

Ghoul in the Graveyard

by

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FADE IN:

Darkness. We hear someone TYPING and a CLICKING of a computer mouse. The screen slowly fades into hands that are tapping on the keyboard along with the music.

INT. BASEMENT BEDROOM - DAY

VENUS is the twenty-something young woman who is on her computer. She is sitting at a desk and scrolling on a page on the internet. She stops every once in a while and dances in her seat, flips her hair, and the like while the VO is going on.

VENUS (V.O.)

Yes, I know. I've resorted to looking for an apartment on the internet. I'm Venus. This is Pickles. We've known each other since high school...some cliché time where we somehow found each-other in the drama and woes of teenage angst. Now we're out of school and stuck with each other. I'm trying to make it as an author, but all I seem to do is leave my nearly empty document open as I scroll the internet for hopes of inspiration. Pickles works at a convenience store. Oh, Pickles. I love her to death and all, but when you've been close with someone for a while, you end up acting like an old married couple.

VENUS stops scrolling at ad listing... \$500 a month for an old house. Saves it, sends it to PICKLES' phone. PICKLES is sitting lazily on the sofa sorting out a Magic card deck.

VENUS

Dude! Check your phone!

PICKLES

I will, Venus...Just give me one second...I need to pick the best cards for this deck...

VENUS

No!

VENUS gets up and grabs the cards from PICKLES' hands.

PICKLES

Don't ruin those! Some of them are worth a shit ton!

VENUS

Check your effing phone.

PICKLES rolls her eyes.

PICKLES

Fine. (Looks at her phone, annoyed then suddenly happy.) 500 bucks. Seriously?

VENUS

That's EVERYTHING included. I mean, except for...internet and um...electric, water, sewage, and...um..pretty much everything else, but I mean...I'm thinking that's a good deal!

PICKLES

Why don't we go check it out? Do you have the address?

VENUS

Yeah...I google mapped it and did street view...it's...across the street from a graveyard.

PICKLES

That's perfect! My parents will NEVER want to visit me there! So..can I uh...please have my cards back. I wanted to enter into a tournament so I need a perfect deck.

VENUS

Here (hands the cards back) Have fun making your Magical Lightning Super Armor Deck.

PICKLES

You insult me. (wide-eyed, laughs after a few moments) But no really...that's not what kind of deck I have...

VENUS

Right. I've e-mailed the property management and hopefully we can find out if we can check it out tomorrow morning or whenever. You're off right?

PICKLES

I am indeed off work...that is if Fail-Mart doesn't call me in again.

VENUS

Alright, I'll get you up...um...whenever I hear back from the peeps.

EXT. DREAMSTATE GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

DARKNESS.

VENUS (V.O.)

I slept a long time. Probably too long.

VENUS walks into the graveyard, fog and mist are clouding her vision...she comes upon a man leaning against a tree. He smiles showing vampire teeth. She laughs. She hugs him and he pulls off his hooded cloak. He is handsome in the moonlight. He bites her neck and she has a look of dramatic shock and fear. She faints. The dream ends.

INT. BASEMENT BEDROOM - DAY

CELL PHONE RING. VENUS shoots straight up, and wipes her face. She yawns. She looks at her phone and smiles.

VENUS

Weird dream... (shakes it off) Sweet. Someone can meet us at 10. Now...all I need to do is...shower and get dressed in half an hour. No big deal.

Heads to the bathroom, towel in hand. She hears the shower running.

VENUS

I hate living with my friend's family.

VENUS leans up against the wall. She shakes her head and heads back to Pickles' room. She changes really fast and throws a pillow at Pickle's head.

VENUS

Get up! We need to go see that place!

ZOOM IN to house in front of the graveyard. ZOOM OUT with the two standing in front of the house. They NOD. SHAKE hands. SIGN paperwork, MOVE in boxes.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

VENUS is laying on the couch fanning herself with a Gothic Beauty magazine.

VENUS (V.O.)

Finally, after all this bull shit

She takes a sip of coconut water

VENUS (V.O. CONT.)

I have my own place again.

She gets up and takes a look out the window into the graveyard. There's a man hanging around a tree. He starts walking back towards the houses and heads next door. She shrugs.

VENUS

Weirdo. (walks back to the couch) So now what?

PICKLES

(Yells from the kitchen)
What?!

VENUS

(yells back)
I said: SO NOW WHAT?!

PICKLES

(comes into the room)
What do you mean now what? We have our own place. No parents to worry about. What else can we do? Relax, maybe?

VENUS

That...or I was thinking...Party.

PICKLES

Party?

VENUS

Party.

INT. CAR - EVENING

VENUS is driving, PICKLES is the passenger. They seem lost in thought, trying to concentrate on where they are. Finally, PICKLES speaks up.

PICKLES

Do you know where a liquor store even is?

VENUS

I'm sure there's one around here...How hard can it be to find? There are enough alcoholics in this town anyways to have one on every corner. One would think.

PICKLES

(points) oohh! There's one! It even has a drive thru!

VENUS

(puts blinker on) a Drive thru liquor store.

PICKLES

That's kind of...dumb.

VENUS

(drives up to the liquor store and parks)
What the fuck are we doing, Pickles?

