

**Writing Sample—Stacy Barton**  
**“ROOM FOR ONE MORE”**  
**Disney Event Group Special Event**



**Show Writer:** Stacy Barton  
**Show Director:** Ken Malquist  
**Show Producer:** Rhonda Ross

This 1.2 million-dollar, affluent event later became the R&D inspiration for Disneyland’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Disney’s Haunted Mansion®. I was the writer for all narrative development, immersive experience design, and scripting as well as executive pitches, articles, and nominations such as the one below.

Link to promo video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ma7iEphKbPQ&list=PLW0C5JOirufmYmUAB2y6a-eUU3Rkykx1D&index=3>

### **2017 THEA TEA AWARDS NOMINATION**

999 Happy Haunts reside in Disney’s Haunted Mansion®... but there’s always room for one more! And so, we created a completely immersive experience for Guests in which they became participants in a grim grinning gala that took them through the Mansion while its ghostly residents entertained.

For this high-touch, interactive experience, the Disney Event Group transformed 42,000 feet of ballroom space into one of the most popular Disney theme park attractions worldwide and populated it with 35 “residents” of the Mansion. Guests enjoyed an evening of immersive entertainment and fine cuisine as they progressed through four recreated rooms of the attraction. Familiar inhabitants of the attraction appeared in ways no one had ever seen before, bringing the Disney’s Haunted Mansion® to life—or as the residents would say, “the afterlife.”

Nothing of this magnitude in regard to recreating the story of a theme park attraction in a ballroom had ever been done before. Dozens of artists and designers from the many disciplines within the Disney Event Group, including food and beverage, collaborated on this project. The result allowed Guests to step into the scenes they loved but had only ever witnessed from the confines of the ride’s own “doom buggies.”

Capitalizing on the mix of silly and spooky that is the hallmark of this attraction, Guests began with a reception in the first room of the Haunted Mansion—a dimly lit Victorian foyer. Here, Grimsley the Butler welcomed all inside, and while drinks and appetizers are passed, he retold the stories of the stretch-room portraits that hung over the gilded furniture. Soon a comedic cast of five ghost hunters arrived, led by the absurdly ineffective medium Madame Fortunatta. Improvised chaos ensued, until the voice of the Ghost Host reverberated around the room, setting up his eerie presence for the night and inviting all “foolish mortals” into the second room.

Following this disembodied voice, Guests stepped down a hallway and into the Great Hall of the Mansion, complete with library shelves, velvet drapes, stained glass windows and candelabras. Cobwebs swung overhead. Candlelight flickered over damask-draped tables and silly Ghoul played a pipe organ while everyone was seated for a gourmet experience, complete with performances by the mansion’s inhabitants between courses.

Upon a flash of lightning, the eight marble busts stepped off the library shelves to become a lively cast of statues performing pop classics with amazing vocals and hard-hitting choreography. Next, the attraction’s twelve ballroom dancers appeared in costumes made of glowing fabric; dipping and twirling to otherworldly music, they danced with Guests between tables.

After the main course was laid, Madame Fortunatta and her comedic entourage drew Guests into their séance, hoping to discover who was to be the Mansion’s 1000 ghost. Unfortunately, being a rather dreadful medium, Madame Fortunatta kept bringing back the *wrong* ghosts in a hilarious musical show in which her followers were embodied by the likes of Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe, Richie Valens and more.

Intent on bringing order out of absurd chaos, the real medium of the attraction suddenly apparated. Usually only seen in the crystal ball of the attraction, Madame Leota appeared this night in a special effects video that filled the frame of the stately portrait over the mantle. With a *proper* incantation, Madame Leota summoned the Hatched Bride from the attraction’s attic with these words, “It is *she* who loves him *most* that will find the 1000 ghost!”

With that, Constance Hatchaway—the eternal bride known for beheading five husbands—appeared in a dazzling spotlight on the attic balcony. Singing a slightly altered Diana Ross classic, “My Headless Love”, she enchanted both the Guests and actors before summoning everyone up the stairs and into the third room.

