

ELECTROPLASM

Written by

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INT. ANGELA'S HOUSE - DAY

It's dark in the kitchen. ANGELA (47) comes into the kitchen and hesitantly approaches the light switch on the wall. She touches the switch with a slender forefinger.

The kitchen lights spring to life. Angela gazes amazed at the beautifully illuminated kitchen.

Exultantly, she runs through the corridor.

Angela stops by a room and knocks on the door.

A sleepy-face JEWEL (25) opens the door, rubbing her left eye.

ANGELA

Wow, thank you!

JEWEL

For what?

ANGELA

For fixing the kitchen lights!
They've been precarious for ages!
You switched them on, and they took
real long to light up, if they
worked at all. Now, they spring to
life immediately! I must confess I
had already forgotten what it felt
like to have an illuminated
kitchen!

Jewel glances at her husband JEREMY (25) beside her, who returns the same stunned look.

JEREMY

Would that be possible?

JEWEL

It's unlikely, but considering that
no one else could have done it...

Angela eyes them with a bewildered look.

JEWEL (CONT'D)

Possibly, the electrician who died
in this house five years ago...

JEREMY

Yes, yes. They say his spirit still
roams around this place.

JEWEL

That's what I heard, too.

Angela disdainfully waves amidst such a wave of nonsense.

Jewel And Jeremy grin.

ANGELA

When you guys finally decide to talk seriously at least once in your lives, go downstairs, so we can have dinner.

Angela turns her back on them and walks away.

JEREMY

Well, all we have to do now is find out who in fact fixed those lights. 'Cause I know it wasn't me.

JEWEL

Me neither.

INT. ANGELA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Angela wakes up to an intense shine.

INT. ANGELA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Angela leaves her so exaggeratedly illuminated bedroom, only to find out that the corridor lights are also on.

ANGELA (THINKING ALOUD)

I could swear I turned those off...

Angela turns the lights off and yawns.

She turns back to her bedroom, but stops. She notices more flashes of light coming from each and every corner of the big house.

A quick stroll around reveals that all possible lights in the place are lit.

Jeremy stands by his bedroom doorway, rubbing his eyes.

JEREMY

Somebody here got a real case of night blindness.

Jewel leaves the bedroom as well.

JEWEL

There must be a better way to find the refrigerator at night.

ANGELA

Very well guys, not that I don't appreciate your sense of humor, but this is getting expensive, don't you think?

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Since when are the lights like that? You don't have to pay this damn electric bill, but I do!

JEREMY

We didn't do it, Angie. If that's what all this nagging is all about.

Angela stares angrily at the man for a few seconds.

JEWEL

He's telling the truth, dear landlady.

ANGELA

There's nobody else living in here but the three of us!

JEREMY

Yeah, if I had slept with anybody else other than my beautiful wife here, I'd most surely know.

ANGELA

Could you please can the jokes for a while and listen to me? This is the kind of thing that can get us into real trouble! The fuses down in the basement can barely stand the microwave lights, let alone this much effort! This house is very old, in case you haven't noticed. Any tiny sparkle can set the whole place on fire!

JEWEL

We didn't do it, Angie!

ANGELA (YELLING)

Then, who did it?

JEWEL

I don't know! Maybe the termites couldn't sleep and decided to read some Humberto Ecco in order to get sleepy!

ANGELA

This is not funny!

Angela puffs in bad mood. She rudely turns her back on her tenants and walks away with heavy steps.

JEREMY

She didn't believe us.

JEWEL

And I also had the distinct
impression she doesn't like
Humberto Ecco, either.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF ANGELA'S HOUSE - DAY

Angela is walking toward her home, carrying her notorious,
otherwise ordinary supermarket bag, which is nearly
overflowing with so many items.

She is approached by her ordinary, otherwise notorious
NEIGHBOR (48).

NEIGHBOR (NERVOUSLY)

Still no news as to when it'll
return.

ANGELA

Who will return?

Angela gets clumsy with her bag.

The neighbor gazes at her suspiciously.

NEIGHBOR

What do you mean who will return?

Angela frowns at him.

ANGELA

I don't know what you're talking
about, mister! Be more specific!

NEIGHBOR

The power! This crazy blackout
that's racking everybody's nerves!
We pay our bills, and this is what
we get in return! Bloody
government!

Angela stares at him with a dumb face.

ANGELA

Blackout?

NEIGHBOR

Since last night. Marilda, my
sister, is climbing the walls
because she lost last night's
episode of that soap opera she's
been following, which to me it's a
blessing. I spent the whole night
long listening to her complaints,
but it was all worthwhile, not to
have to cope with another episode
of that crap.

Angela faces him.

NEIGHBOR (CONT'D)

Only problem is Sunday is coming,
and I don't want to miss the game.
It's of the utmost importance that
the power is back by then. I've
already called the damned electric
company at least a hundred times,
and they told me they had no
freaking idea of when we're gonna
have our energy back! Can you
believe those jerks?