PICKLES

What do you mean?

VENUS

What the fuck are we doing? You're my only friend, how can we "party" if there's no one to come "party"?

PICKLES

Simple. We could buy a shit ton of alcohol...go back home...play Super Smash Bros. Which is fucking awesome and I'd whoop your ass...Or we can go home...Get hot. I mean me-not-wearing-a-videogame-tshirt hot and pulling-stuff-out-of -the-back-of-my-closet hot. Go to a bar or nightclub...or wherever has hot guys and booze. Well, I'm not old enough, but we can go to an 18 and over place! Party there. What do you think?

VENUS

I think...

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The two are holding up and swaying along with the music.

VENUS

Not quite sure that this is partying.

PICKLES

Just...be patient. Perhaps something eventful will happen.

The bartender gets their attention and gives them some fruity drinks. Venus raises a hand questioning, but the bartender nods his head to a man approaching the girls.

NICO

You can put down those waters now.

VENUS smirks annoyingly and nods at the bartender. They take their drinks reluctantly. Venus looks down at her drink and back up at NICO. Her smirk is still visible.

VENUS

To what do I owe the pleasure?

NICO

My name is Niccoli but you may call me Nico.

VENUS

And?

PICKLES starts drinking, mouths 'whats this' to the bartender who tells her it's a Shirley Temple. She becomes mildly intrigued about the mysterious stranger.

NICO

I'm actually your neighbor...I thought I'd welcome you to the neighborhood.

VENUS

We're not exactly in our neighborhood, are we? It's actually kinda...far. Actually, it's like...across town.

NICO

No, we are not. I'm merely being friendly, no need to be harsh.

VENUS

Well, I appreciate the drink. Thank you.

Venus finally gulps it down and places it on the bar.

VENUS

Shall we?

Venus places out her hand for Pickles to grab and she leads her out the on the dance floor. The two start dancing nerdily.

INT. VENUS AND PICKLES' PLACE - MORNING

Venus wakes up with yesterday's makeup on and video game noise. She looks up and Pickles is sitting on the couch playing video games. She pauses and looks over to Venus. She smiles.

VENUS

How can you be smiling? It's too early and I'm entirely too hungover to smile.

PICKLES

One, it's 1 in the afternoon and two, I'm not hungover at all.

VENUS

Well aren't you special, since you're not even old enough to drink. I need coffee.

PICKLES

Let's go to the coffee shop down the street then. We can walk.

VENUS

Walking?

PICKLES

Which would be worse at the moment...walking
or being in a car?

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Venus and Pickles are walking down the sidewalk, heading to the coffee shop.

PICKLES

I told you that you'd feel better after a shower.

VENUS

I do feel alot better...but I still need my coffee...

VENUS sees a "missing" poster on a fence near them.

PICKLES

Hey! That's Mrs. Gillespie. She was just a few houses down from us. I helped her carry in groceries a couple days ago. Now she's missing?

VENUS

Did she like...run away or something?
(laughs)

PICKLES

She's in her 80's I think. Where would she go?

VENUS

Well, maybe she got lost or something when she was trying to go somewhere? It happens a lot to old people. They lose it.

PICKLES

I don't know. She seemed pretty "there" when I saw her...

The two continue walking and they finally reach the coffee shop.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Venus and Pickles order their drinks and sit down, waiting for them to make it.

BARISTER

Venus...and Pickles? Venus and Pickles.

Pickles goes up to grab the coffees. Everyone else in the shop is staring and someone snickers.

PICKLES

Does anyone want to know how I got the nickname Pickles? Anyone? Anyone? Yeah, that's what I thought. (under breath) Fuckers. (walks back to table)

VENUS

Calm down a bit.

NICO

Hey you guys! (waves from across the room)

VENUS

Do I know you?

PICKLES

Oh, you're our neighbor Nico. How about that (looks at Venus raising her eyebrow)

NICO

You've forgotten me already?

VENUS

Oh no, I just tend to ignore stalkers.

NICO

Stalker? I'm no stalker.

VENUS

Then how do you explain knowing that we were your neighbors in the first place?

NICO

Um, I saw you move in. No offense, but you two aren't exactly subtle.

<cuts to Venus and Pickles dancing in their driveway chanting "we have our own place, we have our own place">

<cuts back to coffee shop>

VENUS

You saw that?

NICO

Yes. I did.

VENUS

Oops.

NICO

At least you're not boring like the rest of the neighborhood. It's pretty dead.

PICKLES

HAHA. That was funny. In a...sad...disturbing way. 'Cause you know...Graveyard. Ok, I'll shut up now.

NICO

Yeah, well anyways. If you ever feel like hanging out sometime I'm just a few houses down from you.

VENUS

Sure thing, buddy.

Nico sighs and shakes his head. He exits the coffee shop and Pickles gives Venus a disapproving look.

VENUS

What? (nurses on her coffee. Pickle hold her arms out questioningly) What?!

PICKLES

Why are you so hard on the guy, he's just being friendly.

VENUS

I don't know. I just get this weird vibe around him.

PICKLES

Weird vibe?

VENUS

Yeah like something feels a little off.

PICKLES

Well of course, you think I'm normal. What does that make everyone else? Weird?

