

THE SARAH JANE ADVENTURES 3

**Episode 7
By**

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Green Revisions

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1 EXT. ASHEN HILL MANOR -- NIGHT

1

1655. Ashen Hill Manor - a large ancient building. Dating back hundreds of years. Imposing. Dark. Sinister.

The CAMERA CLOSES on it slowly as...

PROFESSOR RIVERS (V.O.)

No-one really knows just when Ashen Hill Manor was first built. But, through history, there has always been a house here. And, so they say, just as long as there has been stone and oak, there has always been evil.

CRASH-ZOOM on the huge, ancient, oak doors.

And the door swings open into DARKNESS...

DISSOLVE TO:

2 INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. SECRET CHAMBER -- NIGHT

2

Deep below the house... a secret chamber, lit dimly by candles. A man, ERASMUS DARKENING (skeletal, fifties, dressed in long robes) works in a sulphurous medieval laboratory amid PRAC bursts of smoke as he experiments...

PROFESSOR RIVERS (V.O.)

They say it was the reputation of the house that attracted the magician Erasmus Darkening.

In the shadows of the chamber/laboratory, a man stands watching. In his thirties, brooding, LORD MARCHWOOD, watches Darkening at work. Simmering.

PROFESSOR RIVERS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

He entered the service of the young, widowed lord of the manor, Lord Marchwood, a man whose family's wealth had been ravaged by Cromwell's Civil War. Darkening promised that in return for his protection, he would replenish the family's fortunes with the secret of making gold from base metal.

Darkening opens a vial - the focus of his experiments, and pours its contents into a dish - it is a dull powder. Not gold. Marchwood's eyes flare with strained anger - he turns and leaves.

(CONTINUED)

2

CONTINUED:

2

PROFESSOR RIVERS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But after two years working in a secret
chamber far beneath the house,
Darkening's alchemy had failed to bear
one ounce of gold.

And hiding elsewhere in the shadowy chamber we find
Marchwood's curious children, ELIZABETH (10) and
JOSEPH(8), watching Darkening at work. As Darkening,
with Marchwood gone, stealthily turns, opens an ornate
cabinet. From within strange lights are cast over him
(but we don't see what's in there) ...

PROFESSOR RIVERS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And the people on Marchwood's land were
uneasy. There were stories of how
Darkening came among them at night. Of
how he took away people that never
returned. That he was not human.

And suddenly, as if sensing them, Darkening turns from
the cabinet - his eyes finding Elizabeth and Joseph and
he reaches for an ornate staff. They react - found-out
and frightened as he points at them with his staff.

CUT TO:

3

EXT. ASHEN HILL MANOR -- NIGHT

3

The house, as before. Dark. Sinister. A single light,
a candle, moving quickly from window to window...

MARCHWOOD (O.S.)

Elizabeth?! Joseph?!!... Elizabeth?!!
Joseph?!!... My children, where are
you...?!

CUT TO:

3A

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. GALLERY -- NIGHT

3A

Distraught Marchwood, searching the house...

PROFESSOR RIVERS (V.O.)

No matter how long, no matter how hard
their father searched for them, they
were never seen again.

CUT TO:

4

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. ENTRANCE HALL -- NIGHT

4

Distraught, MARCHWOOD falls to his knees in the middle of
the elaborately etched family crest.

MARCHWOOD

My children!

He cries out in anguish...

CUT TO:

5

EXT. ASHEN HILL MANOR -- NIGHT/DAY

5

MARCHWOOD's cry echoes into the night...

PROFESSOR RIVERS (V.O.)
And they say he searches still.

As Marchwood's cry fades...

It becomes day. Modern day.

SARAH JANE is leaning on her car, parked outside Ashen Hill Manor. With her are CLYDE (who has a bag over his shoulder) and RANI. And PROFESSOR RIVERS, behind whom stands a large van bearing the PHAROS INSTITUTE logo.

Professor Rivers has just finished her story.

SARAH JANE
It's a good story, Professor Rivers.
But I don't believe in ghosts.

