

Ghost Roast

written by

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An original spec for This is the Thing (Fibe TV1)

**INT. RECORD STORE - DAY**

MIKE is working the cash. It's nearly closing time. Customers are milling about. Mike picks up the phone and pages the store:

MIKE  
(into phone)  
Attention, shoppers: the store  
will be closing in 5 minutes.

No reaction.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Please bring your items to the  
front.

Nothing.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
(gives up)  
Or not. That's cool too.

MANOLIS approaches the counter with some LPs.

MANOLIS  
Give 'em hell, Mikey!

MIKE  
Hey, Manolis.

MANOLIS  
You're playing my roast tonight,  
right?!

TIM enters alongside Mike.

TIM  
Roasted Greek? Yum! Sadly, Michael  
has other commitments.

MIKE  
Sorry, man. I promised Tim I'd  
stay for inventory.

MANOLIS  
(to Tim)  
I thought you were in Hollywood  
with your YouTube thing?

TIM  
Didn't work out. Creative  
differences.

MIKE  
They asked him to shave.

TIM

This 'stache is the source of my power.

MIKE

He's the hipster Samson.

MANOLIS

So ditch Hipster Samson and do the gig! It's gonna be packed, man - you want to be a comic, don't you?

MIKE

(thinking)

I do wanna test my roast material...

TIM

Uh-uh, no way, dude. You promised!

MIKE

Sorry, Manolis. Maybe next time.

MANOLIS

Word of advice, Mike. You're too nice. You've gotta be selfish in this business or you'll never make it.

MIKE

I'm not "too" nice, am I?...

MANOLIS

Yeah, maybe not. Can I borrow twenty bucks?

MIKE

(happy to help)

Oh yeah, for sure.

Mike hands Manolis a bill, which Manolis takes.

MANOLIS

See? Too nice. And you know where nice guys finish?

Manolis pays for his purchase with the twenty dollar bill.

MANOLIS (CONT'D)

Last. Keep the change.

MIKE

(processing all that)

Huh.

Manolis exits.

TIM

Rude.

MIKE

Hey, bros before shows, right?

Tim checks his watch, then picks up the phone, and in one motion:

TIM

(moved)

Awww.

(into pager, to customers)

We're closed. Go away.

**INT. RECORD STORE - NIGHT**

Mike and Tim both hold clipboards for inventory.

MIKE

OK, inventory time. What's my job?

TIM

The most important one of all,  
Mikey: You're on lookout!

MIKE

(not understanding)

Like, for missing Blu-rays...?

TIM

I know I have a cool, casual -  
some might say *smouldering* -  
exterior. But the truth is...

(in confidence)

I'm scared, Mikey. I'm scared AF!

Mike looks at his clipboard, confused.

MIKE

I'm sure it's not *that* off.

TIM

It's not the inventory I'm scared  
of, Michael.

(hushed)

It's the ghost!

MIKE

(automatically)

Totally, man.

(double-take)

Hang on - *ghost*?! What are you  
talking about?

TIM  
You know Old Olaf?

MIKE  
The janitor? Doesn't he drink soap  
all day?

TIM  
No, he doesn't "drink soap all  
day," Michael. That's absurd.  
Anyway...

DISOLVE TO:

**INT. RECORD STORE - DAY [FLASHBACK]**

Earlier that morning, Tim raises the store's security grate as OLAF (60s) mops nearby, gulping soap between mops. Old Olaf is grizzled and intense - an "old salt" type. As Tim reports dialogue, they 'speak' along - like Luis's stories in Ant-Man.

TIM (V.O.)  
I was opening the store today as  
Olaf mopped out front. Something  
was off. He was pale, scared.  
"Howzitgoin', Olaf? You look like  
you've seen a ghost." "So Olaf not  
crazy - you see ghost too?!" (I  
can't do his accent, but you get  
the idea.) "I see who now?" He  
leans in real close and whispers:  
"Ghost of Lime Ridge Mall."

CUT TO:

**INT. RECORD STORE - NIGHT**

MIKE  
You've got to be kidding me!

TIM  
Just listen:

CUT TO:

**INT. BEDDING STORE - NIGHT [FLASHBACK]**

Flashback in a flashback of Olaf's POV of his story to Tim.

