



**Sample Pages from
The Cow's Head**

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HORROR MOVIE 102: FAILING JUST GOT DEADLIER

A Collection of Five Hauntingly Bizarre Tales

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT BY
Steven Stack



Cast of Characters

The Ascot Ribbon (1M, 1F)

Travis: 16, and has an affinity for his looks, Bean, his mother, and his ascot ribbon.

Bea: Also 16, a somewhat normal teen except for her name (and the story behind it) and her odd affection for Travis.

Slash, Slash!!! (4F, 2M)

Nate: 17, the traditional heartthrob with nothing else to offer; dating Brooke and is Erika's brother, though he has his doubts about this.

Brooke: 18, the jock who's good at everything she does. Is dating Nate because he's quite attractive. Not one for feelings.

Marvin: 16, the studious, kind of dorky one, a fan of horror movies. Recently started dating Sasha.

Sasha: Brooke's best friend, dating Marvin, also a fan of horror movies, and clearly would be the "last girl" in horror movies because she is the least threatening and most likable.

Erika: The friend who's the least likable and most expendable of the group. Also, Nate's sister.

Pippa Vanderway: A serial killer, reminiscent of 80's Slasher films. Well, except for the fact that she's British, wears paint-splattered overalls, has pigtails, and is terrible at it.

The Cow's Head (5F, One Talking Cow's Head)

Sage: 14, Very headstrong and in denial due to her older brother's death and her parents' inability to love the one they still have. The leader of the group.

Kendra: 13, lives her life in fairy tales because her real life is clearly no fairy tale.

Landry: 14, the logical one of the friend group who tries to be the bridge between Sage and Kendra. Is also protective of Sage because she doesn't seem to want to protect herself.

Kevin: The Cow's Head, the star of a Ukrainian urban legend, oddly similar to Cinderella.

Cassie: Was the younger sister of Karen, but now is merely a vessel for a virus that is keeping her alive.

Karen: Was the older sister of Cassie, but now is merely a vessel for a virus that is keeping her alive.

The Date (2F, 2M)

Chris: 15, best friends with Ray and Felicia, who are dating. Speaking of dating, Chris has never been on a date. Until tonight.

Felicia: 16, dating Ray. Likes to research the odd happenings in St. Claire. Very loyal and direct.

Ray: 16, dating Felicia. Sees Chris as a little brother even though he's only a few months older. Seems to have it all together.

Jinny: Probably 15. A girl who is inhumanely attractive and mysterious. Started school at St. Claire three weeks ago and is very attracted to Chris, for reasons unknown.

Tofuman (2F, 2M)

Dane: 17, dating Tara, died last year and is now a Zoman, half-zombie/half-human. Tends to place lots of things in his "denial box."

Bloo-day Ma-ray: The urban legend Bloody Mary, only here she rips out hearts and sings about her love of ripping out hearts.

Tara: 17, died last year with Dane, her boyfriend, when she gave Hook Hand back her hook. Is really embracing this Zoman thing, including the eating human part.

Phillip: 18, went on a date with Tara, rather dumb, loves playing the ukulele and being found edible.

Dedicated to...

Jon Hawkins, who is one of my best friends and who once hit me in the face with a racquetball because he's terribly inaccurate on the racquetball court. Or maybe he's quite accurate. One can never be sure about such things.

The Cow's Head

Setting: An abandoned, quarantined cabin.

At Rise: We hear voices outside of the cabin. Then KENDRA, SAGE, and LANDRY enter. SAGE has a backpack full of supplies. KENDRA is carrying a Halloween bag. LANDRY is carrying a bag of candy. All have flashlights. SAGE, the leader of the herd, enters first and smiles.

SAGE: Here it is.

LANDRY: Is that... blood?

SAGE: Yep. Lots of blood. Least it's not fresh.

KENDRA: Why didn't they clean up –

SAGE: Probably didn't see the point. No one's going to stay in this place again after what happened.

KEVIN: Except for us apparently.

SAGE: You're welcome.

LANDRY: *(sees an uncomfortable KENDRA)* What's wrong, Kendra?

KENDRA: *(turns to her)* Everything, Landry! We all know that my life wouldn't be on anyone's list of "Lives I wished I had," so I spend most of my time when I'm not with you guys reading and waiting for Halloween so that for a while, I won't have to be myself, and I'll get candy for it. Instead, I'm here where teenagers went crazy and killed each other.