PROFESSOR RIVERS
Of course you don't. And neither do I.
But Ashen Hill Manor is reputedly one
of the most haunted locations in the
UK.

And Professor Rivers leads them through the doors...

CUT TO:

5A

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. ENTRANCE HALL -- CONTINUOUS

5A

Once grand, the building is falling into dereliction. SARAH JANE notes the Marchwood family crest on the floor as PROFESSOR RIVERS leads she, CLYDE and RANI into the house. The main double doors remain open behind them.

CLYDE
So let me get this right, if you don't believe in ghosts, Sarah Jane - and you don't believe in ghosts, Professor...

RANI
...What are we doing here?

PROFESSOR RIVERS
Well, obviously, to see if we're right.
To find scientific proof one way or the other.

(CONTINUED)

5A CONTINUED:

5A

SARAH JANE

In that case, I'm delighted that you invited me along to cover the story.

Professor Rivers smiles, and leads off into the control hub (The Panelled Room). As Sarah Jane follows, Clyde catches her arm.

CLYDE

You are sure about this, aren't you? I mean, there are no such things as ghosts, yeah?

RANI

(teases)

Clyde, I don't believe you. After all the things we've seen, you're scared of ghosts!

CLYDE

Who said anything about "scared". Did I mention "scared". I don't think so.

Sarah Jane smiles, easily confident.

SARAH JANE

Don't worry. I'm sure. Whatever people may think they have seen at Ashen Hill Manor, it has more to do with imagination than the supernatural.

And she goes after Professor Rivers. Clyde throws Rani a confident look, and the two of them follow Sarah Jane.

Slowly, unnoticed, the front doors close behind them.

CUT TO:

TITLES

6	<u>OMITTED</u>	6
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7	<u>INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PANELLED ROOM -- DAY</u>	7
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SARAH JANE, CLYDE and RANI find PROFESSOR RIVERS with her assistant assembling the ghost-watch electronics. TOBY SILVERMAN (geeky, 20s).

PROFESSOR RIVERS

Introductions. Sarah Jane Smith, journalist. My assistant from the Pharos Institute, Toby Silverman.

SARAH JANE

Hello, Toby. This is Rani and Clyde.

(CONTINUED)

RANI

I'm sort of Sarah Jane's apprentice.

CLYDE

And I'm...

Clyde takes a pack from the bag over his shoulder...

CLYDE (CONT'D)

I'm carrying the sandwiches.

RANI

So are you the technical genius, then?

Toby puts aside the screwdriver he's working with.

TOBY

I don't know about that. I'm just interested in the quantifiable effects of meta-normal energies on established phenomena. Preferably within contained environments.

RANI

Yeah. We should've brought Luke.

CLYDE

Only he said people who believed in ghosts were still living in the Dark Ages.

He catches Toby's stung look...

CLYDE (CONT'D)

Or something like that.

SARAH JANE

(awkwardly apologetic)

Luke is my son.

PROFSSOR RIVERS

Toby is the son of Professor Sir Rupert Silverman.

SARAH JANE

The physicist? What does your father think of his son dabbling in the paranormal?

TOBY

(evasive)

You know, just because there are things we can't see and touch, it doesn't mean they aren't there. The universe has a lot of secrets.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

7

SARAH JANE
Oh, believe me, I know.

RANI
Hold on, you're a scientist. You're not
supposed to believe in ghosts.

Toby is reluctant...

TOBY
I ought to get on with putting this
monitoring equipment together.

Sarah Jane notes his reluctance...

SARAH JANE
Of course.

And he notices his screwdriver has gone, starts to look
for it, as...

PROFESSOR RIVERS
The house has a long history of
apparent psychic activity. The legend
of Erasmus Darkening is just the tip of
the iceberg. And there are the
disappearances.

CLYDE
Disappearances? Nobody said anything
about disappearances.

SARAH JANE
No. They didn't.

PROFESSOR RIVERS
Don't worry. A house like this will
always engender new tales to chill the
blood. I'm largely inclined to believe
that it's nothing more than that.

RANI
"Largely"?

Professor Rivers is uncomfortable.

SARAH JANE
There is something else, isn't there?