VENUS

No, not his mannerisms or the way he acts, just like...a weird aura

PICKLES

Aura?

VENUS

Yes, Aura (sips coffee)

PICKLES

(speaks dramatically) Well since you are such an expert on auras, then what color is mine?

VENUS

(shaking her head)

No.

PICKLES

Come on! Tell me! (grabs her shoulder dramatically) I must know or I surely faint from antici...pation!

VENUS

Well, you're aura is...brown.

PICKLES

(frowns) Brown. Like poo?

VENUS

Yes, but it's sort of glowing gold

PICKLES

So, my aura is literally holy shit? Holy shit.. That's crazy!

(both start laughing)

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Pickles is sipping on a juice box sitting in a lawn chair in a cosplay outfit staring across the street at the graveyard. Venus walks outside and stands next to her and folds her arms.

VENUS

You know, you can't really tell it's a graveyard.

PICKLES

Yeah?

VENUS

Yeah. With all the trees it looks like...a park.

PICKLES

Well, it technically is a park. Just a really depressing park.

VENUS

True. (pauses) Would you like to go on a stroll with me?

PICKLES

A stroll you say?

VENUS

Indeed, a stroll.

PICKLES

Then we shall change to the appropriate garb for a leisurely stroll.

<instantly changed into Gothic outfits complete with parasols and gloves. Venus is in black, and a Pickles is in white>

The two walk across the street and begin to stroll in the graveyard.)

VENUS

A lot of graveyards have amazing architecture. It's kind of enchanting in a way.

PICKLES

It is.

They notice a sign on the front door to the chapel. It reads: After 150 years, we are now closed for burials. This property will now be maintained by the city of DENVER. If you have any questions, please contact the local city official's office or visit our website for more information.

VENUS

This is dated like a month before we moved in.

PICKLES

Hm. That's odd. They must have run out of room or something.

VENUS

Must have. Can't think of any other reason.

A lady walks up behind them and taps them on the shoulder. They jump and turn around.

PICKLES

You gave me a fright, Miss!

VENUS

Same here! (to Pickles) A little too in character, Pickles.

MAB

I'm sorry, I was just going to introduce myself as the new caretaker. Today is my first day! Yay!

PICKLES

(In a british accent)

It's a pleasure to meet you. My name Pickles. This is Venus. What's yours?

(Venus rolls her eyes at her)

MAB

Oh, those are interesting names. My name is Mable, but you can me Mab.

VENUS

Well if today's your first day, isn't someone here showing you the ropes?

MAB

Yeah, the old caretaker is here teaching me. There really isn't too much to learn though since I grew up doing this.

VENUS

You grew up tending to cemeteries?

MAB

It's a family business, but since my cousin works for the city he told me about this job and it pays more and I don't have to deal with my family all the time. They drove me crazy.

PICKLES

Oh, I know how that is, we just (starts up in accent again) we just moved out of my parents house and it felt amazing.

VENUS

Okay you can stop with your horrible accent.

PICKLES

but I don't want to.

VENUS

Whatever.

MAB

Oh! Here's Niccoli!

VENUS

Niccoli?

(he walks up to them)

NICO

Mab, how many times do I have to tell you?
Call me Nico.

VENUS

You're the old caretaker?

NICO

Yup! That would be me. I've only worked here
for a few months before they uh shut down and
had to get rid of me.

PICKLES

No offense, Mab, but why didn't they keep
Nico on? Since he was already trained and
all.

NICO

Technically I was a temp. They knew that they
were out of money, out of room, and I didn't.
Then the city took it over and they're not
affiliated with temp agencies or anything
like that. They hire officially and all that
junk. So pretty much, she knew she had this
job before I knew what hit me.

VENUS

That's kind of harsh.

MAB

I kind of agree. It's pretty fucked up
actually. That's society for you!

VENUS

You're the one that has his job now.

MAB

Yeah, I didn't know they were going to do that. But now that it's all said and done, what are you gonna do?

NICO

If you're done talking, Mable, I need to show you a couple more things then hand the keys over to you.

MAB

Okay. Well, see you! Venus. Pickles. (walks off with Nico)

Venus and Pickles start walking back toward their house. Two older women are walking fast paced on the sidewalk and stare at them as they pass. Pickles smiles and waves at them. They hurry on as Venus shakes her head and chuckles a bit.

VENUS

You're weird.

PICKLES

We're weird.

VENUS

Yeah, I suppose so.

Someone (JAKE) comes walking up to them, and nearly runs them over.

JAKE

Do you live in this neighborhood?

PICKLES

Yeah, we do. Why?

JAKE

Because my friend is missing. I don't know if you've seen him...but it's been a few days and we're all starting to really worry. (gets out phone and shows a picture of him)

VENUS

Does he work at the coffee shop?

JAKE

He works at a coffee shop. It's a few blocks away, not too far. Why?

VENUS

I saw him the other day. Pickles and I were there. We got drinks. Didn't notice anything out of the ordinary, but it was our first time there so I'm not sure what ordinary is there...but he was still there when we left, pretty sure.

JAKE

The last time he was seen was right before closing a few days ago. Well if you see him, let me know. I live in 1324 right across the street.