TIM (V.O.)  
 Earlier that night, Olaf was in Quilts Etc. Out of the corner of his eye, he sees something move in the bedding isle. "Hello?" he called. "Is anyone?" No reply. So he gets closer and closer... All of a sudden, one of the sheets turns and looks at him with its dead, black eyes!

A classic, white-sheet GHOST appears and moves towards Olaf.

TIM (V.O.)  
 A ghost! Olaf ran as fast as his old, Norwegian legs would allow and hid in his janitor closet till dawn.

CUT TO:

**INT. RECORD STORE - DAY [FLASHBACK]**

Back in the initial flashback, Olaf concludes his story to Tim.

TIM (V.O.)  
 "The night," he warned. "Ghost come at night."

Tim finishes opening the store. Olaf exits, chugging soap.

CUT TO:

**INT. RECORD STORE - NIGHT**

TIM  
 And *that's* why you're on lookout.

MIKE  
 (incensed)  
 I cancelled my gig 'cause you're scared of ghosts?! You know what you are, Tim? You're *selfish!*

TIM  
 You gotta believe me, Mikey!

MIKE  
 Manolis was right. I *am* too nice. Next time you need help, forget it.

Mike grabs his inventory clipboard and heads to the back room.

TIM

Wait!

MIKE

I'll be in the stock room. If I see any ghosts, I'll let you know. Oh wait! *Ghosts aren't real!*

Mike exits. Tim gets down to doing inventory.

TIM

Fine! Go!  
(regretful)  
Some friend you are...

In the background, the ghost rises up from behind a rack and follows after Mike.

**EXT. HAMILTON STREET - NIGHT**

B.A. JOHNSTON sings a short, thematic song.

**INT. RECORD STORE BACK ROOM - NIGHT**

Mike is counting product, oblivious to what's behind him.

MIKE

...89, 90 Imagine Dragons LPs.

He crosses it off his inventory sheet.

MIKE (CONT'D)

'Dragon' down our sales.

Behind Mike, the ghost enters and the door slams shut through ghostly magic. Off the noise:

MIKE (CONT'D)

Not now, dude. I'm still mad at you.

Beat. As Mike talks, the ghost rummages through product in the back. Maybe tries on headphones and sways to the music; or compares Deadpool shirts, trying to decide which one's cooler...

MIKE (CONT'D)

Sorry I snapped. It's just that, I want to be a comic more than anything, right? Gigging's the only way I can make that happen. That's why I was so upset.

Beat.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
 I just worry that I put other  
 people first so much, I forget to  
 take care of myself, y'know?

Beat.

MIKE  
 I know you know. Pass the Funkos?

The ghost fetches a box for Mike, puts it in his work area and floats back to the door, as Mike looks away, searching for the right words:

MIKE (CONT'D)  
 You wouldn't ask me to miss a gig  
 for nothing. I guess you really  
 needed me, huh? Tell you what?  
 Grab us some coffees and call it  
 even.

The door opens 'on its own' again and the ghost floats out.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
 Good talk, man.

**INT. RECORD STORE - NIGHT**

Tim is doing inventory and completely terrified.

TIM  
 2 Cannibal Corpse LPs with flesh-  
 eating zombies on the cover,  
 check. 2 Carcass LPs with songs  
 like "Torn Arteries" and "Genital  
 Grinder," check.  
 (crying out)  
 Why'd I start with the death metal  
 section? It's the second scariest  
 genre after Christian Rock. What?!  
 Who's there?!

Beat. Silence.

TIM (CONT'D)  
 You're losing it, Timbo.

Beat.

TIM (CONT'D)  
 Maybe Mike was right. Maybe I was  
 being selfish.  
 (MORE)



TIM (CONT'D)  
 If ghosts aren't real, then he  
 missed his gig for nothing.

Beat.

TIM (CONT'D)  
 Mike's always there for me. Next  
 time, I'll be there for him.  
 (overconfident)  
 Ghosts! Hah! They're about as real  
 as the Leafs' cup chances.  
 (aloud)  
 You hear that, ghost? I don't  
 believe in you anymore!

He picks up another scary death metal album.

TIM (CONT'D)  
 (spooked)  
 Definitely not...

**INT. RECORD STORE - NIGHT**

Mike enters.

MIKE  
 Hey man, the back's all counted.