PROFESSOR RIVERS
The Scrivens family - who legally still
own the house - a mother and father and
two children, vanished one night
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (3)

7

PROFESSOR RIVERS (CONT'D)
 twenty years ago. The keys were found
 still in the doors. Locked from the
 inside.

Clyde and Rani exchange a chilled look.

As Professor Rivers has had enough of Toby's screwdriver hunting...

PROFESSOR RIVERS (CONT'D)
 Toby! What on earth are you doing?

TOBY

My screwdriver. I put it down here. I
 know I did. Right there. And now it's
 gone. Vanished.

Professor Rivers pulls out a gadget, starts to scan with it.

RANI

What's that?

PROFESSOR RIVERS
 EMF meter. Paranormal activity causes a
 fluctuation in the electro-magnetic
 field.

As Sarah Jane retrieves the screwdriver from where it's hidden beneath a crate of Pharos technology. It could have rolled there.

SARAH JANE

Save your batteries, Professor. The only ghost at work here is the spirit of Sir Isaac Newton.

She hands the screwdriver back to Toby.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)
 Gravity. It fell and rolled away.

She looks around at Clyde and Rani.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)
 Come on. Let's take a look around.

CUT TO:

8

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. GRAND STAIRCASE -- DAY

8

SARAH JANE, RANI and CLYDE take in the place as they climb the stairs. There are portraits on the wall. Including one of Lord Marchwood with Elizabeth and Joseph.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH JANE

It's so sad how the house has fallen into disrepair. It must have been quite wonderful.

RANI

Well, Professor Rivers couldn't have picked a creepier place for a ghost hunt. It's felt like someone's been watching me since we got here.

SARAH JANE

It's psychological. You know this house is supposed to be haunted and your imagination starts to work over time.

CLYDE

No wonder Luke wanted to stay home. I could get bored with jumping at my own shadow pretty fast.

As Rani finds the portrait of Lord Marchwood (there's a little plate to identify him).

RANI

At least we know Lord Marchwood was real.

SARAH JANE

I've no doubt he was. And his children probably disappeared, too. Perhaps Lord Marchwood did spend the rest of his life hunting for his children. But the afterlife? I doubt it.

She shakes her head, saddened, but dismissive, and moves on. Rani and Clyde follow.

Above them on the stairs, unseen by them, a child's hand on the banister - ELIZABETH MARCHWOOD's hand. And then she moves away...

RANI

What about the disappearances? I mean, an entire family vanishes into thin air. Whether or not you believe in ghosts, that's just sinister.

SARAH JANE

Of course.

(MORE)

8 CONTINUED: (2)

8

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

But I've seen so many strange things in my life - wonderful and frightening - yet all of it had a scientific explanation of some kind. The trouble with ghosts is that there simply isn't any scientific basis for them to exist.

Suddenly - a BELL tolls. Deep, loud and ominous. Almost deafening. From nowhere. Again.

CLYDE

What's that? Dinner time?

RANI

I didn't see any bell tower.

SARAH JANE

There isn't one.

As the bell continues to toll.

Sarah Jane hurriedly heads back down the stairs, Clyde and Rani follow.

The bell tolls.

CUT TO:

9

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PANELLED ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

9

SARAH JANE, CLYDE and RANI come through the doors - PROFESSOR RIVERS and TOBY look up as they continue to assemble their kit.

And it's like walking into a wall of silence. As if the bell just cuts off.

PROFESSOR RIVERS

Miss Smith?

SARAH JANE

Didn't you hear it? The bell. The church bell.

TOBY

What bell?

ON shocked Sarah Jane, Clyde and Rani.

CUT TO:

10

EXT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. GARDENS -- DAY

10

CLYDE and RANI are walking through the gardens, looking back at the imposing house.

CLYDE

There's no bell tower. Nothing.

RANI

So why did we hear something like Quasimodo on a joy ride, but Professor Rivers and Toby heard nothing? Doesn't make sense.

CLYDE

I'm telling you, I don't care whether Sarah Jane believes in ghosts or not, there is something seriously freaky about that place.

POV: And SOMETHING is watching them from the bushes.