VENUS

Oh, we live next door.

JAKE

Cool. Well please keep an eye out.

VENUS

Certainly.

(Jake leaves)

VENUS

Okay, I don't know about you but I'm in the mood for a sammich.

Venus continues walking but Pickles stops and crosses her arms. Venus doesn't notice so Pickles hurries up to her.

PICKLES

Wait a second!

VENUS

What?

(They both stop)

PICKLES

Another person missing in the neighborhood.

VENUS

Yeah. He probably just skipped town.

PICKLES

Don't you think it's a bit of a coincidence?

VENUS

Not really. They're not even close in age. Do you think they ran away together or something? Lovers torn apart because they were going to send her away to a old folks home.

PICKLES

No! Don't be like that. I think that there's a serial killer around here.

VENUS

Serial killer? Puh-lease. You watch too many horror movies.

PICKLES

Okay, I admit that I watch a shit ton of Horror movies. Probably too many for my own good...But, you need to admit that there must be something going on. This is a quiet neighborhood. We live next to a cemetery for goodness sake!

VENUS

I dunno. Maybe they got mugged or kidnapped or something. I don't know.

PICKLES

I think we should find out.

VENUS

Pickles, these things tend to resolve themselves. Like, the cops for instance. I'm sure they're right on it. Haven't you seen The First 48?

PICKLES

Have you seen Unsolved Mysteries?

VENUS

Okay, okay. I just don't see a connection except for the fact that they're from this neighborhood. If you hear about another missing person, let me know. (salutes and walks off)

PICKLES

Well you're a...poop head.

INT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Pickles is in front of the mirror dancing "Ballin' the Jack". She is dressed up like a 40's performer.

PICKLES

First you put your two knees close up tight,
then you swing it to the left, and swing to
the right-

(Venus bursts in and shows Pickles her phone)

PICKLES

I'm practicing!

VENUS

Whatever. You know that dude we talked to a
while back?

PICKLES

Dude. Dude, dude, dude?

VENUS

The guy that was looking for his friend.

PICKLES

Yeah? Did he find him?

VENUS

No...Not alive anyway. That guy is dead.

PICKLES

Holy bajesus. That is not good.

VENUS

You think? You were right, there's a freakin'
killer on the loose!

PICKLES

So where was his body found?

VENUS

It was in the cemetery. It was in an open
grave.

PICKLES

That...is...disturbing. Wait, open grave? I thought they were closed. Weird. So will you finally help me figure it out?

VENUS

Yes, I will...but we have that talent show tonight.

PICKLES

No worries. We can investigate before and after. Is there enough time?

VENUS

Oh yeah. Lots. Right. I better get ready then...

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

The two are dressed up in their garb for the talent show, makeup done and everything. They are using a lantern to see in the dark and they're heading towards the chapel of the cemetery.

VENUS

I told you to bring the flashlight. Why did you have to bring that thing. What are we, camping?

PICKLES

I couldn't find a flashlight.

VENUS

Seriously? There's several in the kitchen, there's one in the coffee table, and there is even one right on your nightstand.

PICKLES

Ok, you could have grabbed one, and I didn't see any other light. So sorry.

VENUS

Right, let's just get this over with.

(knocks on the chapel door)

PICKLES

Are you sure someone's here?

VENUS

Someone has to be here. Don't the caretakers have to stick around and make sure no nonsense happens?

PICKLES

I guess. Oh yeah. Maybe Mab is here.

VENUS

Let's just try the door.

(opens door and they slowly enter. It's quiet.)

PICKLES

Hello? Mab?

VENUS

It wouldn't be hard to see her if she was here...This place is pretty open.

PICKLES

Look between the pews.

VENUS

What like she's taking a nap? AHH! (screams)

Mab is lying with her face down on a pew. Pickles runs over to Venus quickly but mab turns over. She yawns.

MAB

Oh shit. What can I help you with?

VENUS

You literally scared the crap out of me.

PICKLES

Literally?

VENUS

(shrugs)
Almost.

MAB

I'm sorry, I was just taking a little nap. I was in a food coma...a lot of stress eating. So much stuff has happened since I started here.

VENUS

Like what?

MAB

Well, that dead guy being here. I mean, recently dead. It was horrible. I was walking along the grounds cause I thought I heard some vandals behind the chapel and what do I find? An open grave with a fresh corpse. I mean, I've seen my share of dead bodies believe me, but nothing like this one.

VENUS

What do you mean?

MAB

He had pieces missing from him. It was weird. It was postmortum. His thigh was gone along with his some of his chest. Strange. I thought I saw someone leaving but I didn't get a good look.

PICKLES

That sounds like someone was making dinner out of him.

VENUS

What?

PICKLES

Think of it, the thigh, the chest - breastmeat.

VENUS

You do watch way too many horror movies.

MAB

Pickles, I totally follow what you're saying.

(Someone comes in running. It's Nico)

NICO

I thought I heard a scream. ARE you okay, Mab?

MAB

Everything is okay, she was startled.

VENUS

There was a mouse.

NICO

Right. Well, I'll be on my way now. (he leaves)

VENUS

Shit, are you going to the talent show at the center?

NICO

Yeah, why?

VENUS

Can we have a ride, we're just a tad late.

