

## HOUSE-SITTER

BY JASON CORDOVA

### WITNESS

*Olivia Kirk*, a freelance production assistant who has been asked to house-sit by Marvin Tennenbaum, a big-shot movie producer. Her source of strength is *knowing that if she fucks this gig up, she'll be stuck doing post on cheesy celebrity haunting shows for the rest of her career*. Her personality trait is *jaded*.

### OTHER CHARACTERS

- ⊙ *Marvin Tennenbaum*, a Hollywood power player going out of town for a week-long film festival; an obvious lie, since there isn't anything on the circuit calendar that week.
- ⊙ *Anthony Rogers*, a private security guard who occasionally stops by the house to see how things are going. Marvin never mentioned him.
- ⊙ *Sir Laurence Olivier*, Marvin's pure-bred Samoyed, who probably cost more than Olivia's car.
- ⊙ *Agnes Moorebank*, Marvin's eccentric great-aunt who lives in a cottage on the property. They say she used to be a minor starlet, but now she is mostly an old recluse; her days occupied with reminiscing on old flames, and re-enacting her favorite scenes from the films she worked on.

### LOCATIONS AND ERA

*The Gardenia House*, a mansion in the Hollywood hills, set on 2 acres of beautifully manicured grounds, with pool and private tennis court. Originally built in the 1920s, the house has passed through several owners over the years. Marvin Tennenbaum purchased the property in 2005.

*We have discovered a huge circular chamber, with sweeping spiral ramp to the surface. Incredible feat of engineering. If only we had discovered from the air.*

**OTHER LOCATIONS**

- ⊙ *The Screening Room*, a small movie theater inside the mansion, decorated in a swooping, art deco style. A mannequin dressed as a concession girl holds a tray full of Jujubes, Raisinets, and other treats.
- ⊙ *The Basement Waxwork*, a series of jewel-tone, *papier mache* corridors interspersed with dioramas featuring scenes from old movies you don't remember, and wax likenesses of actors you've never heard of.
- ⊙ *The Plum Room*, a salon with furnishings upholstered entirely in dark, plum-colored velvet, and wallpaper and draperies in a heavy damask of the same color. The room is dimly lit by old gas lamps on the walls.
- ⊙ *The Attic*, which is dusty and dark, and filled with old props and movie memorabilia.

**SPECIAL CARDS**

- ⊙ Objet d'Art
- ⊙ Visions
- ⊙ Replace the *Witness*
- ⊙ Anachronism
- ⊙ Alien Artifact

*This, then, is the location  
of the prodigious tower.*

*We have found the bodies  
of Gedney and the missing  
dog, packed in the sledge  
like so much baggage.*

*Not baggage. Specimens.*

**HOUSE-SITTER: SAMPLE CLUES**

- ⊙ A reel of silent, black & white film depicting the same short scene over and over again. With each repetition, the actors become slightly more alien or terrifying in appearance.
- ⊙ A photo book with the words “Taken Too Soon” embossed on the cover, and filled with head shots of actors who died at a young age, and some from the present day who are very much alive.
- ⊙ An old phonograph playing a recording of several people doing frenzied, barnyard animal noises. In the background, faintly, can be heard ritualistic chanting.
- ⊙ A screenplay whose title and text are in an unknowable, alien tongue, but with notes like “Nice dialogue!” and “Should we get Marilyn for this?” written in the margins.
- ⊙ The unmistakable voices of long-dead movie stars occasionally whisper to the *Witness* on the intercom installed throughout the house.
- ⊙ An elegant vanity table with mirrored legs and surfaces, its drawers filled with swarming cockroaches.
- ⊙ Wet footprints leading from the pool to inside the house.
- ⊙ A stack of unmarked VHS tapes containing home videos of a family who previously occupied the Gardenia House. In each scene, someone has a large, fist-sized insect crawling on them, but no one seems to notice.
- ⊙ The diary of a star from Hollywood’s Golden Age. Several pages are missing, and there are strange symbols scrawled on the back inside cover.
- ⊙ A slick of gray goo in the kitchen’s dumbwaiter.
- ⊙ A brass and wood telescope fixed on a pulsating red star.
- ⊙ A row of wig display heads that look eerily similar to the *Witness*, but with hairstyles from different eras.

*Penguins! Penguins can  
only mean one thing.*