CUT TO:

11

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. RED ROOM -- DAY

11

A study. SARAH JANE is alone. The furniture in there is covered with white dust sheets, but there is an exposed bookcase.

She finds what she's looking for. An old book, THE HISTORY OF ASHEN HILL MANOR.

SARAH JANE

The History of Ashen Hill Manor.
Perfect.

Sarah Jane turns away from the bookcase, stands reading through the book.

Behind her, books on the shelves begin to move back and forth...

Something makes Sarah Jane spin around and look. The books are still.

Sarah Jane, uneasy, closes the book and takes it with her as she leaves.

CUT TO:

12

EXT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PAVILION -- DAY

12

CLYDE and RANI, still exploring the grounds, have come upon a walled pavilion area with a still fountain. It's an idyllic spot.

RANI

Look at this, it's beautiful.

As she hurries towards it. Clyde follows, a little more reserved...

CLYDE

Yeah. Castle Dracula probably looked okay on a sunny day too.

Rani is at the pavilion now, peering through the cracked wooden door. Excited.

RANI

Doesn't look like anyone's used it in years.

CLYDE

That would be because everyone just disappears.

Rani looks at Clyde and smiles, teasing.

RANI

Are you scared?

CLYDE

Clyde Langer, scared? I've taken on just about every creep in the universe and come out on top. I ain't afraid of no ghost.

And to make the point, he tries the door of the pavilion - and it opens.

Rani grins.

RANI

Good. Come on.

And she pushes past him into the pavilion. Clyde really doesn't fancy it, but goes in after her.

CUT TO:

13

INT./EXT ASHEN HILL MANOR. PAVILION -- CONTINUOUS

13

CLYDE and RANI look about them. The pavilion is dark and dusty. An old rotting wooden boat, and a pile of junk - the building has evidently been used to store all kinds of unwanted stuff from the big house - including an old fractured mirror. The door stands open behind them.

CLYDE

Smells like cucumber farts in here.

But Rani is a little entranced by the place...

RANI

It's just old and damp. It must have been wonderful here years ago. A picnic by the the fountain. Taking the boat out on the lake.

Clyde has found a big hole in the bottom of the boat.

CLYDE

If you like to paddle.

Then - outside - the fountain suddenly bursts into life.

They rush out onto the pavilion terrace.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

Who turned that on?

And there's the sound of teenagers laughing, maybe four or five of them. But no-one's there.

RANI

Hello? Who's there?

And the fountain dies - and so does the laughter. Just like that.

CLYDE

(all bravado)

Hey! Is someone out here messing with us? Cos we're not falling for it!

Okay?

And then, behind them in the pavilion - the sound of an old radio being tuned, and then, clear as a bell, Glenn Miller playing.

Clyde and Rani spin around...

CUT TO:

14

EXT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PAVILION. BUSHES -- DAY

14

From the bushes - something watches CLYDE and RANI. We hear strange, inhuman grunting...

CUT TO:

15

EXT/INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PAVILION -- DAY

15

RANI and CLYDE move back towards the pavilion, as the music plays...

RANI

I am not hearing this.

And Clyde sees something on the floor...

CLYDE

You don't believe that? Wait 'til you see this.

Rani looks. There are wet feet marks (a teenager's) on the floor. Leading into the pavilion. As if someone had been playing in the fountain.

Disbelieving, Rani touches one of the footprints and her fingers come away wet.

And then, as Glenn Miller continues to play, from behind the boat and junk - the sound of a girl sobbing...

Clyde and Rani exchange a look...

RANI

Hello?

Only the sobbing. Someone's heart breaking.

Hesitant, Rani takes a step into the pavilion towards the hidden girl...

Clyde grabs Rani's arm. Whispers...

CLYDE

What are you doing?!

RANI

If it's a ghost, it can't hurt us. It's already dead.

The sobbing continues.

RANI (CONT'D)

Besides, listen to her...

(CONTINUED)

15

CONTINUED:

15

Rani moves towards the crying. Clyde reluctantly follows.

There's a tarpaulin hanging. Clyde pulls it back -

The sobbing stops and there's nothing there.