NICO

Sure thing.

PICKLES

I thought you said we had time to investigate before the show.

VENUS

Yea, I didn't think it would take too terribly long.

PICKLES

It's been like five minutes.

VENUS

I was looking at the clock wrong, okay!

INT. NICO'S CAR - NIGHT

NICO

So what were you doing back there?

VENUS

Just doing a little investigation of our own about the disappearances in the neighborhood.

NICO

Make any progress?

VENUS

No, not really. I don't want to talk about it.

NICO

Okay then. Pickles. What are you two doing in the talent show?

PICKLES

Oh, we're going to-

VENUS

You couldn't have asked me? I look exactly the same as her. I'm sitting right next to you. In fact, we were engaged in conversation.

NICO

What? You said you didn't want to talk.

VENUS

I said I didn't want to talk about IT, that doesn't mean I don't want to talk.

PICKLES

Venus, can you take a few seconds to stop being a bitch for once. You act weird around him.

VENUS

Shut up! I told you he has a weird aura.

NICO

I'm right here, you know.

VENUS

Well, Niccoli, you have a weird aura.

PICKLES

Can we all just calm down for a bit? No?

NICO

What do you mean, weird aura?

VENUS

You give me the heebie jeebies, okay!

NICO

How?

VENUS

Because I think you're a murderer.

(slams on the brakes)

NICO

So you get into a car with someone you think is a murderer. Nice.

VENUS

Well, you're probably not one. And...I needed a ride.

NICO

Get out.

VENUS

What?

PICKLES

Now you've gone and done it. (under breath) I always wanted to say that in an appropriate context...

NICO

Both of you. Out.

VENUS

It's just a couple blocks away now! (both getting out of the car)

NICO

Walk. (drives off)

VENUS

Really?

PICKLES

Well, I don't know why he kicked me out, but you deserved that. (they start walking)

VENUS

What?

PICKLES

Yeah, you were going total bitch mode on the poor guy. Plus, calling him a murderer? I mean, I didn't even know we had a suspect.

VENUS

Of course he's a suspect. He gives me the creeps! Plus, he worked at the graveyard.

PICKLES

Everyone gives you the creeps. Besides...he's not the only person associated with that graveyard.

VENUS

Mab? She's harmless.

PICKLES

Well, if you want to look at her as a suspect...The disappearances didn't start until she started working there...Plus, the vandals, she should've seen who it was. The grave that the body was dumped in wasn't far at all from the chapel and the street where she saw the person take off was pretty well lit.

VENUS

She could've been sleepy or not paying attention or-

PICKLES

Eating the victim. If it was her, according to my extensive horror movie knowledge, then she's a ghoul.

VENUS

A ghoul? What the fuck is a ghoul?

PICKLES

A ghoul, in some theories is an evil spirit or something that robs graves and feeds on recently deceased bodies.

VENUS

Ew! Sick.

PICKLES

Yeah, it's not one of the cooler monsters, that's for sure.

VENUS

We better get going, it's nearly our time slot.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

The girls make their way to a table with their names on a card. They plop down and look to the stage.

ANNOUNCER

Continuing our movie themed talent show, our next duo is going to be performing a scene from the amazing film *The Devil's Carnival!*

Two people come get on stage, one dressed as Lucifer, one as Tamara, and they perform. While they are performing, Venus and Pickles are lip syncing and swaying. Then they do their last make-up touch ups. The song ends and they stand upright. They head to the stage.

ANNOUNCER

VENUS and PICKLES shall now perform... "Ballin' the Jack". Have you ever seen the movie "For Me and My Gal?"

PICKLES

Judy Garland and Gene Kelly, helloooo!
(audience laughs)

ANNOUNCER

Well, here they are!

Venus and Pickles perform. Everyone claps. They sit down. Camera pans to NICO who is in the audience and he has his arms crossed. Pickles motions for him to join them at their table and he reluctantly does so.

NICO

Need anything else? A ride perhaps? You know, I'm not a taxi service or a chauffeur.

PICKLES

And I thought she was the drama queen.

VENUS

You're the drama queen. (crosses arms)

PICKLES

That is true. I am. Well, I was wondering if you would like to join us in our investigation.

NICO

Investigation? Of what?

PICKLES

Well, you know those missing people, and that one that was found recently?

NICO

Yes?

PICKLES

Well we have a theory, but, we don't know how to test it out.

NICO

Theory of what?

PICKLES

We think Mab is a Ghoul.

NICO

You think Mab is a ghoul?

VENUS

Will you stop repeating everything she says!
Pet Peeve!

NICO

Sorry. It's just kind of unbelievable to accuse her of anything. I don't even know what a ghoul is. Are you talking about a new gang in the area? Or a zombie even? See, I knew people shouldn't joke about the zombie apocalypse. (laughs)

VENUS

She's talking about a ghoul. Someone who feeds off of human flesh.

NICO

Ugh, you could have just said you think she's a cannibal.

PICKLES

Deceased human flesh. Personally, I think someone put a curse on her and made her that way because she's not showing signs of dementia or having seizures all the time, so she must have started recently.

NICO

Well, do you even have proof that she is a cannibal.

