

Quincy and Carlyle are setting up ghost detection apparatus at an old hotel.

Carlyle: So this old hotel is pretty haunted, right, Quincy?

Quincy: If local legend and rumors propagated by drunkards are to be trusted.

Carlyle: How many drunkards?

Quincy: Three that I talked to, at least.

Carlyle: Class B verification. Sweet!

Quincy: Yep. The stories are numerous and varied. Some accounts include people feeling like their hair is being pulled slightly when getting ready for bed. Others say they'll be taking a shower, completely alone, when out of nowhere they feel this mild hair-pulling sensation.

Carlyle is wide-eyed.

Quincy: Don't be scared. Stuff like this is routine out in the field. Nothing life-threatening. Er, I guess except for the one case here of the man falling off the balcony in the mid-seventies. Pulled right over the edge by the scalp, they say.

Carlyle: Holy smokes! I'm surprised this place isn't swarming with paranormal investigators already. You sure this gig hasn't been scooped by any of the big names yet?

Quincy: Oh, not again...

Carlyle: Do you think the late great Franklin Linkletter ever heard of this case? Or the incomparable Dr. Edgar Pants?? You don't suppose...

Quincy: No.

Carlyle: The legendary Sir Winthrop G. Tuttlehorn has set foot here??? Oh my God!

Quincy: No! Please, Carlyle, you're distracting me from my delicate apparatus. Anyway, I'm not fond of those personalities. Longwinded gluttons for the spotlight. They are more interested in book sales than real science these days.

Carlyle frowns, imagines herself smiling in her room with all her paranormal investigator fan-paraphernalia. In another thought bubble, a photo of her posing with a huge smile, with Linkletter who looks particularly unphotogenic. Signed, "To my young female fan, keep believing in things. Franklin Linkletter"

Carlyle: Well, I think they're great.

Quincy: I guess it just hackles my craw a bit that those guys get all the glory and money when so many hard working guys like me are out there invested in the science, having trouble putting food on the table.

Carlyle: But this is your first gig, right? And we just had a nice big breakfast at your mom's earlier. I'm still pretty full, actually.

Quincy: And you should be in class now. If I called your principal, I bet I'd find out they still take truancy seriously nowadays.

Carlyle ignoring the threat, her eyes light up.

Carlyle: Hey, how much cash are we gonna rake in on this gig?

Quincy: Um...

Carlyle: Is the hotel manager going to pay us for this? Was it up front, or do we send him an invoice? Hmm, maybe a cashier's check would be best. It might be a good idea to get a Paypal account for our website...

Quincy: That's not really how it works. I had to put down a pretty big chunk of change to get the room for the night. Even then, I had to pretend we were brother and sister on vacation. Places like this get nervous when they see the equipment.

Carlyle: Is that why you needed to borrow all my grandparents' luggage? And why you're wearing those ridiculous sandals?

Quincy: I *like* sandals, ok? My heels blister easily so I...

Carlyle: What are you doing? You've been messing with that thing for a half hour.

Quincy: It's a phantasmometer. I rigged it up myself at the university.

Carlyle: Looks like a tape recorder with some kind of paper funnel on it.

Quincy: Maybe to the untrained... yeah, pretty much.

Carlyle starts rummaging through the suitcase.

Quincy: Careful, that's some serious gear. Oh, that's a vapor ticker. It's really important. Hey why don't you set it up? It'll be good experience for you.

Carlyle: How does it work?

Quincy: It calculates concentration of vapor in the air attributable to ghostly presence. The hand on the small dial will tick slightly if a particle of vapor hits the internal screen.

Carlyle: There is goes!! A ghost!!

Quincy: No, that tick was too big. That was ordinary vapor.

Carlyle: Oh. Hey, there's a smaller one!

Quincy: No, that one's way too small. Well within the margin of idle jittering.

Carlyle: Hmm.

A pause.

Carlyle: Was that one big enough?

Quincy: Oops, that was me. I bumped it with my knee. Sorry.

Carlyle looks blankly, and then a little sad. She puts the machine down beside her on the bed, and starts to fantasize.

Carlyle: Sir Tuttlehorn, I must say your discoveries in the realm of unexplained phenomena are only outmatched by your eloquence on topics of the obscure! And you are quite the gentleman to invite me on your paranormal safari as top sidekick!

Tuttlehorn (from off-panel): My lady, what good are riches and brilliance if they cannot be utilized in favor of my number one fan, and far and away top-prospect in paranormal exploration excellence?

Carlyle: So true, Sir! I say, is that a lemon cake in your hot air balloon? How did you kn...

Tick.

Carlyle opens her eyes wide, and sees the dial. She glares at it as the hand moves a little.

Carlyle: Quincy! Quincy! The hand!

Quincy: Yeah, my knee bumped it again. I really should move to the other side of the bed.

Quincy gets up, and pauses.

Quincy: Um... Carlyle...

Carlyle: Yeah?

She turns around to see Quincy looking at a ghost, just standing there looking at both of them casually.

Carlyle: Eeek! Oh God! My hair, don't touch my hair!

She starts batting the air and trying to protect her hair with the other hand.

Quincy: Get the camera, Carlyle! Oh, man. Oh, man! My paper funnel is crumpled! I mean my... phantomasma... phantamale... it's broken. Fuck!

He throws it at the ghost.

Quincy: Why did I do that!!

The ghost gets scared and starts running out of the room. Carlyle has the camera, a Polaroid, and starts snapping wildly with her eyes shut and still protecting her hair, while trying to run out of the room.

She runs out of the room and down the hallway, with the ghost "chasing" her (but he's actually scared of Quincy, running from him). She's still snapping wildly.

They get to the top of the staircase, and the ghost catches up to her and trips over her.

Ghost: Shit!

He goes tumbling down the stairs, breaking his neck. His crumpled torso lies at the bottom.

Quincy: I... think he's dead. Or more dead.

Carlyle: He doesn't have a pulse.

Quincy: Um, should he?

Carlyle: You're the one who went to college for this stuff. He's not moving, anyway.

Quincy (flipping through photos): None of these photos show anything. It was an infrared camera. I guess he wasn't emitting heat. Ironically, if we had brought a normal camera, we could have gotten some nice shots.

Carlyle: Should I go get the vapor ticker and put it next to his corpse?