He looks at Angela with pondering eyes.

NEIGHBOR (CONT'D)

Don't tell me you didn't know about
the power shutdown!

Angela almost drops the supermarket bag.

NEIGHBOR (CONT'D)

Are you alright?

The neighbor helps Angela with the bag.

ANGELA

Um, yes. I've just lost balance for
a while. It must be this heat.

NEIGHBOR

Oh yeah, I see it now!

The neighbor notices lights coming out of Angela's house.

NEIGHBOR (CONT'D)

You got one of those generators!
Oh, forgive my ignorance. I
should've noticed it before. No
wonder I caused you so much
confusion, I apologize for that.
Well, the rest of us, poor slobs,
still have to battle a long fight
against the electric company to see
if we can get some action from the
bastards. See ya, Angie.

Angela does not return his goodbye with words, only with a
slight nod.

INT. ANGELA'S HOUSE - DAY

Angela finally enters her home, which is still marvelously
illuminated in splendor. She throws the bag on a chair,
nearly dropping it on the floor.

She tumbles down on the living room couch, as if about to pass out. Her eyes roll up so much around the sockets that she can almost see her own brain.

ANGELA (WHISPERING)
This house doesn't have a
generator...

DISSOLVE TO:

Angela's skin, already dry and white by nature, looked even paler, like a sheet of paper.

Jewel brings her a glass of water.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Thanks.

JEWEL
Have you called the electric
company?

ANGELA
Yes. According to them, we should
also be in the dark.

The landlady takes a deep, labored breath, as if fighting to bring air down to her lungs.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
The whole damn neighborhood's in
the same grid, a big happy family.

JEREMY
Are you sure you don't want me to
take you to a doctor? I know you
vomited, too.

ANGELA
It's no use to take me to a doctor.
I'm not the one sick in here. It's
the house.

JEWEL
Are you positive? Just look at you!
You look like you've seen a ghost!

Angela faces Jewel with reproaching eyes.

ANGELA
I'm glad to know you guys are
getting a grip on what's going on
here. How did you know about the
blackout anyway? Have you been
talking to the neighbors, too?

JEREMY

No, we knew about the blackout through the Internet.

ANGELA

Why am I not surprised? If you went out at least once in a while instead of doing everything from home, you'd find out there's actually a world out there.

JEREMY

Guess we deserved that one.

JEWEL

I agree.

Jewel turns to Angela.

JEWEL (CONT'D)

You, on the other hand, might as well go to the nearest Office Depot and buy yourself a time-machine, see if you can land on the twenty-first century. You did hear of something called the Internet, right?

The landlady shrugs.

ANGELA

Very funny.

JEREMY

We were not supposed to have Internet, either.

Angela takes a deep breath.

ANGELA

Well... That doesn't help matters! How come the lights of this pigsty are on if there's a blackout going on in the entire neighborhood? A bloody tree fell on the power lines two blocks from here, and nobody comes to fix them!

JEREMY

Did they really take that long to find the problem?

JEWEL

Can't even trust public services these days.

ANGELA

Can you please put a cork in the wisecracks just for a minute and help me out here? How can we have light and Internet if the power is down?

Angela hesitates.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I'm a little scared here, alright!

JEWEL

So, I guess it won't be much of a help either if I say that I tried to turn off the lights, but I couldn't. I tried all switches, but no deal. I don't know where all this electricity is coming from.

JEREMY

I checked the fuse box in the basement, and they're deader than ethics in this country. We're not receiving any electricity from outside. Our mysterious power is coming from inside the house.

ANGELA

What are we gonna do? Call an exorcist? I mean, I've never been superstitious, but you have to agree something is very wrong in here.

JEREMY

Well, if we are being haunted by spirits; at least, they paid the electric bill.

JEWEL

So, we can say the government is doing way more for the dead than for the living. There are a lot of furious people out there, because they also pay their bills, but are getting no service right now.

ANGELA

You are hopeless! You could at least check on that bloody Internet of yours, see if you can find something about the former owner of this house, you know, the electrician who died within these walls five years ago.

JEREMY

Thought you said you were not superstitious.

ANGELA

I'm not! But considering the latest events, I'm trying to keep an open mind.

JEWEL

Way ahead of you. We found nothing on the web. It seems that only celebrities end up on home pages when they die. The rest of us, slobs, only get to the state morgue.

ANGELA

Where else can we find information about this electrician?

JEREMY

In the last place we could think of in this globalized world, the public library. I say we go there.

JEWEL

You mean, leaving home just for a research?

JEREMY

Well, we shall follow the example of our dear landlady here and keep an open mind.

ANGELA

If you're through with the jokes, we got a library to visit!