Overhead rafters, dormer windows, and exposed brick walls surrounded our Guests in the famed attraction’s attic. In a moment, old dusty sheets were drawn from antique furniture so that Guests could find a seat for a comical recreation of the 1960’s game show, “The Hatchet Bride’s Dating Game.” Complete with campy music, hilarious questions, and a Guest as one of the eligible bachelors, this interactive show entertained. Constance eventually chose one of the séance actors to be her next “head of household” and everyone

was ushered through the family crypt and out into the wedding reception in the attraction's Graveyard.

Low-lying fog covered the ground as dappled moonlight shone through craggy trees. Guests shuffled through dead leaves as they wove their way between tombstones, garden benches, and ghoulish buffets of desserts. On their own stage, the never-before-seen-live Hitchhiking Ghosts welcomed everyone to the Hatched Bride's "Swinging Wake." In glowing costumes, eyes, and teeth, these three ghouls performed like a trio of bad wedding DJs, hosting a wild dance party with stand-up hilarity.

With the 1000 ghost clearly identified as the Hatched Bride's new husband, a spirited grand finale wrapped up the night. The entire ghostly cast performed a brand-new pop version of the "Grim Grinning Ghosts" before bowing, waving, and filing back into the Mansion through the crypt.

## SCRIPT EXCERPT

### Room For One More

### Madame Leota Green Screen Taping

*LIVE in blue*—green screen taping in black

**EFFECT: MADAME LEOTA** green screen



### GHOST HOST

Unfortunately, Grimsley, they seem to be having trouble getting through. Perhaps Madame Leota can establish contact? She has a remarkable head for materializing the disembodied

### MADAME FORTUNATTA

There she is, in the portrait over the mantle!

### GHOST HOST

Yes, it would appear that she has sensed your sympathetic vibrations.... Leota? can you lend us a hand?

MADAME LEOTA pauses because she is only a head

**LUCY**  
(*aside*) Awkward.

**MADAME LEOTA**  
(*To MASTER GRACEY*)  
Of course... it's what I do – it's what I lived for!

(*To GUESTS*)  
Why have I been summoned?

Stammering, in awe

**MADAME FORTUNATTA**  
Oh Madame Leota, your highness—oh I am such a fan—I mean, you see, it's just that, well we can't quite seem to find the 1000 ghost!

**MADAME LEOTA**  
(*To FAMILY*)  
Ah, I see...

Returning to her trance

(*conjuring*) Hmmmm.

Finding the answer; looking back at family

It is *she* who loves him *most* that will find the 1000 ghost! Prepare yourselves!

Goes into her incantation

Serpents and spiders, tail of a rat; *I'll* call the spirits, wherever they're at. So rap on a table it's time to respond; send us a message from somewhere beyond...

**SFX:** Wind sounds and a flicker of lights as **SÉANCE ACTORS** murmur

Goblins and ghoulies from last Halloween: awaken the spirits with your tambourine.

**SFX:** Tambourine sounds

**SÉANCE ACTORS**  
(*murmur, ad lib*)

**SFX:** a bell is heard

**MADAME LEOTA**  
Wizards and witches, wherever you dwell, give us a hint, by ringing a bell!

MADAME LEOTA'S voice rises over the **LIVE SÉANCE ACTORS'** murmurs

**SÉANCE ACTORS**  
(*excitement, squeals, ad lib*)

**MUSIC: MY HEADLESS LOVE**

*(lyric spoof on Diana Ross, "My Endless Love")*

After song ends

**MADAME LEOTA**

Creepies and crawlies, toads in a pond; let there be music, from regions beyond... bring back the bride with her hatchet and song!

**HATCHET BRIDE SINGS**

**MADAME LEOTA**

Hornfrogs and lizards, fiddle and strum; bewitched a few bachelors, Constance has done.

Ghost fiends and furies she's been married before; five times to be certain...but there's room for one more!

**MADAME FORTUNATTA**

I knew it – oh I knew it!

**MADAME LEOTA**

Now, into the attic, to find the man she loves most; he will surely become your 1000 ghost...

**MADAME FORTUNATTA**

Oh, my! Isn't she simply splendid? Thank you, Madame Leota!

**MADAME LEOTA**

Certainly...

You asked for it...

*(laugh)*

*As she disappears*