It's like watching surgery. I never miss it. If you'll just excuse  
me. (Tucker heads down the hall to check it out)

Angela:

(After an awkward silence) So... how do you know Tucker?

Ted:

Well I've known him ever since he died. I was there to get him.

Benji:

Weird. So right after the accident you were the first one he saw.

Ted:

Oh yeah, and he was embarrassed! As a Grim Reaper you aren't supposed to laugh at people that have just experienced something like that but I couldn't help it. I guess after a while I'll stop finding it so funny, but that day is not today (laughs)

Benji:

That's kind of mean. I thought you were friends.

Ted:

I couldn't help it. I bet you wouldn't be able to hold a straight face either.

Angela:

Lots of people have accidents skydiving!

Ted:

Skydiving?

Benji:

Yeah, through flaming.... Rings....

Ted:

Is that what he told you? I'm surprised he didn't add "Blindfolded" and "handcuffed" as well if you were gonna buy all the crap he was shoveling! Look, I like Tucker, I really do but he embellishes things a little too much OR he will straight up lie to you.

Angela:

He lied to us?

Ted:

Listen, Tucker died because he choked on one of those onion ring flavored chips. It's ridiculous because those chips are a ring and even if swallowed WHOLE you can still breathe because there is a big hole in the middle. It did not work that way for him.



Angela:

Okay so he lied because he was embarrassed. I might have done that too if I choked on an onion chip. I can give that a pass.

Ted:

Don't you want to know how long he has really been here? Or why he isn't haunting someone else?

Benji:

I would.

Angela:

It has crossed my mind quite a bit.

Ted:

Now I don't know all the details in full alright. Normally a ghost haunts where they die. He was relocated to this house.

Angela:

Does that happen much?

Ted:

No! You honestly never see that happen. He was a quiet haunt in a house in this neighborhood that is no longer around.

Benji:

What happened to the house?

Ted:

Disappeared through time and space for all I know! I said I don't have all the details. You're missing the point. A ghost has to have somewhere to call a home. Once the home was gone he was given the opportunity, A CHOICE, to move on or come here. Nobody gets that! Nobody gets to choose!

Angela:

Who tells him this stuff?

Ted:

An angel of course. Scared the beejeezus out of him too. Where did you think the orders come from? Dwarves?

Benji:  
You mean that we COULD possibly see an Angel while here?

Ted:  
Gross. Why would you want to?

Angela:  
Who wouldn't?

Ted:  
Me. You know what Angels look like. A bunch of wheels covered in eyeballs. And that's if you are lucky.

Benji:  
This is the second time we have heard that description. I don't want to see one anymore.

Ted:  
Can we get back on subject? I got places to be eventually. Tucker chose to stay here. Crazy right. I've been coming here to try and help him commit and take the next step. That's my whole job.

Benji:  
But you are still his friend, right?

Ted:  
Of course, that's exactly why I don't want him to stick around here with you two. No offense.

Benji:  
None taken.

Angela:  
The guy must just love being a ghost.

Ted:  
You know, you seem to be taking the whole astral plane thing really well.

Angela:  
On the outside we are calm but inside we are still very much in shock.

Benji:  
Honestly, we are just biding our time.

Ted:  
What do you mean "bidding your time"? This isn't a rest area.

Angela:  
We are just waiting for the power to go out on the deathbox so that we go back to our plane of existence.

Ted:  
You think the power in it will die before midnight?

Angela:  
Probably not. Maybe a couple hours later or more.

Ted:  
Wait...so he didn't tell you?

Benji:  
(Starts holding his stomach) I'm starting to not feel good again. What didn't he tell us?

Ted:  
His mission is to get you back to your plane by midnight. That is the end goal. You two need to get back to your plane by midnight tonight or your form will stay here forever!!

Angela and Benji:  
WHAT!?

Benji:  
(Panicking and holding on to Angela) What are we going to do?

Angela:  
I don't know but we have to do something quick. (Tucker comes back from the hall)

Tucker:  
Something quick about what? Do you need some of my ghostly guidance?

Angela:  
Tucker... wanna play twenty questions?

Tucker:  
I don't like the sound of how you said that. It sounded angry. I don't do well with angry.

Ted:

This is about to get awkward. (Fakes looking at a watch) Would you look at the time. I gotta go reap a soul. Death waits for no man... yada yada. Bye (Leaves to the kitchen)

Tucker:  
What did he say to you?

Benji:  
Just a little tidbit of information that we should have been told from the beginning!

Angela:  
Tucker, why didn't you tell us we only had until midnight to get back?

Tucker:  
We had a plan. That thing (Pointing to the deathbox) will die and POOF you're back in your bodies and everyone is happy. Yay!

Angela:  
That only works IF it dies before midnight.

Tucker:  
Which it totally will! (Very positive and then less positive) Right?

Angela:  
No! It's extremely efficient for a home project. Waste not and all that crap!

Tucker:  
Good for you over achiever! You want a medal?

Angela:  
No! I want a body! (Suddenly there is a knock at the door and Angela and Benji gasp)

Benji:  
(Whispers) Who is it?

Angela:  
(Whispers) I don't know. Maybe they'll go away.

Tucker:  
Why are you guys whispering when they can't hear you? Are you trying to whisper so I don't hear you cause I have really good hearing?

Angela:

Why don't you go haunt someone else for a little while?

Tucker:

No need to get upset. It was a perfectly simple question.

Angela:

No need to get upset? Your incompetence was going to result in us not having vital information to get home. Luckily Death showed up...

Benji:

I just don't think I'll ever get used to that phrase...

Olive:

(From outside) Hello. Anybody home?

Benji:

I don't recognize the voice

Angela:

Me either.

Tucker:

I have some input: Who cares? (Both Benji and Angela's hands shoot up to raised positions) Ok, united front. I can respect that. You two are finally started listening to each other! That's a huge breakthrough.

Seth:

(Walks in. He is handsome and mysterious and dark.) Well they wouldn't tell us where the hidden key was if they didn't want us to use it, Olive. (He enters followed by Olive who is also dark but a businessy dark and carries a clipboard.)

Olive:

I suppose that is a true statement but...

Seth:

(Dramatically throws his hands out and puts them up to his head) WAIT!!!

Angela:

Oh my gosh! I almost forgot that he was coming (Kind of fan girling)

Benji:

Who is this psycho?

Angela:

You mean psychic! It's Set Pluridon! The foremost expert in the field and the national leader of the Association of Spooks, Spectres, Haunts, Apparitions, and Terrors

Benji:

The guy with the soft drink that kills you?!

Seth:

(Really over showing he is focused and engaged) I sense.... A presence. (Benji and Angela's jaws almost hit the floor. Tucker is unimpressed)

Benji:

He can sense us?! This is crazy!

Angelica:

He is the best of the best! I always knew his teachings were real and true and full of...

Olive:

Seth, there is nobody here.

Seth:

Oh thank god. Doing that stupid act is exhausting.

Angela:

Full of CRAP!!

Tucker:

So this is the guy you were gonna skip out on a date with my man Benji for?

Benji:

Don't take my side!

Seth:

Alright Olive. What the heck are we doing here?

Benji:

Besides brain washing the gullible?

Angela:

Hey!

Olive:  
Brain washing the gullible of course! Our specialty.