JEWEL

That means you're coming with us? In your current weakened state, shouldn't you stay and rest?

ANGELA

Alone in this house? No way! Besides, it's getting real hot in here with all these lights.

JEREMY

One thing we can say about our little ghost friend here. He's the only one of his kind that doesn't make you afraid of the dark.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Jewel, Jeremy and Angela are in the public library. The first thing they see is a row of computers right by the entrance. There seems to be more machines than books in the place.

ANGELA

Twenty-first century, huh?

JEWEL

Well, what now?

JEREMY

Time to exercise the nearly extinct art of searching for knowledge by means of conversation. Let's ask the librarian.

Jeremy walks to the reception desk, where a young librarian lady is busy administrating her desktop.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Excuse me, miss...

The librarian very fast raises her head and stares at him with big, shining eyes. She opens an extremely warm smile.

LIBRARIAN

May I help you, sir?

ANGELA

Even my youngest daughter is older than she.

JEREMY

Where can I find information about an electrician who died in a house long time ago, but might have come back as a spirit that turns lights on, even when there's a blackout?

LIBRARIAN

Oh, second row on the left, occultism section. Right beside the how-to-make-easy-money section. You can also consult newspapers from the time period in question, on the library computers, you know, like in the movies!

JEREMY

Thank you, miss!

LIBRARIAN

You're very welcome, sir! And if you also want to know about dead folks who cook or play soccer, we got a lot of material about those, too.

ANGELA

No, thanks, honey, only the illuminated stiff for now. I already have a cook, and last time I checked, he was still alive.

JEREMY

Only his food can kill.

ANGELA

Hey! If you're not happy about it, try and make your own food!

JEWEL

Ladies and gentlemen, this is a library. Let's lower our voices and get to business. I suggest we go straight to the newspapers. Occultism section won't be much of a help if we don't know what kind of ghost we're dealing with here.

JEREMY

Computers again... If I knew my face would still be glued to a monitor, I would have done it at home! You mean to tell me I drove two hours in this darn traffic jam for this?

JEWEL

Well, there's no traffic jam at this hour yet. But, of course, we cannot be completely sure since we used the subway. And we just took ten minutes to get here.

JEREMY

I know. I just wanted to complain.

In front of the computer, Angela watches Jeremy skimming old, yellowish newspaper clippings on the screen.

ANGELA

How did you know an electrician had died in that house? They put that kind of thing on the Internet, too?

JEWEL

No. Just the good ole buzz in the neighborhood. What about you?

(MORE)

JEWEL (CONT'D)

How did you know an electrician had died in that house?

ANGELA

Well, I've been living in that dumpster for quite a while now, remember? I also have ears, and I also listen to things!

JEREMY (MURMURING)

And you're also grumpier than an old hag.

ANGELA

What was that?

JEREMY

Nothing.

The landlady also does not notice Jewel putting her best efforts to suppress a laughter.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Here it is!

Jeremy's eyes are fixed on the screen headlines.

JEREMY (READING ALOUD) (CONT'D)

'Electricity technician dies by accident at home after a quarrel with his wife.' Apparently, he lost focus due to the aforementioned argument with his better half and accidentally touched a high-voltage transformer in his own backyard, which was still energized. He was electrocuted to death.

JEWEL

Wow, that's a tough way for a wife to make a point! And they say modern family is not deteriorating.

JEREMY

We can say their relationship ended in a very shocking way.

JEWEL

There was indeed some static between the two.

ANGELA

Hey, can it you two! This is no laughing matter!

JEWEL

You're right, madam.

ANGELA

Well, what now? Knowing the identity of our corpse doesn't help very much.

JEREMY

Guess we can try the occultism section now.

JEWEL

And, perhaps, also take a look at those how-to-make-easy-money books.

They go to the occultism section and research there.

DISSOLVE TO:

JEREMY (BORED)

Any luck?

JEWEL

Found a lot of stuff about how to make love potions and all sorts of spells to take millionaires to bed, but nothing we can really use.

Suddenly, Jeremy fixes eyes on one particular book.

JEREMY (YELLING)

Get a load of that!

Some people around shush him.

JEWEL (LOUD VOICE)

What!?

ANGELA (LOUD VOICE)

What!?

More shushes come from people around.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

They make occultism books in brochures too!

JEWEL

Not all spirits are rich.

ANGELA (YELLING)

Ah, for crying out loud!

People in the library shush them again, this time more angrily.

Angela turns to them.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Oh, shush yourself! You sound like a broken valve! We are in a discussion here! You want quiet, go read in the cemetery!

Some people there furiously shut their respective books closed and stand up, outraged.

JEWEL

If any of you is really going to the cemetery, could you please ask about souls who turn lights on?

Nobody answers, naturally.

It also doesn't take long for the young librarian to walk to them with the same large, warm smile.