CLYDE

Are we feeling freaked yet?

Rani looks at Clyde - and in the mirror (behind him) sees ERASMUS DARKENING reflected, pointing his staff towards her, it's nearly touching her....

Rani gasps and spins around - but no-one's there.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

CUT TO:

16

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. MIRROR ROOM -- NIGHT

16

Once a music room. PROFESSOR RIVERS, SARAH JANE, CLYDE, RANI and TOBY eat a ghost hunter's picnic amid shrouded old musical instruments. The History of Ashen Hill Manor lies before Sarah Jane.

PROFESSOR RIVERS

I think what you experienced was a stone tape manifestation.

RANI

Some of us are new to this kind of thing, you might need to explain.

SARAH JANE

It's the theory that events can be recorded on physical matter - normally stone - and then, under certain circumstances, they get played back. It's the most convincing explanation for most so-called hauntings.

PROFESSOR RIVERS

Our geological survey shows the house is built on a gigantic slab of granite bedrock - which research suggests is a great conductor of these psychic recordings.

(CONTINUED)

16

CONTINUED:

16

TOBY

Stories of the Grey Lady that walks a castle rampart. Or - sometimes - a legion of Roman centurions marching along a road. Only people only ever see them from the knee up -

CLYDE

Because the Roman Road was lower!

PROFESSOR RIVERS

Spot on.

CLYDE

(with ghoulish relish)

I heard about this castle where some lord was murdered by his jealous brother on the ramparts. Lopped off his head. And every Hallowe'en it comes rolling down the castle steps.

Rani fixes him with a spooked look.

RANI

Thanks Clyde.

Clyde gives her a mischievous, innocent shrug

RANI (CONT'D)

(to Sarah Jane)

The man I saw in the mirror - he didn't look like any sort of recording.

PROFESSOR RIVERS

Well, if it was a disembodied spirit, let's hope he shows up again tonight.

She checks her watch.

PROFESSOR RIVERS (CONT'D)

It's after eight. It's gone dark. It's time to begin the experiment.

TOBY

If I could have everybody's mobile phone, please.

RANI

Our phones? What for?

PROFESSOR RIVERS

Mobiles can interfere with our equipment.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

16

CONTINUED: (2)

16

PROFESSOR RIVERS (CONT'D)

We can keep in touch throughout the house with walkie-talkies.

SARAH JANE

I'd like to speak to Luke first. And Rani and Clyde should call their parents.

PROFESSOR RIVERS

Of course. We'll be in the control hub running final checks.

As she and Toby leave.

Clyde has his phone in his hand. Mock-rehearsing his call.

CLYDE

Hi Mum. Yeah everything's cool. Just bedding down for the night in the old haunted house - haven't seen any ghosts yet, I reckon they must be on a skeleton staff. Still, if nothing happens I can do my homework - brought my exorcise books with me. Yes, mum, I've had my tea - we had ghoul-lash!

Sarah Jane and Rani, shake their heads despairing.

CUT TO:

17

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PANELLED ROOM -- NIGHT

17

TOBY and PROFESSOR RIVERS are running final checks on the equipment...

PROFESSOR RIVERS

The EMF network?

Checks.

TOBY

All meters through the house operating and on-line.

PROFESSOR RIVERS

Thermostats?

Checks.

TOBY

Operating and on-line.

(CONTINUED)

17

CONTINUED:

17

PROFESSOR RIVERS
Video cameras?

Toby checks the bank of monitor screens. One of them - for the briefest, almost subliminal moment - is filled with DARKENING's face. And then it's gone. Toby isn't sure if he even saw it...

PROFESSOR RIVERS (CONT'D)
Toby?

TOBY
- Sorry. For a moment, I thought I saw...

Toby hits a button. A timestamp in the corner of the screen shows he's re-winding a few seconds - but there's nothing there, no face...

PROFESSOR RIVERS
You saw what?

TOBY
Nothing. The cams are all fine.

But then one - in the nursery - breaks up.

TOBY (CONT'D)
No. Hang on, the nursery cam is on the blink.