PICKLES

Ghoul, and no. Which is why I called it a theory. You've seen more of her than us, have you noticed any strange goings on with her?

NICO

No, not really. She did complain about headaches and eating a lot til she's asleep. I never seen her eat though, not even on our lunch break.

VENUS

Assuming she doesn't have a common eating disorder...if Pickles is right, and this is a spell of sorts cast on her, then she might not even remember eating people. Maybe she goes in a trance.

NICO

Say you both aren't crazy. It's a Friday night, show is almost over and I have nothing else to do. I guess I'll play with your theories, perhaps I'll even help you out.

PICKLES

Really?

NICO

Sure, why not? I'll even drive you back to the neighborhood.

PICKLES

Sweet! So, um, (to Venus) is this show a contest or is it just a show.

VENUS

Aren't you the one that signed us up for it?

PICKLES

Yes, but I wasn't paying attention.

NICO

It's just a show. It's a benefit.

PICKLES

Ohhhh! So, no prize?

VENUS

No prize.

PICKLES

Okay, let's go.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

VENUS

Wait here while we change.

Venus and Pickles exit and Nico wanders around the room. There are pictures of the friends on the walls and he gets a closer look at them. He makes his way to the couch. He plops down and Pickles comes out in something Nancy Drew might wear.

NICO

You sure changed fast.

PICKLES

Yes, when you've done as many plays and quick changes that I've had to do in my time, you learn to be a speed demon. Plus, my mom would get mad if we would take forever trying on clothes at the store. You did not want to release THAT demon.

NICO

I see. (laughs)

PICKLES

Venus actually takes forever, my mom would get super pissed off at that.

NICO

So you're not sisters?

PICKLES

No. Practically, though. We've been inseparable ever since I was 12. She's a couple years older than me, actually.

NICO

How did you become friends if you're a couple years apart. I always met my friends in school.

PICKLES

I was actually home schooled, and she was my neighbor. I met her by selling cookies door to door. I never made it further than her house though. I had an instant attachment to her. She thought I was annoying of course and hung out with me out of pity, or her parents made her. A year or so after we became friends, her mom and dad died in a wreck. She didn't have...anyone. No foster parents, no other family to speak of, she was going to be put in the system. You know-

(she immediately shuts up when she noticed Venus coming in the room. She bites her lip and looks at the ground.)

VENUS

Her family saved me, really. Rescued from the unknown. I'm extremely grateful to them and to Pickles, even. She grew on me. I tolerate her. (laughs) I'm mostly grateful she tolerates me. Look, Nico. I'm sorry I was a total bitch to you. (puts out her hand to shake and he shakes it.) Thanks for wanting to help out.

NICO

Even though it is extremely insane. What is this, a horror movie?

VENUS

Yes, yes it is.

NICO

Riiight. Anyways. What is the plan?

VENUS

I say we confront Mab.

PICKLES

What do we say? Hey, we think you're eating people, so please stop it. K. Thanks, bye.

VENUS

No! Well, we need to figure out if it even is her for sure, I don't know how, though...and then we need to figure out how to break the curse or whatever it is.

NICO

Right. Let's get a move on, then.

INT. CEMETERY CHAPEL - NIGHT

PICKLES

I don't think she's here anymore.

NICO

Well, she should be! She was just here a while ago.

VENUS

Maybe she's eating someone!

PICKLES

No, she just ate, duh.

NICO

She might be walking the grounds.

PICKLES

That is a possibility.

VENUS

Okay, then let's get a move on! Does everyone have their phone charged?

NICO AND PICKLES

Yes. (annoyed)

VENUS

Then let's go out there and survey!

They all turn to go to the door when their presence is acknowledged by Mab.

MAB

What are you guys doing here?

They all run out the door screaming all the way out. Mab follows them, behind the chapel where they see a fresh corpse laying out. Mab get's closer to them.

VENUS

Is that that guy who's friend went missing?

PICKLES

Yes! Jake. 1324. She's picking the neighborhood off one by one!

MAB

I can't help it! I don't know how or why... as soon as I got this job it started happening. I can't control it at all! (she takes a knife to the corpse and starts cutting him up.)

PICKLES

You can't help eating people?! Get back demon scum! I'm equipped with the Light of Eärendil and I'm not afraid to use it.

VENUS

I don't think you have something from Lord of the Rings!

Pickles grabs Nico's flashlight and shines it in Mab's face.

MAB

Why are you being so mean?

VENUS

Why are you eating people?! (grabs the flashlight from Pickles)

MAB

I told you that I don't know!

VENUS

How do you expect us to believe you when you're the one chowing down on someone right in front of us!

MAB

Someone did this to me.

PICKLES

How did someone do this? Did they curse you?

MAB

I don't know how it all happened. I just know when I started working here, it didn't happen before...If you know what's good for you, you should leave before I hurt you too.

PICKLES

We'll help you, I promise!

MAB

Just go! (starts crying as she starts to eat the body)

The three of them leave and they head up the driveway of Venus and Pickles' house. Nico gets in his car.

VENUS

Where are you going?

NICO

I don't know if you saw what I did, but I'm getting the hell out of this neighborhood.

VENUS

That actually sounds like a good idea. Come on, Pickles.