LIBRARIAN

Excuse me. Sorry to interrupt you, but I received some complaints that you guys are talking a little loud. Could you lower yours voices, please?

JEREMY

We can do better than that. We're gonna rid you of our inconvenient presence, leaving only my friend Angela here, to undertake further research. Trust me, she can be quiet when there's nobody around to listen to her nagging.

ANGELA

Ha, ha, very funny. And what the heck are you talking about?

JEREMY

We're not getting anywhere here. I think it's better if Jewel and I came back to the house and continued our little Internet search. In the meantime, and considering we make such a great team, you might as well stay here and see what else you can find in the newspapers.

ANGELA

Like what?

JEREMY

Like strange events that took place after the electrician died.

ANGELA

If it is Internet you seek, I'm sure they have WiFi in this environment.

Such theory is immediately confirmed by a positive nod of the librarian.

JEREMY

Oh, I'm sure your connection is faster.

ANGELA

Yes, the same fast connection whose payment you are three months late!

JEWEL

Well, the connection is fast, the users are not.

ANGELA

Anyway, why do I have to be the one to stay here?

JEREMY

We can do the other way around, if you want. We stay, and you go home all by yourself and, if the ghost shows up to swallow your soul, you take this opportunity and ask him who he is.

ANGELA

Not a chance! Very well, we do it your way. We meet again in an hour.

Angela turns to the young librarian.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Are you still here, honey?

LIBRARIAN

Excuse me.

The girl raises a moody head and goes away, finally erasing what seemed to be a perennial smile.

Angela examines newspaper clippings from times of old, over and over again. She puffs.

Angela checks her wristwatch. The desk she's sitting on is full of empty coffee paper cups.

She takes a deep, frustrated breath.

ANGELA

What the heck is happening in my home?

START FLASHBACK

INT. ANGELA'S HOUSE - DAY

MONTAGE

- A) Angela is kissing her husband goodbye.
- B) Angela eats breakfast with husband, two teenage sons and two teenage daughters.
- C) Angela argues harshly with one of her daughters (inaudible dialogue).
- D) Angela argues with one of her sons (inaudible dialogue).
- E) Angela is sitting on the couch alone, in a big house full of material assets and modern electronic equipment.

END FLASHBACK

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Angela resolutely moves her head away from the computer.

ANGELA

Why am I giving so much credit to
electrical malfunctions?

She looks around. The library is almost empty.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I'm getting light and Internet I'm
not supposed to, so what?

She looks at the librarian working her computer.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

My house is surely in much better
shape than the whole neighborhood.
Who am I to complain?

Angela finishes another cup of coffee.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Who believes in ghosts anyway?

LIBRARIAN

Madam?

ANGELA

Yes, sweetheart?

LIBRARIAN

We're closing.

ANGELA

Me too.

Angela stands up resolute.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

My place needs a technician, not a priest.

She takes a few steps toward the exit and looks behind. Angela stops. Something on the computer screen captures the corner of her eye.

She comes back to the desk and checks an article in a newspaper clipping.

CLOSEUP of the newspaper article. It reports an event that took place five years before, around the time when the electrician suffered his tragic, accidental demise.

Still standing, Angela decides to take a better look at the article.

Her face changes to one of horror. She loses balance, as if about to fall down.

The librarian runs and helps Angela sitting down on the chair she was sitting before.

Another good samaritan brings her a glass of water.

LIBRARIAN

Are you alright, ma'am?

Angela does not speak. She's as pale as a corpse. Her face is anguished in dreadful fear.

INT. ANGELA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jeremy and Jewel jump for joy in front of a laptop.

JEREMY

It's amazing what we can find on a ghostly-powered web these days!

JEWEL

Definitely. The very best of occultism is already online, together with porn, celebrities' gossip, and further intellectualities.

JEREMY

Not to mention the several articles about people that died, but whose souls cannot go on in peace to meet their final destinies, due to a strong belief they still left something behind to finish.

CLOSEUP of the laptop screen. A picture of a smiling Bruce Campbell kind of guy stands out.

JEWEL (V.O.)

A Russian electronic engineer named Dmitri Pavlov Stanislav Bobrov, also an enthusiast of the supernatural, spent a good deal of his life studying such cases.

Fading picture of smiling BOBROV (60) becomes more and more clear, to the point of becoming the real him.

START FLASHBACK

INT. BASEMENT WITH ALL SORTS OF GIZMOS - NIGHT

Bobrov works very hard in some experiment, clearly involving electricity. He gets a shock when dealing with some device, and his hair gets pointy.

JEWEL (V.O.)

After graduating with honors in the well respected Moscow State University and, boosted by his PHD in Harvard and master's program in Oxford, he was granted an American work visa, later being aggressively recruited to work in the world famous Massachusetts Institute of Technology, good ole MIT.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Bobrov shakes hands enthusiastically with some old men in suits.

