

**HOUSE**

written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. THEME PARK - HAUNTED HOUSE - NIGHT

A sea of Halloween. The clash of a GENTLE FALL BREEZE and screams of terror provide the perfect seasonal soundtrack for the manufactured moonlit fog machine air.

Disoriented attendees in costume flood the streets. Hired scareactors lurk, ready to claim their next victim. The experience is so immersive it is a mystery to discern the participants from the performers.

An ominous building facade looms in the b.g. Two brothers KEVIN (17) and BEN (13) shove through the crowds towards the entrance. Ben trails behind.

Kevin tugs on his younger brother to keep up.

KEVIN

Come on, Ben! This'll be fun!

Ben stops and crosses his arms.

BEN

Nope.

KEVIN

Why? You scared?

BEN

No. You're the one who's scared.  
You HATE haunted houses.

With nearly convincing, but completely false boldness, Kevin smiles and places his hand on Ben's shoulder.

KEVIN

Listen, I'm older now and I'm NOT  
scared anymore.

(beat)

And, since you're not scared, this  
should be a cakewalk, right?

Ben trusts Kevin too much to doubt his big brother's false grin. But, Ben is clearly bothered by something else. He shrugs Kevin's hand off his shoulder.

BEN

You told me we were coming here to  
ride the new Rip Ride Rockit roller  
coaster.

KEVIN

We're totally gonna' do that,  
little bro! Right after we go  
through Hell House of Horror.

BEN

If you only wanted to go in haunted  
houses, why did you buy express  
tickets for the rides? Was that a  
bribe or something?

(beat)

You said we were gonna hang out --  
like we used to.

KEVIN

And, that's exactly what we're  
doing, right?

(extending hand)

Don't worry, I'll be right beside  
you.

BEN

NO! I'm not going in there!

Kevin grabs Ben's hand and drags him closer to the house.

KEVIN

I promise we'll go on ALL the rides  
after we go through this house.

(beat)

Deal?

Ben jerks his hand out of Kevin's grip and steps back.

BEN

You're just doing this so you can  
hang out with the cool kids at  
school.

Kevin's smile tumbles down like a deck of cards.

KEVIN

You heard about the dare, huh...?

BEN

Duh. Everyone at school knows.

KEVIN

All I gotta do is go inside, take a  
selfie with a Hell House Demon, and  
get outta there.

Ben swallows his tears.

BEN

If you become one of them... what happens to ME?

Troubled, Kevin looks at Ben.

KEVIN

What are you talking about...?!

(beat)

Do you think I'm not going to hang out with you at school anymore... is that it?

Ben is silent. He glances at Kevin, then at the gloomy house and shrugs. Kevin got his answer.

HOUSE ENTRANCE

Blood-curdling shrieks, shrills, and chills of patrons walking through the morbid maze fill the air. The CREAKING DOOR waves back and forth calling the brothers to push it open.

BACK TO BEN AND KEVIN

KEVIN (CONT'D)

(confessing)

Okay Ben, you're right. I absolutely hate haunted houses. I'm actually getting terrified just being here. But, I can't handle being the next viral "chicken meme" at our school.

(beat)

I'm sorry I lied to you. I just can't do this alone.

(beat)

Will you please do this house with me, so I'm not the laughing stock of the entire school?

BEN

I'm not afraid of this dumb house, Kevin. I'm just afraid of losing my best friend.

The brothers' genuine honesty temporarily drowns out the shrieks. They stare at each other, until Kevin breaks their silence.

KEVIN

Let's just forget about the stupid house, ok? Let's go on some rides!

Ben wipes his nose on his long sleeved shirt.

BEN

What about the dare? And your friends?!

KEVIN

They aren't my real friends.  
(smiles genuinely)

You are.

For the first time tonight, Ben smiles. He reaches to give Kevin a hug, but instead awkwardly lifts his fist for a bump. Kevin laughs and wraps his little brother in an unashamed bear hug.

BEN

Come on. The sooner we get this over with, the sooner we can go on Rip Ride Rokit. Hell House of Horror -- here we come!

(taking a "race" stance)

Last one there has to take out the trash for a month!

Ben takes off running towards the house. Astonished, Kevin freezes, but then quickly accepts his brother's race challenge. They reach the nightmarish doorstep at the same time.

A horrifying howl pierces through the walls. They look at each other contemplating one last chance to back out. Ben reaches for Kevin's hand and with a deep breath, the brothers push through the CREAKING DOOR together.

FADE TO BLACK.

**THE END**