TIM  
 You're a nice guy, Mike.

MIKE  
 It's nothing.

TIM  
 It's *not* nothing. Next time you  
 need help? I *gotchu*.

MIKE  
 (charmed)  
 You 'gotch' me?

TIM  
 I gotchu.

MIKE  
 Awesome. Now, how 'bout those  
 coffees?

TIM  
 Alright! *What* coffees?

The front shutters rattle: It's the ghost with some coffees.

GHOST

Boooo!

MIKE

The ghost! He's real! I  
should have listened to Tim!

TIM

The ghost! He's real! You  
should have listened to Tim!

MIKE

I have so much to live for. Late  
night spots! A sitcom! Growing old  
and out of touch and complaining  
how PC culture on college campuses  
is out of control!

TIM

The Seinfeld!

MIKE

Exactly! Oh man, I don't wanna  
die!

TIM

(rising to the occasion)  
I gotchu, Mikey. Hey ghost, over  
here!

MIKE

What are you doing?

TIM

Creating a diversion so you can  
escape!

The ghost is slowly closing in on Tim.

MIKE

I can't just leave you!

TIM

Why not?

MIKE

'Cause I'm a nice guy, dammit!

They hug.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What a way to go! Killed by a  
bedsheet! The last time I saw a  
phantom menace *this* lame, it had  
Jar-Jar Binks in it!

GHOST

(offeneded)  
Oooh!

The ghost staggers back, injured.

MIKE  
What happened?

TIM  
I think he's sensitive.

MIKE  
That's it!

MIKE AND TIM  
Ghost roast!

Tim turns on the PA and tosses Mike a mic:

MIKE  
Hey ghost, you're so old you used to cheer for the Hamilton Tiger-Cubs! And back in your day, they wanted to build an LRT- yeah, an LRT-Rex!

The ghost staggers back again - direct hit!

MIKE  
And talk about stupid! You're so stupid you thought Mohawk College was a school for punks. But you're a film buff, it's true: You once went to Copps Colosseum and said "1 for the Russell Crowe/Joaquin Phoenix fight!"

The ghost staggers back further still - he's on the ropes!

TIM  
Finish him off, Mikey.

MIKE  
I can't! I'm out of jokes.

The ghost begins to recover.

TIM  
Riff, man! *Riff!*

MIKE  
Hey, ghost...

Mike looks around the store for inspiration.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Your... favourite album... is Eagles  
*Greatest Hits*?

The ghost howls in despair - he's mortally wounded.

TIM  
Woah, dude. Too far.

MIKE  
I was desperate.

GHOST  
Ooohh!

*Poof!* The ghost disappears.

TIM  
Great set, buddy.

MIKE  
Yeah, it felt good.

**INT. RECORD STORE - DAY**

The next morning. Tim and Mike drink coffees and play a game:

MIKE  
Deaddie Vedder.

TIM  
Corpseney Love.

MIKE  
Skel'ton John.

Minolis approaches the counter.

MINOLIS  
What's going on, boys?

MIKE  
We're playing "Undead Rockstars."

TIM  
It was a long night.

MIKE  
But we got through it. Together.

TIM  
Heck yeah we did, bud.

Beat.

TIM (CONT'D)  
Braaaaaain Maida!

To the tune of *Superman's Dead's* pre-chorus:

MIKE  
Oh?

TIM  
A-woo-oo!

MIKE  
Oh?

TIM  
A-woo-oo!

MIKE  
Oh?

TIM  
A-woo-oo!

MIKE  
Hey Manolis, how was the show?

MANOLIS  
Terrible! The audience was dead.  
Totally dead.

MIKE  
Sucks, man. Mine too.

Beat.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Joan Zom-baez?

TIM  
Absolutely not.

MIKE  
Yeah, no, sorry.

UNDER CREDITS:

**INT. MALL FOOD COURT - DAY**

Olaf and the ghost are sitting at a table. The ghost is hunched, sulking, as Olaf enjoys his breakfast.

OLAF  
You barely touch eggs!

Olaf keeps eating for a few beats, then:

OLAF  
Okay, I eat.

Olaf reaches over and takes the ghost's plate for himself and washes it down with soap. He offers the ghost a swig, but the ghost shakes his head, "No thanks."