They get in the car and drive away

INT. NICO'S CAR

PICKLES

Why didn't you try to stop her from eating that guy?

NICO

One, he was already dead, and two...she had a big knife. I wasn't about to get in between her and her meal.

VENUS

Yeah, that was probably a wise decision. We just needed to get out of there and figure this out

NICO

I'm going to my friend's place. He's out of town.

VENUS

Wait, do you know where Mab used to work before?

NICO

Yeah, she worked at the McNaulty place. It's her family's place.

VENUS

I wonder if any of them would know anything about...strange behavior or whatever.

NICO

Well, I don't think we can get any further the rest of the night.

VENUS

So take me back home so I can get some sleep.

NICO

Uh, no. I'm not letting you go back to that neighborhood. It's too dangerous.

VENUS

Then where are we going?

NICO

My pal's place. He's out of town and I'm watching it for a few days. He has a cat.

PICKLES

Does he have any gaming consoles?

NICO

He's a dude, of course he does.

PICKLES

Score!

VENUS

Great, we're having a gaming sleepover.

PICKLES

So awesome!

VENUS

I don't know how you would be able to concentrate on games at a time like this.

INT. FRIEND'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Venus and Pickles are in big t-shirts sitting in front of the television playing a game intensely.

PICKLES

You freakin' suck! That was a cheap shot!

VENUS

Whatever. You're just a sore loser.

PICKLES

I didn't lose, I still have a life left!

VENUS

Well, you're just being sore. Now, get over it!

(After a few moments, they stop playing and it's obvious that Pickles loses)

PICKLES

You're a bitch.

VENUS

Yup! And proud of it, too!

PICKLES

Anyways, video games help you with your coordination.

VENUS

I feel more coordinated already.

PICKLES

High five!

(Venus goes to high five, but she misses)

VENUS

Let's not speak of this again.

NICO

Well, as entertaining as this is, I think I'm going to go to bed for the night.

PICKLES

It's early yet! You said you'd play with me!

NICO

I don't know about some of you, but I have a job I'd like to get to in the morning.

PICKLES

Oh, I have a job. Er...had a job. I haven't come in in a while.

VENUS

Pickles! How are we supposed to pay rent?

PICKLES

Don't worry about it, I have money saved up, plus I get money from that inheritance.

VENUS

What inheritance.

PICKLES

Oh, my great uncle died a couple weeks ago from a hang gliding accident. Apparently, he was wealthy.

VENUS

I didn't even know you had a great uncle. I'm sorry for your loss.

PICKLES

No worries, I never even met the guy.

VENUS

Oh...ok then!

NICO

Anyways, bed time.

(Nico exits the room.)

VENUS

What are we going to do?

PICKLES

What do you mean?

VENUS

What are we going to do about this whole situation?

PICKLES

Well, tomorrow, we're going to Mab's family's place...and find out what we can.

VENUS

This is all just...crazy. Don't you think?

PICKLES

Yes. It is. But...you know crazy is my middle name.

INT. NICO'S PLACE - DAY

Pickles and Venus are gathered around the table eating cereal slowly. Nico is changing from a his work shirt into a casual shirt.

NICO

Are we going soon? It's like noon.

PICKLES

You just rhymed.

NICO

Yes, I did, who cares. Let's go!

PICKLES

FINE!

NICO

Get dressed, let's go, let's go!

INT. FAMILY MORTUARY - DAY

Family is huddled together, seemingly having a staring contest with NICO, PICKLES, & VENUS

BEVERLY

So, um, you are Mable's current employers, yes?

VENUS

Well, representatives of them, and we realized that her references were never checked.

TOM

You don't think it's a bit later for that? She's worked there a while now.

VENUS

It's a mere technicality, her job isn't in jeopardy.

BEVERLY

Ah, I see. What did you want to know about her? I'm sure you've noticed what kind of a worker she is.

VENUS

Yes, we have. She is very...hard working and dedicated...and all that jazz.

NICO

What we were wanting to know was if she had anything go awry when she was working here

TOM

Well, I don't know what you're implying, but she was very well behaved and everything was normal.

NICO

No, rivalries?

BEVERLY

Rivalries? What do you mean? We're all family here!

NICO

Why did she leave working here if you're all family? Did she not like it here?

BEVERLY

I really don't appreciate your accusatory tone. If this was merely checking references, you could have called. What is going on?

VENUS

We think someone is making your daughter sick...ma'am.

TOM

Sick? How?

VENUS

We cannot disclose that information. She is currently in quarantine and unable to see anyone. We're actually not her employers.

PICKLES

We're federal agents.

BEVERLY

My goodness! I need to see her!

PICKLES

You can't, you don't want to get sick too.
We need to know if she had any enemies.

BEVERLY

Well, her cousin MAX wasn't very pleased with her
changing her place of employment, but he
wouldn't...

TOM

He's in the back. I'll get him for you.

NICO

No need, we'll go get him.

Max runs through the doors and outside. Begins a chase.

They make it to a park and Nico tackles Max who injures his arm in the
process.

NICO

What did you do to Mab?

MAX

I don't know what you're talking about.

NICO

Says the guy who ran from me.
What did you do to her?!

MAX

That backstabbing bitch deserves
what she got!