Professor Rivers grabs one of the walkie-talkies.

PROFESSOR RIVERS
I'll go and check it.

CUT TO:

18

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. MIRROR ROOM -- NIGHT

18

SARAH JANE, CLYDE and RANI are getting up after their calls, ready to leave.

RANI
Mum says Luke's been driving Dad round the bend all afternoon.

As they get up and head for the door, they've left The History of Ashen Hill Manor on the table, closed.

CLYDE
What? Luke's your dad's star pupil. He's probably secretly planning your wedding.

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED:

18

RANI

I don't think so. Not any more. Dad taught him to play chess today. And Luke beat him six times before he went home.

SARAH JANE

Oh, I'm sure he had your father in pieces.

She turns and sees the book lying on the table. Open. Stops dead.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

I closed this book. I know I did.

And then the pages flutter, as if a breeze is blowing through them.

CLYDE

Is there a draft in here? Someone tell me the window is open. Please.

RANI

It isn't.

SARAH JANE

Must be a draught coming down the chimney.

And the pages stop fluttering. As if something has found what it wanted.

Rani gasps. The book is open to an old picture of ERASMUS DARKENING.

RANI

That's him! That's the man in the pavilion.

Darkening's name is beneath the picture.

SARAH JANE

That's Erasmus Darkening.

CLYDE

The magician?
Bet he made a mean balloon giraffe at kids' parties.

CUT TO:

19

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. NURSERY -- NIGHT

19

PROFESSOR RIVERS enters. The nursery is old fashioned. A child's bed with a mobile above it, a doll's house, teddy bears, rocking horse, clockwork toys, chalkboard. There's an EMF meter on a tripod and video camera on another watching the room. She checks it.

CUT TO:

20

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PANELLED ROOM/NURSERY-- NIGHT 20

TOBY is at the static-filled nursery cam screen - as the picture comes back, showing PROFESSOR RIVERS close-up, adjusting. The wide-angle lens isn't flattering.

TOBY

(into walkie-talkie)

That's better, Professor.

(jokes to himself)

Boy. Can see why you went into science, instead of telly.

PROFESSOR RIVERS

(walkie-talkie)

I heard that.

As SARAH JANE enters the panelled room with RANI and CLYDE.

SARAH JANE

Where is the Professor?

RANI

Something seriously freaky just happened.

SARAH JANE

(to Rani)

Which I'm sure has a rational explanation.

TOBY

She's in the nursery. Won't be long.

CUT TO:

21

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. NURSERY -- NIGHT

21

PROFESSOR RIVERS is satisfied with the video camera.

PROFESSOR RIVERS

There.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

21

CONTINUED:

21

PROFESSOR RIVERS (CONT'D)
(into walkie-talkie)
Happy with the positioning, Toby?

TOBY (O.S.)
(walkie-talkie)
Right on target. Miss Smith wants to
talk to you.

PROFESSOR RIVERS
I'll be down in a minute.

Professor Rivers turns away from the video camera. And
hears a child's laughter...

The mobile above the bed begins to turn...

CUT TO:

22

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PANELLED ROOM/NURSERY-- NIGHT

22

PROFESSOR RIVERS on the cam monitor. But TOBY is
checking the EMF network - no-one sees her, or the moving
mobile. CLYDE and RANI with SARAH JANE.

SARAH JANE
I refuse to believe that book was opened
by any ghost, and certainly not the
ghost of a supposedly evil magician from
the 17th Century.

RANI
Something opened it, Sarah Jane. And
there wasn't any breeze - we'd have felt
it. And that was definitely the man in
the pavilion.

Sarah Jane considers - As Toby gets excited over his
equipment...

TOBY
Oh! Wow! Look at that!

SARAH JANE
What is it?

Toby indicates his EMF monitors.

TOBY
EMF read-outs across the house are
spiking. Something is happening.

CUT TO:

22A **INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. NURSERY -- NIGHT**

22A

PROFESSOR RIVERS is captivated by the turning mobile.