LANDRY nods as KENDRA shakes her head in disgust.

SAGE: I feel like you're simplifying what happened because there's was way more to it than that but whatever.

LANDRY: About that, how do you even know happened? Everything awful that happens here in St. Claire always gets covered up.

SAGE: My dad.

KENDRA: He told you? That's a pretty messed up thing to –

SAGE: He didn't. After Matt died, Dad needed something to occupy his mind besides, I don't know, spending time with the kid he still had. He decided to find out what really happened here at the cabin because, well, why not? He started digging and I start

snooping through what he found. And let me tell, what happened in this cabin, is the stuff of nightmares. I'll give you all the details when it's story time. (*KENDRA and LANDRY look at her*) What?

KENDRA: Do you miss you Matt? I mean, you never talk about him anymore and –

SAGE: Of course, I do. He was awesome. And he got me. Plus, he was always nice to me even when I was “little sister” annoying. (*silence*) He deserved better than what he got. (*LANDRY and KENDRA both nod*) When he got sick and I watched him just wilt away in that bed... it wasn't him anymore so I, uh, stopped going to see him as much. (*shakes her head*) I did get to say goodbye but I don't know if he heard me.

KENDRA: You've never talked about any of this with us before.

SAGE: I've never talked about anyone about it with anyone before. I have no idea why I'm doing it now. It's not one of favorite topics. (*silence*)

LANDRY: Well, thanks for talking to us about it. Makes you more human.

SAGE: Being human is overrated. (*silence*)

LANDRY: It must be weird being the only kid now.

SAGE: It sucks. I thought that when he died, my dad would expect me to step it up or something and I wanted to, but I just became... invisible. (*silence*)

KENDRA: Do you want a hug?

SAGE: Pass. (*KENDRA seems hurt slightly, SAGE notices*) Thanks, though.

LANDRY: I bet if Matt was alive, he would've tried to stop you from coming out here.

SAGE: (*laughs*) He would have. Or he would've come out here with us.

KENDRA: Yeah, speaking of coming out here. I get why Landry and I did because we do whatever you want us to, but why did you want to come here knowing what you know about this place and what happened here?

SAGE: Two reasons, one because it's Halloween and I thought it would be fun. Two, and most importantly, when you clearly have no control over what happens to you, see Matt, why not simply say screw it and do whatever you want for however long you get to?

LANDRY: But if something happens to you, your parents will be alone.

SAGE: I know that, Landry. Believe me. But in the end, we all end up alone so there's also that.

KENDRA: Such an uplifting thought.

SAGE: This is why I avoid acting human, Kendra. *(she sighs)* Anyway, enough of this crap. Let's get this night started. Now, neither of you brought your phones, right?

KENDRA and SAGE both nod that they didn't.

LANDRY: And why did you not want us to –

SAGE: Because none of them had their phones either. That's why they weren't able to call for help.

LANDRY: Which turned out turned out well.

SAGE: Hindsight's always 20/20. Besides, Karen and Cassie's bodies were never found, so maybe their story ended happily ever after. *(silence for a moment)*

KENDRA: Something awful is going to happen tonight. Even worse than missing trick or treating.

SAGE: Relax. We're in a place where something horrible happened. Past tense. Trust me, tonight nothing bad is going to happen.

KENDRA: And you just signed our death warrant. Horror Movie 102: a group of teenagers go the scene of a grisly crime and the leader says, "Trust me, tonight nothing bad is going to happen" resulting in... something bad happening.

LANDRY: Like what? Our flashlights suddenly cutting out and us hearing a loud knock at the door?

Their flashlights cut out and a loud knock is heard at the door. They react.

Oh, crap. Did I make that happen?

Another knock is heard. KENDRA is about to scream, and SAGE puts her hand over her mouth.

SAGE: Shhh! Whoever's out there might not know we're in here.

KEVIN: *(from offstage)* I do.

KENDRA: My flashlight's not working anymore.

SAGE: Yeah, mine's not either.

KEVIN: Nor does Landry's.

LANDRY: (*whispers*) He knows my name.

KEVIN: I know all your names.

LANDRY: Well, that's not creepy at all.

KENDRA: What do we do?

KEVIN: Let me in.

SAGE: We're not doing that.

KEVIN: Don't be rude. (*more forceful*) Besides, you don't have a choice.

