

1 EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY**1**

It's a foggy, cold day. A car drives on a long gravel road, tall trees line the path and the start of a terribly rainy afternoon is on the horizon.

2 INT. CAR**2**

CHALISE (19) is looking at the map on her phone while HANNAH (30s) drives. Despite the beginnings of rain, she has her window down and takes a long drag of her cigarette.

CHALISE

It should be on our left any minute now.

The road is isolated and damp as Hannah slows the car to let a dogwalker past, before pulling up in front of a grand set of gates engulfed by the nearby shrubs. A small and rusted metal sign reading 'PRIVATE: DO NOT ENTER' hangs from it

HANNAH

(gawking at the house)
You are having a laugh.

Within the gates, a large 1800s country estate looms over their car, however amongst the dense forest it looks like a hidden gem. Its clear this house hasn't been lived in for a long time and has fallen victim to the elements. As they pull in to the drive, 2 vans are already taking up space.

HANNAH

Shit did they beat us here?

Hannah throws her cigarette butt on the gravel floor, and they both hastily get out of the car to rush inside and escape the rain.

3 INT. WHEELER ESTATE**3**

Inside, the house is incredibly dilapidated and dusty, but was likely once a beautiful mansion. The foyer is an expansive room of rubble which splits in to multiple hallways and rooms, looking over the foyer is a large gallery and the remains of what would have been a grand chandelier hanging from the centre of the ceiling.

RENOVATOR

Hi you must be Miss Ellison?

HANNAH

I was once.

She snorts a laugh, however the man seems wound up too tight for jokes.

HANNAH

I mean, yes, you must be Mr. Hayes then?

Chalise wanders off, her mothers voice fades into the background as she snoops around.

Majority of the windows are shattered which causes rain to spill in and onto the windowsill, and debris from something unknown covers most of the marble floor. The ceiling has caved in a few areas, and water damage or black mould touches the rest.

The house seems to groan with age as Chalise peaks into every crevice, looking for nothing in particular.

A faint RUSTLE can be heard in the distance, then -- SQUEAK.

Chalise freezes, listening intently for the sound again. She quietly turns around, looking for the source of the noise, only the faint chatter of Hannah and the man in the background.

Theres a long pause, then again -- SQUEAK.

It comes from the room on her left. She takes a deep breath and edges towards the source of the noise.

CHALISE

(muttering to self)

Please don't be a rat, please don't-

She enters what may have once been an idealistic KITCHEN, but was now a result of the conditions that affect the rest of the property. A loud CREAK and STOMP of footsteps upstairs causes her to instinctually look up for a brief moment. She shivers before --

A high-pitched SQUEAL breaks the silence suddenly and unexpectantly. An alarmed Chalise seeks out the noise to find sat on the counter --

A slinky grey cat covered in fleas holding a now deceased rat in its mouth, its both a cute and horrific scene.

CHALISE

Shit, you scared me little man!

She laughs at her overly dramatic reaction which spooks the cat into running off, however a sense of fear still thickens the air.

HANNAH

What a crappy old house am I right?

Chalise jumps again at the unexpected voice.

HANNAH

Woah, you alright?

CHALISE

Yeah, no, I'm just-

A breeze follows into the room, and the rain is falling harder than before. Chalise shakes off the cold.

CHALISE

What did the renovator guy say?

HANNAH

Its gonna be one big expensive project to get this place up and running into a liveable place. I know you wanted to keep it but its just gonna cost too much sweetheart.

CHALISE

What now then? We just sell it? Can't we try and work something out, like opening it for weddings or something?

HANNAH

For now, they are gonna put supports in where the roof isn't safe, and mark of any rooms we shouldn't enter-

CHALISE

And-

HANNAH

And theres a small air bnb we can stay in for the moment while we figure out what to do, okay?

Chalise gives a weak half smile, clearly not satisfied with the plan but willing to trust her mother. Another chill carries through the air, causing them both to pull their coats closer.

HANNAH

Why don't you take a walk up to the nearby town square and bring us back a tea, yeah?

CHALISE

In the rain?

HANNAH

Little bit of rain never hurt did it?

CHALISE

(Under her breath)

Yet I don't see you offering to go...

Hannah playfully slaps her on the arm, and ushers her out the front door.