NICO

WHAT SPELL DID YOU PUT ON HER?

MAX

Spell?! What the fuck are you
talking about?

VENUS & PICKLES pull up near them and walk over sipping on some coffees

NICO

Thanks a lot guys for helping...

PICKLES

Um...Dutch Bros? Stops sipping and offers her drink.

NICO

I don't want Dutch Bros!

PICKLES

Blasphemy!

VENUS

Did you find anything out?

NICO

I'm about to figure out what he cast on her.

PICKLES

Oh, continue...

NICO

Well?

MAX

I didn't cast any spell on her, you moron.

Nico pushes his arm hard against the ground and he whimpers.

MAX

I drugged her, dude!

PICKLES

What was in the potion! Do you have an antidote?

MAX

Potion? You guys are stupid! It was drugs I got from these guys downtown. It was new. Like, I said. She deserved it! She betrayed our family to work for the man!

NICO

What's the drug? How to we stop it?

MAX

I don't know!

Family pulls in and Nico gets off Max. The cousin travels with the family, annoyed, and obviously in trouble by Mab's parents. Nico dusts himself off.

PICKLES

See? We helped. We brought them. He's gonna get it.

NICO

Well, now we have to find who these drug dealers are.

PICKLES

I was sure it was something magical...

VENUS

I knew there was a logical reason...

PICKLES

Sure, ya did.

EXT. Game store. DAY

PICKLES

I don't know. This looks like a normal game store. Not shady at all.

NICO

I don't know if you noticed, but our friend Max back there was wearing a nerdy shirt. Where else would nerds go in this town?

PICKLES

You have a point. This is comfort zone.

They enter.

INT. GAME SHOP - DAY

SHOPKEEPER

Can I help you find anything today?

PICKLES

No, I'll get the Munchkin expansion pack later...We have other business to attend to.

VENUS

So many nerds...how do we figure out who the dealers are?

PICKLES

I've got this. (talks a little louder)
I can't wait to work on my Slave Leia costume!

All the nerds look at Pickles and Venus, except for two in the back corner. They are playing a card game intently.

VENUS

Bingo.

Nico and Venus walk over to the nerds in the corner.

VENUS

You don't think Slave Leia is hot?

TRENT

What?

NICO

Listen, buddy. I know what you're really doing here. I just want to know how to fix my friend.

TRENT

Oh my god. He didn't actually use it, did he?

NICO

Use what?

TRENT

We took this thing from the lab. I didn't think Max would use it!

NICO

Look, I know that you're probably just some innocent science nerd that mixed a few things that he wasn't supposed to. I just need to know, how to fix it.

TRENT

I'm sorry if his dogs started eating corpses, it was only meant to be a joke, please don't arrest me.

NICO

Kid, he didn't use this on a dog.
He used it on a person.

TRENT

Shit. Um. I'll have to get a few
things from the lab. Do you know
how long it's been in the person's
system?

NICO

A few weeks, why?

BRANDON

After a period of 20 days, the
chemicals start to eat away at the
stomach and slowly kill whatever it
was given to.

NICO

And you made this? You were going
to give this to a dog?

TRENT

It was a lab accident! Besides, I had
the antidote in the lab, we would
have saved the dog by then.

NICO

That makes it so much better. You need
to get a move on and get the antidote.
I'll meet you at the graveyard ASAP.

PICKLES

Ooh, a man taking charge!

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

They come across Mab who is lying on the grass covered in dirt. Her face is matted with clotted blood. Pickles pokes her with a stick and she doesn't move.

VENUS

Are we too late? (she looks at Nico.)

Nico gets in close and tries to hear her breathing. He hears the slow intake of breath and Mab suddenly jolts awake. Her eyes are wild and she reaches forward and grabs his hair.

NICO

Shit! Get her off me! (she pushes her aside)

VENUS

Mab! It's us! Calm down.

Mab goes from a frenzy in to a crying fit. She is shaking uncontrollably.

MAB

Help me.. HELP! (she gasps)

PICKLES

Where the fuck is that guy?

VENUS

I don't think the school is very far away, we have to try to keep her calm until he gets here. (kneels and pickles hold her feet down while Nico holds her arms down) Mab. Listen to me. I need to know how long ago this started. Did max give you anything a while ago that seemed suspicious?

MAB

Pie. Homemade pie.

VENUS

How long ago.

MAB

Almost 3 weeks.

VENUS

Ok, he poisoned you. Don't freak out, we're trying to get the antidote to you as soon as possible.

Mab breaks into a sudden frenzy and bites Venus's arm. She suddenly gets quiet and her breathing slows down.

PICKLES

Oh my god, what do we do?!

NICO

She's dying, I don't know.

TRENT and BRANDON run over and quickly give Mab the antidote. After a few moments, nothing.

BRANDON

Oh no...I killed someone. I will not survive jail. Panic attack.

TRENT

BREATHE! (slaps Trent)

When trent is slapped, Mab takes a deep breath in and shoots upright.

MAB

Shit.

Pickles and Venus cheer. Trent and Nico pick Mab up while Brandon is left stunned. They take her to the car and drive her to the hospital. Last image we see is the bite mark on Venus's arm.

THE END