KENDRA: (*turns to SAGE and LANDRY*) It's okay. The door's locked.

The sound of a click is heard and the door creaks open.

KEVIN: Was... locked. (*silence*) Maybe you need a little light.

A blue light fills the cabin. They are getting scared. Silence. The voice sighs.

Come get me. Now. And don't even think of running. I promise what's out there is way worse than me. (*silence*)

LANDRY: What do we do?

SAGE: Play along until we can figure out how to get out of here. Follow my lead. (*gets up and starts walking towards the door*) If something happens to me –

KENDRA: You want us to run away.

SAGE: No! I want you to save me.

KENDRA: Yeah, we're not doing that.

LANDRY considers saying something but doesn't.

KEVIN: The clock is ticking.

SAGE: I'm coming. (*Exits as KENDRA and LANDRY move closer together. Silence. From offstage.*) Oh.

KEVIN: Oh, what, Sage?

SAGE: Oh, nothing. Nothing at all. I just –

KEVIN: Pick me up, bring me in, and then place me on the couch.

SAGE: Cool, cool, cool.

KENDRA and LANDRY move away from the couch. SAGE enters awkwardly carrying... a cow's head. She looks at LANDRY and KENDRA and then places the cow's head on the couch and backs away. Silence.

It's a talking cow's head.

Silence. KEVIN, the cow's head, makes a loud pleased sound.

KEVIN: This couch is quite comfortable. Thanks for bringing me in.
(*silence*) I get it, you three are kind of weirded out by me.

KENDRA: Kind of?

KEVIN: Okay, a lot. But look, don't judge a cow's head by its lack of a body. I am way more than what I don't have. (*silence*) I'm not going to lie; I feel a lot of judgment from you three.

KENDRA: You're a bodyless cow's head that's talking to us.

KEVIN: My name's Kevin. (*silence*) Got any food? I'm super hungry.
(*sniffs*) Is that chocolate? (*notices LANDRY eating something*)
Landry, what are you eating?

LANDRY: Me?

KEVIN: There's no other Landry here, bud.

LANDRY: A candy bar. Kit Kat. My favorite.

KEVIN: Can I have some?

LANDRY: I guess... Kevin. But like I said, they're my favorite so I'd prefer you not eat all of it. (*She crosses over with her candy bar and puts it down. Nothing happens.*)

KEVIN: I'm going to need a little help here, bud, because I don't have –

LANDRY: Oh, right. Sorry. First time I've fed a... you know... (*Picks up the candy bar and moves it close to the cow's mouth. She then pulls back.*)

KEVIN: Don't be a tease, Landry. Now give me some bar. (*LANDRY does*) Oh, this is good. Haven't had chocolate in a long time. Very tasty. (*finishes*) That's enough. Don't want to eat it all.

LANDRY: (*sadly*) You already did. Just the wrapper's left. And that was my last one.

KEVIN: Somebody under planned.

KENDRA: Were you actually going to eat after a cow's head?

LANDRY: That's a good question that I don't know how to answer.

KEVIN: (*yawns*) Put me to bed.

SAGE: Put you to bed?

KEVIN: Yeah, I'm super tired.

KENDRA: Oh! (*KENDRA is genuinely excited*) I know who you are, Kevin. You're a Ukrainian urban legend.

LANDRY: They have those?

KENDRA: Every place does, dummy. The story of The Cow's Head is that he shows up at a poor girl's house, she takes care of him, and then good things happen for her. Kind of like Cinderella.

SAGE: Seriously? (*KENDRA nods*) That's stupid.

KEVIN: Even urban legends have feelings, and just because it sounds stupid, it doesn't mean it's not true.

SAGE: Are you saying it is true?

KEVIN: What else would I be? It is St. Claire after all, am I right?

KENDRA: This is great! That means we take care of him and then good things will happen to us. We've already fed him, and now we put him to bed. And boom, in the morning everything will be great. (*SAGE and LANDRY look confused*) Trust me! We'll get our every wish. Like mine has always been to be, you know, someone else.

LANDRY: Well, that's not sad at all.

KENDRA: It is what it is.

LANDRY: Okay. What about you, Sage?

SAGE: I don't know. Something feels wrong about this –

KENDRA: Something felt wrong about coming here tonight, yet Landry and I came with you because you wanted us to.