INT. MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY - DAY

Bobrov works very hard in some experiment, clearly involving electricity, only now in the MIT, with a whole team of assistants helping him. He gets a shock when dealing with some device, and his hair gets pointy.

JEWEL (V.O.)

Over there, he found fertile ground for his researches in the areas connected to the extraordinary, not to mention unrestricted access to all kinds of equipment and state-of-the-art technology, which very much helped in his tasks.

Again, Bobrov shakes hands with the same old men, only this time they're wearing aprons.

JEWEL (V.O.)

He conquered good doses of respect
from his colleagues.

However, some men and women in desks wave disdainfully at
him.

JEWEL (V.O.)

Although many considered him a bit
eccentric, sometimes even a total
idiot, for undertaking such
endeavor.

Bobrov keeps working hard. Events are showed with camera in
fast motion.

Now, he's shaking hands with those who had previously waved
disdainfully at him, still with camera in fast motion.

JEWEL (V.O.)

However, he could later accept the
apologies offered by his harshest
critics, when he proved his ideas
were completely feasible, even the
most improbable and absurd ones.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Bobrov speaks to the camera with a chalkboard behind him.
He's carrying a teacher pointer.

BOBROV

You see, when an individual dies in
an extremely intense way for he so
strongly believes that something
still ties him to this predictable
and linear life dimension, a
compact mass of feelings is
released from the body together
with the soul, to ride in an
amazing parallel universe, in
search for the answers that the
deceased person still believes he
needs to find before departing
forever.

He turns to the chalkboard. There's nothing written on it.

BOBROV (CONT'D)

Never mind. To put it simply, this
mass of feelings and emotions
crosses the physical space as we
know it, but always keeping a
strong, spatial bond with the post-
mortem parallel realm.

(MORE)

BOBROV (CONT'D)

This interaction occurs in such a powerful way that it unleashes forces never dreamt by any mortal, to the point of touching the mysterious plans of quantum physics, which in turn alters the space-time continuum, causing the opening of an inter-dimensional crevice. Remarkable, huh?

Camera shows the classroom. There are only three students in there. One is sleeping, and the other two are fingering Smartphones.

BOBROV (CONT'D)

That's right! The stunning energy generated by this process is interpreted as huge waves of static electricity in the world of the living, allowing the spirits that cross such crevice to communicate with the living, by using all elements that somehow create or use electricity, such as light-bulbs, televisions, refrigerators, microwave ovens, car batteries, among others. The phenomenon as a whole was dubbed Electroplasm.

CLOSEUP of Bobrov.

BOBROV (CONT'D)

That's it, my friends. My name is Dmitri Pavlov Stanislav Bobrov. I'm smart and extremely handsome!

He opens a large smile to the camera, and one of his white teeth shines. Smiling Bobrov fades until again becoming the picture on the laptop screen.

END FLASHBACK

INT. ANGELA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

JEWEL

Phew! That's some long flashback. Anyway, do you think this is what's going on here?

JEREMY

In the absence of a more plausible explanation, we shall believe so.

JEWEL

I can barely wait to tell Angie everything!

JEREMY

Yes, but, let's use small words
this time, eh?

Out of the blue, inexplicable disturbances manifest with violence in the entire house.

Every device that is plugged in acquires life and goes crazy.

Light-bulbs go on and off frenetically, the refrigerator seems to develop the engine of a plane, so much noise it makes.

The washing machine shakes so hardly it takes walks around the kitchen.

Every light and digital screen blinks like mad, alarm clocks scream their strident, unpleasant sirens.

Vague moan-like-noises coming from nowhere cut the air all around.

Jeremy and Jewel only move their heads, almost in perfect synchrony, in an attempt to follow the whirlpool blowing on all sides.

In fact, the only element maintaining stability and quietness is, ironically, the television.

CLOSEUP of TV. It does not show anything defined, only static and dots.

All of a sudden, everything shuts down. Each and every object in the house is absolutely still.

Jewel and Jeremy are also paralyzed. They don't even move their eyes. Both rub their respective necks, as in pain.

CLOSEUP of TV. The image changes to show the proverbial multicolored bars, as if somebody is trying to broadcast.

JEREMY (STUTTERING) (CONT'D)

Do... do you think some ghost is
trying to communicate through the
TV?

JEWEL (SHAKY VOICE)

Should we put it on channel 3?

CLOSEUP of TV. The image stabilizes, also acquiring shape and color, to clearly show a DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN (52) with hair and beard partially grayish. His gentle eyes irradiate a subtle understanding. The man is looking directly at the screen, as if looking at the camera.

Jeremy and Jewel shudder before such bizarre situation.

MAN ON TV

Good morning!

Instinctively, Jeremy and Jewel look over their shoulders. However, as expected, there is nobody in the room but them.

JEREMY

Yep, looks like the TV guy is really talking to us.

