

# Funny Thing About Ghosts

*By Sam Havens*

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## **DEDICATION**

*To my wonderful wife, Gretchen Havens*

## **STORY OF THE PLAY**

What do you get when you put a married couple, a butler, an evil owner of an estate, a local spiritualist, and five ghosts in a mansion overnight? Kenny and Janelle are a determined couple, willing to spend the night in the haunted Gottlieb Mansion to become the new owners. Consuela Gottlieb has other plans, while the ghosts are just trying to get the key to their spirit home. With a group hug at the end, this witty comedy is sure to keep the audience laughing. About 75 minutes.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*Cast of 9 or 10: 5 m, 3 w, 1 or 2 flexible*

**Kenny Drake:** 25 to 40. Husband, ready to take a dare.

**Janelle Drake:** 25 to 40. Wife, not so ready to take a dare.

**Morris Hefferton:** 40 or so. Archetypal butler, but prefers to be referred to as the steward of the manor.

**Maggie the Magnificent:** 30 to 50. Local spiritualist who performs séances.

**Consuela Gottlieb:** 30 to 50. Devious owner of the estate.

**Ghost Wexley:** 30 to 50. Informative, helpful (and hungry) ghost.

**Head Ghost Goyle DeFarge:** 40 to 50. Narcissistic, threatening, king of all ghosts...but has a weakness or two.

**Ghost Gilliam Gottlieb:** 60 or so. Beloved grandfather ghost.

**Ghost One, Professor Milkins:** Any age. A mad scientist ghost.

**Ghost Two:** Any age.

*(Ghost One and Ghost Two may be played by the same actor, male or female, with change of costume.)*

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**DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

The play may be performed in one act with no intermission. For a two act production, please place the interval following Scene Three.

**SETTING**

The main room of the Gottlieb estate. The space is in considerable disrepair with dust and cobwebs everywhere. Gray sheets cover the heavy furniture. A big hearth. Family portraits on the walls. For simpler productions, furniture and props can be arranged before a background of dark draperies. A larger table with a minimum of 3 chairs is required. A smaller table or sideboard is needed for the snacks.

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### Scene 1

*(BEFORE RISE: In the black, FX of eerie organ music and a crack of lightning. AT RISE: JANELLE and KENNY DRAKE, with overnight bags, enter the main room.)*

**KENNY:** Wow! Honey, just look at the place!

**JANELLE:** I'm looking. I'm also sniffing. Meh.

**KENNY:** It's not so bad, Janelle.

**JANELLE:** Smells like your special omelets.

**KENNY:** My Sunday morning omelets are unforgettable.

**JANELLE:** That's what I'm saying.

**KENNY:** Hmm.

**JANELLE:** *(Looks at her cell phone.)* No cell phone signal in this crazy house.

**KENNY:** You don't need your cell phone tonight.

**JANELLE:** What if I need to call 911?

**KENNY:** You won't. Just trust me.

**JANELLE:** Okay, Kenny. What's your big surprise?

**KENNY:** Well, you've heard of the wealthy landowner, Consuela Gottlieb?

**JANELLE:** Of course. She is known for eating small birds.

**KENNY:** I met with Mrs. Gottlieb and she offered me, well, a bet.

**JANELLE:** This sounds bad. What kind of bet?

**KENNY:** A very sweet bet. You and I spend the night here and she gives us the title to the place.

**JANELLE:** What?

**KENNY:** House, property, all of it. We can't lose.

**JANELLE:** This place? This creepy place that looks like a mausoleum?

**KENNY:** Just imagine, Janelle. We become owners of this house. We refurbish it and sell it for two million.

**JANELLE:** Refurbish? You mean burn it down.

**KENNY:** Maybe three million.



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**JANELLE AND KENNY:** AUUUGGGGHHHHHH!

**CONSUELA:** Mr. Drake? Please.

**KENNY:** Very well.

*(SFX: As he signs, a hideous laugh from above.)*

**GHOST:** (O.S.) Bahwahheeeeeehaaaaaaahhheeeeeee

**KENNY:** Once again, I did not hear that.

**JANELLE:** I did.

**CONSUELA:** Don't forget, Mr. and Mrs. Drake, if you fail to stay until dawn, you must give me fifty thousand dollars.

**JANELLE:** What?

**KENNY:** Oh, did I forget to mention that tiny detail?

**JANELLE:** Kenny!

**CONSUELA:** Goodnight, you crazy, kids. See you in the morning. Maybe. *(SHE exits.)*

**JANELLE:** I smell sulfur.

**KENNY:** That's the sweet smell of money after we sell for big bucks.

**JANELLE:** But if not, we owe Consuela money we don't have.

**KENNY:** Don't worry. All we have to do is stay all night.

**JANELLE:** What a nutty idea.

**KENNY:** It's just a test. To see if we have the bravery to inherit the old Gottlieb mansion and its legend.

**JANELLE:** Legend? What do you mean?

**KENNY:** Well, you know...

**JANELLE:** Kenny, what are you not telling me?

**KENNY:** The thing is, sweetie, there is a myth, just a myth...

**JANELLE:** What kind of myth?

**KENNY:** That the place is cursed.

**JANELLE:** Haunted and cursed? Perfect!

**KENNY:** Janelle...

**JANELLE:** I'm not staying all night in a cursed ghost house with a loon laughing in the attic.

**KENNY:** It's merely a folktale. Nobody believes in ghosts. You don't, do you?

**JANELLE:** Only if one taps me on the back and says good evening.

### **End of Freeview**

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