LANDRY: Or made us.

KEVIN: Peer pressure, am I right?

Production Notes

Sets

The Ascot Ribbon needs merely a bench. You could add delightful trees and shrubbery if so inclined.

The Cow's Head takes place in an old cabin and only needs a chair or a couch. You can make the set as elaborately “creepy cabin” as you wish. Even though a “bloodstain” is mentioned, there is no need to stain your stage with blood.

Slash, Slash takes place at abandoned campground, but the only real set piece needed is a tent. For Erika's death scene, you can have it simply take place downstage using downstage lighting, leaving the main set (featuring the tent) onstage in the dark.

The Date occurs in a backyard with a table and four chairs at night.

Tofuman takes place in a living room of a shack. There needs to be some chairs and a table for Dane to work his magic with his tofu.

Lights

Basic lighting is needed for all scenes. To create a more suspenseful atmosphere, dim lighting is recommended for almost all scenes, and a blue light would be excellent for *The Cow's Head*. There are moments that blackouts are required, and those are mentioned in the script.

Sound

The Ascot Ribbon

- Perhaps a soft meadow sound
- The sound of a head falling off

The Cow's Head

- Loud knocking at the door
- Outdoor noise

The Date

- Cellphone notifications

Tofuman

- 80's style music

Props Needed*Ascot Ribbon*

- Ascot Ribbon (Travis)

Cow's Head

- Bags (Sage, Landry, Kendra)
- Cow's Head (Kevin) Note: We used a cow's head mask stuffed to make it look full. You could also make one.
- Kit Kat bars (Landry)
- Flashlights (Sage, Landry, Kendra)

Slash, Slash

- Bedazzled Machete (Pippa)
- Backpacks (Marvin, Sasha, Erika, Nate, Brooke)
- Note (Pippa)
- Stick (Pippa)
- Sorry Pieces (Nate)
- Inhaler (Nate)

The Date

- Snack food, juice boxes (Chris)
- Bowl of cinnamon applesauce (Chris)
- Cell Phones (Chris, Ray, Felicia)

Tofuman

- Tofu in the shape of human parts (Dane)
- Ukulele (Phillip)
- Phillip's Heart (Bloo-day Ma-ray) Note: If you wished you could place the heart in a paper bag.

Costume

All characters can dress in what you imagine for them, except for Pippa Vanderway in *Slash, Slash*, who has "glasses, pigtails, freckles, and paint splattered overalls."

Also, Travis's ascot in *Ascot Ribbon* should be quite the colorful one.

Random Vital Notes*The Falling Off of Travis's Head in The Ascot Ribbon*

We did this by blacking out the lights when Bean removed the ascot ribbon and having Travis fall behind the bench so that only his head could be seen. We covered the bench with a black sheet to aid in the illusion. When the

lights returned, bam, no body. Like magic.

The Slash, Slash Training Montage

This is based on what was quite prevalent in almost every 80's movie I saw. Think cleaning montage, or car wash montage, building montage, etc. And each montage is full of hijinks, no talking, smiles, goofiness, and, most importantly, an upbeat 80's song. In our case, the montage is training someone to be a horror movie serial killer. Even though it's already listed in the script, I've included what needs to be trained... right here:

- The menacing stare for a rather long and tedious time (Pippa does rather poorly at this).
- The slow walk that always gets them places faster than people running (Pippa also does poorly at this because she either skips, hops, or something else ridiculous).
- The powerful slashing with no flair (Pippa also does poorly at this because she does the slashing like a dancer).
- Appearing in random places like a game of whack-a-mole (Pippa thinks she does good at this but her happily popping out is kind of the opposite of what they are after).
- The using of various things to kill people.
- At one point, she wants something to drink but is denied because killers don't drink or eat
- Whatever else you can think of! Have fun!

Kevin (The Cow's Head) Voice

This one we did by using a microphone. You could also just have the person hidden onstage to provide the voice. Though the microphone added another element of weirdness.

Cassie and Karen in The Cow's Head

They should simply be in the background covered in sheets. They could also almost be offstage if that's easier.

The marking on Jinny in The Date

Have fun with this one. Not that you couldn't have fun with everything else. It needs to be big enough to be seen by the audience. Placement depends on your taste.

The Ripping Out of Phillip's Heart in Tofuman

This one clearly takes place offstage, and no heart must be ripped out.



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