MAN ON TV

We still got work to do.

JEWEL

We did everything you asked and more, Sam! What else can we do?

SAM

Take her to the light.

JEREMY

What light?

SAM

You are the light of her life. So, it should be simple enough. Just guide her to you.

JEREMY

But you have to admit, she doesn't make it any easier!

SAM

She does not know how. You have to teach her how to do it.

JEREMY

Yes, by playing these little games, charades, and puzzles! It would be so much easier if we could simply show up and spell out to the person in question exactly what she needs to understand, and what is required of her!

SAM

It's not how it works. Otherwise, it would not be sincere. Not to mention the fear people would experience once all normal and acceptable references were broken. It would make them question their own sanity.

JEWEL

Well, you cannot question what never existed. People just don't admit they are crazy.

(MORE)

JEWEL (CONT'D)

But I know what you mean. Only this woman is a real pain in the neck! She's stubborn as a mule, movie star self-centered, and more selfish than a politician!

SAM

That's why I called you. If there is somebody who can connect to such difficult person, it's you, guys.

JEREMY

I hope we can live up to your expectations.

SAM

The end is near, more than you can imagine!

Sam opens a large, friendly smile and waves goodbye with both hands.

He turns his back on the screen and walks in the opposite direction, causing his image on TV to get smaller at every step he takes, until disappearing in the gorgeous twilight rising on the horizon.

The TV turns off on its own, and all lights in the house die.

EXT. PORCH OF ANGELA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Angela comes to her porch nearly breathless, her skin white as snow.

INT. ANGELA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Angela bursts into the house, practically breaking her own door down.

ANGELA

Who are you?

JEWEL

Good evening to you, too! Don't you want to know what we found out?

ANGELA

Answer my question!

JEREMY

Wow, what face is that!? You look like you've seen two ghosts!

Angela mutes in rage and faces Jeremy with very angry eyes. The veins on the landlady's neck seem on the verge to explode.

JEWEL

Alright, alright. But have your memory checked when you have the time! I'm Jewel, this is Jeremy, we are your tenants, remember? We've been living in here for a year now and never missed a payment. In fact, we only owe you the last twelve months.

ANGELA

That's what I thought! When you filled the tenancy agreement form, you forgot to mention you are dead!

JEREMY

Well, we figured that as long as we paid...

ANGELA

Enough jokes! I came across a newspaper article from the same time the electrician had his accident...

Angela stares at her two tenants.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

It talked about a couple of stand-up comedians, Groucho Marx style, who performed in bars and discos... They gave their lives to save a small boy who got trapped in the wreckage of a car that had just crashed against a power line pole. High-voltage cables were about to hit the boy, but the couple ran to hold them. They came just in time to save the kid, but the contact with the live wires caused them to die electrocuted... exactly like the electrician who lived in here!

JEREMY

This obituary, by any chance, mentions all tours the couple took around Europe and all awards they won?

ANGELA

NO!

JEREMY

That's a shame. They only told the truth, then.

ANGELA

That's it! I definitely had enough of your bullshit! The deceased couple's names were also Jeremy and Jewel Fideglio!

JEREMY

A coincidence.

ANGELA

There was a picture of them. They are you!

JEWEL

Another coincidence. That only means there was another couple with the same names as us, who looked exactly like us and had the same exact profession. It happens every day.

ANGELA

Knock it off! Now, you listen to me good! You tell me right now what the heck is going on here before I call the cops... or a hearse!

Jeremy and Jewel exchange uncomfortable looks.

JEWEL

Fine.

Jewel comes closer to Angela, slowly and carefully, as if the landlady is made of Ming porcelain.

Jewel wraps her arm around Angela's shoulder like a mother.

JEWEL (CONT'D)

The important thing is Sam loves you, he always did and always will, and by no means has he held you responsible for his death.

ANGELA

NO!

Angela rejects the girl's arm with violence and cries copiously.

JEREMY

Yep, good ole Sam tried to warn us that wouldn't work.

JEWEL

We don't have much choice now. We're almost out of time.

JEREMY

I know.

In fury, Angela grabs each and every object she can find, breakable or not, and throws them all to the floor and walls.

After nearly destroying every item in the house, Angela tumbles down on the edge of the couch. Her eyes are still red of so much crying.

Jeremy brings her a glass of water. Angela accepts it and holds it with a trembling hand.

JEWEL

We can communicate with the living by means of a phenomenon called Electroplasm. Obviously, we knew that such thing existed, but we only found its origin and discoverer about an hour ago, little before you came.

The landlady is still quiet. She remains in the same position, with an angry look directed to nowhere, pouting.

JEREMY

The Electroplasm was first postulated by a brilliant, erratic, innovative, and slightly demented Russian engineer called Dmitri P. S. Bobrov.

Angela faces him for a while.

ANGELA

And how does that work?

JEREMY

Um... It takes some doing to explain, but I assure you the process exists, and it works.

ANGELA

I can see that! I wasted my life!

Jewel walks to the couch, slowly as if getting into a tiger cage. She sits down beside the house owner.

JEWEL

And that's the problem. You think you wasted your life when, as a matter of fact, you simply let the best part of it go right by you, like the wind.

Jeremy sits on the couch as well.

JEREMY

But there's still time. Make it count!

ANGELA

They abandoned me!

JEWEL

No, you scared them away. Not intentionally, of course, but you did it just the same. But they still remember you, and they always will. All you need to do is give them a chance and, if time permits, maybe give yourself a chance. Then, you may even consider the possibility of giving everybody else a chance.

ANGELA

My children never listened to me! They are the ones who never gave me a chance!

JEWEL

They listened to you all the time! But you hardly returned the courtesy. The world does not spin around you. And when somebody disagrees with you, it's not a governmental-alien conspiracy against your person! You scare away everybody who loves you with your distrust and paranoia!

ANGELA

I've always been there for my family! I worked my ass off, so they could always enjoy a good life, having everything they needed and more! And what I got in return? Nothing!

JEWEL

Are you sure?

ANGELA

Now look, you may be a ghost and all, but you were not there. I lived my life, not you! Of course, I'm sure!

JEWEL

Like all selfish people, your memory gets pretty selective at times.

ANGELA

Go to hell!

JEREMY

That's a terrible thing to say to a spirit. Well, we've already made it to the purgatory, why not going all the way down...

JEWEL

Nobody is going to hell! You are already in one, Angela! You'll never find peace of mind, unless you take a good look inside yourself and find what is wrong with your life, instead of blaming everybody else for your problems.

ANGELA

I have nothing to say to you.

JEWEL

Good. Then, you listen. You just don't accept the truth. It feels good to play the victim, I give you that, but in the long run, it makes you spoilt and scared.

ANGELA

Ah, now you are saying I am the spoilt one?

JEREMY

And scared.

ANGELA

Oh shut up!

JEWEL

You hurt the ones who like you every time you only remember the few bad things that happened, but neglect the several wonderful moments that brought you great happiness. Your family and friends give you a lot of joy. They do a lot of things only to please you, things they don't even like sometimes, remember this? Or you'll just go on and on, living in denial?

Angela does not answer.

JEWEL (CONT'D)

Well, remember?

ANGELA

Yes.

JEWEL

Nice. Then, you keep remembering. And perhaps one day you'll realize, once and for all, how unfair you've been to those who ever loved you.

ANGELA

Are you saying that every little thing that went wrong in my life was my fault?

JEWEL

No, I'm saying that not everything was everybody else's fault.

Angela is silent, as if caught by surprise by those last remarks.

JEWEL (CONT'D)

Guess it's right about time for you to tell all of those you really care for how you feel about them, because they've already done that for you.

ANGELA

I've always liked you, guys.

JEREMY

Well, this is indeed a good start, especially because... YOU HAVE WHAT NOW!?

Angela takes a deep breath, while tears run down her cheeks.

ANGELA (WEEPING)

I don't have much time.

JEREMY

Wrong. Time is what you have the most. The fact you're still alive is a big help. Jewel here and I don't have any.

JEWEL

People are kind of prejudicial against this thing we call time. It's not bad if used wisely.

ANGELA

I'll call my son... tell him I'm sorry for being so mean to his girlfriend, now his wife. She was a waitress at the time, you know.

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I didn't think she met our social standards. I'll also apologize to my oldest daughter. We had an ugly fight when she dropped law school to be a piano player, instead of becoming a lawyer like me. All she wanted was to follow her own path. I shouldn't have tried to force her to follow mine.

JEREMY

That's the spirit! No pun intended.

ANGELA

This Dmitri what-his-name must have been quite a guy.

JEWEL

It's Dmitri Bobrov.

ANGELA

Whatever! How can I possibly patch things up with my late husband? I killed him!

JEWEL

What happened to your husband was an accident. You merely upset him, but this is not a crime. If it were, all soap opera authors would be in jail now. He was the one who forgot to check if the transformer was energized or not before getting his hands on it. It wasn't your fault, and you know it.

ANGELA

If I could talk to him just one more time...

JEREMY

You can!

ANGELA

How?

JEREMY

The same way middle class folks solve all their problems, by turning the TV on!

ANGELA

Are you saying I can talk to my deceased husband through the TV?

JEREMY

Well, as TV is usually the greatest responsible for obstructing family dialogue, I believe that would be a healthy change.

ANGELA

Will I ever see you again?

JEWEL

Tell ya what, every time you switch on your bedside lamp or hear the beep of the microwaves, or simply feel a static in the air, remember us.

ANGELA

Oh, I'll miss those jokes!

Angela, Jewel, and Jeremy get together in a collective hug.

Angela turns the TV on.

CLOSEUP of TV. Only static and dots appear, nothing intelligible on TV.

Angela faces her two tenants with angry eyes. They exchange uncomfortable looks.

CLOSEUP of TV. The image of a man finally materializes on the screen.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I'm glad to see that cable TV service is bad also in the realm of the dead.

JEREMY

You have no idea! And don't get me started on cell phone signal in there, you just can't get any! A real purgatory! Oops, no pun intended again.

CLOSEUP of TV. Sam, Angela's late husband, appears clearly on the screen, but does not say a word. He just smiles tenderly and stretches a hand out of the TV.

ANGELA

What do I do now?

JEWEL

Go with your husband.

ANGELA

You mean, going into the TV?

JEREMY

It's everyone's dream.

JEWEL

He wants to have a little powwow with you. Maybe set a few things straight before departing. I hope you don't mind TV makes people look fat.

ANGELA

This Ergastoplasm of yours is really efficient.

JEREMY

It's Electroplasm.

ANGELA

Whatever!

JEWEL

And remember, If you consider yourself worthy of pity, you end up believing in it. And others will, too. Do not follow this path!

ANGELA

Don't worry, dear. My life will be as polished as jewel! My God, I can't believe I said that! I'm getting some bad habits from the both of you.

JEWEL

Feel free to use our jokes and tell people they are yours. Consider this our latest - and delayed - will and testament.

ANGELA

Lord, no way!

Angela smiles.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Will I be able to come back here after I'm through talking to my husband?

JEREMY

Of course! Leaving TV is very easy, just ask the producers of 'Sex and the City!'

JEWEL

That's not funny!

JEREMY

I know.

CLOSEUP of TV. Sam and Angela walk hand in hand, their images on TV getting smaller as they walk far from the screen. It's possible to see they are talking (inaudible dialogue). A few seconds later, the older couple disappear in the beautiful sunset produced on the flat screen, shaped like a landscape.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Well, I guess this movie will have a happy ending after all.

JEWEL

Conventional, but happy.

JEREMY

Phew, that was a tough one!

JEWEL

You'd better believe it!

JEREMY

Can we go to heaven now?

JEWEL

Affirmative. I don't think we'll be requested any other post-mortem job. There can't be that many lost souls in this planet.

JEREMY

Well, I don't intend to stick around and find out.

JEWEL

Besides, paradise must be in great need of good comedians these days.

JEREMY

Yes, but don't tell them that, or they'll never let us in. And the alternative, you know, is not quite pretty.

JEWEL

Good point.

Jeremy and Jewel Fideglio walk away from the camera, until disappearing in comedians' heaven.

EXT. SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF ANGELA'S HOUSE - DAY

Angela leaves home and locks the door.

She walks to her car. However, she stops and looks back at the house.

ANGELA (WHISPERING)
So little time, so much pettiness.

She enjoys the beautiful sunrise.

Angela is approached by the same neighbor who spoke to her before, when the blackout hit.

NEIGHBOR
Good morning!

ANGELA
Good morning!

The man opens his eyes widely to such positive attitude, from somebody who never has a positive attitude.

NEIGHBOR
Ah, in such a good mood today,
aren't we? Are you leaving for
work?

ANGELA
That's what it looks like.

NEIGHBOR
As I'm sure you noticed, we can
enjoy the benefit of light again!

ANGELA
Yes, till the next blackout.

NEIGHBOR
Oh, that's for sure.

The man mutes and turns white all of a sudden.

ANGELA
Is there anything else I can help
you with?

NEIGHBOR
Well, I don't want to hold you any
longer... Look, I'd just like to
ask you... I don't want to bother
you or anything...

Angela looks at him impatient.

NEIGHBOR (CONT'D)
I was considering... If you are not
doing anything tonight, after work,
I mean, I surely have no plans for
tonight yet... we could have dinner
together in my house. My late wife
always said I make a terrific
lasagna!

ANGELA

Oh yes, I remember! If I don't have
any last timers at the office,
let's say, eight o'clock?

The neighbor again opens his eyes so widely they almost fall
from the sockets.

NEIGHBOR

Really!?

ANGELA

There's only one eight o'clock in
the evening per day, right?

NEIGHBOR

And what if some last tomer, I
mean, toner, I mean, last timer
shows up?

ANGELA

Nine o'clock then, if it's not a
problem.

NEIGHBOR

Not at all! It's a deal!

Angela finally gets into the car.

INT. CAR - DAY

REAR-VIEW MIRROR'S POV - Angela sees the neighbor. He's
walking like a drifting galleon that floats on a sea of
happiness and new hopes.

Angela grabs the steering wheel, but gets a slight shock due
to flea power. She smiles.

ANGELA

See you next adventure, my comedian
friends.

FADE TO BLACK.