Behind her we see ERASMUS DARKENING - pointing towards her with his staff -

CUT TO:

22B **INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PANELLED ROOM -- NIGHT**

22B

And on the cam monitor screen: a fizz of obscuring static.

CUT TO:

23 **INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. NURSERY -- NIGHT**

23

CU: PROFESSOR RIVERS screams.

CUT TO:

24 **INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PANELLED ROOM/NURSERY-- NIGHT**

24

SARAH JANE, CLYDE and RANI launch themselves at the monitor screen.

SARAH JANE

What happened?

TOBY is just staring at the screen in shock.

TOBY

Where did she go?

On the monitor screen the nursery is empty. (And the mobile has stopped revolving.)

RANI

She's vanished.

SARAH JANE

Come on!

Sarah Jane rushes out, followed by Rani, Clyde and Toby.

CUT TO

25 **INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. GALLERY -- CONTINUOUS**

25

SARAH JANE leads RANI, CLYDE and TOBY towards the nursery.

(CONTINUED)

25

CONTINUED:

25

And Clyde catches something out of the corner of his eye - ELIZABETH and JOSEPH MARCHWOOD holding hands, watching them from along the passageway off. It's all but subliminal. And when he looks again - they've gone.

He chases after the others.

CUT TO:

26

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. NURSERY -- NIGHT

26

SARAH JANE, CLYDE, RANI and TOBY burst into the nursery. No Professor. No sign of her. All is still. There's a clean chalkboard there.

RANI

Professor Rivers didn't strike me as the kind that plays hide and seek.

And then Toby's walkie-talkie comes to life...

PROFESSOR RIVERS (O.S.)

Hello? Hello? Is anybody there?

Toby relaxes, relieved...

TOBY

Professor? Where are you? You had us all worried for a second...

Professor Rivers comes over the walkie-talkie again, but her voice is distant, strangely distorted by weird interference...

PROFESSOR RIVERS (O.S.)

Hello? Where am I? Is there anybody there? Can anyone help me?!

And she's gone.

TOBY

Professor! Celeste!

SARAH JANE

Wherever Professor Rivers has gone, she can't hear you...

As she begins to scan with the watch.

CLYDE

Yeah. But where is she?

(CONTINUED)

26

CONTINUED:

26

SARAH JANE

I don't know. But these readings are like nothing I've ever seen before.

TOBY

What is that?

SARAH JANE

Like your EMF meter. Only more useful.

And a music box on the dressing table starts to play.

RANI

Who set that off?

TOBY

Poltergeist activity. This room is famous for it.

SARAH JANE

Or perhaps just a freak mechanical fault.

And then the rocking horse behind Clyde, butts him in the back -

CLYDE

Woah!

As he jumps away from it. The rocking horse is moving back and forth.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

I just got head-butted by a rocking horse!

SARAH JANE

You must've knocked it.

CLYDE

I didn't! I know I didn't!

And the rocking horse is rocking faster.

Toby checks the EMF meter.

TOBY

The electro-magnetic signature has increased by five milli-Gauss - eight - ten... This is astonishing!

Clockwork toys on a shelf all come to life...

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (2)

26

RANI
No, this is freaky!

As Sarah Jane uses her watch -

SARAH JANE
These readings are going crazy.

And now, a child's voice...

CHILD (O.S.)
Ring a-ring o' roses, A pocketful of
posies...

SARAH JANE
We have to get out of here.

TOBY
Are you kidding? This is amazing!

And Rani sees something -

RANI
Sarah Jane! Look!

The chalkboard - a piece of chalk writing on its own.
GET OUT.

CHILD (O.S.)
A-tissue!, a-tissue! We all fall down!

SARAH JANE
Come on! Now!

She turns to the door - which slams shut.

Clyde grabs the handle -

CLYDE
It's locked!

TOBY
It can't be.

CHILD (O.S.)
Ring a-ring o' roses, A pocketful of
posies...

SARAH JANE
The energy in here is building! I don't
want to be in here when it peaks.

CHILD
A-tissue...

(CONTINUED)

26

CONTINUED: (3)

26

Sarah Jane aims the sonic at the door.

CHILD (CONT'D)

A-tissue...

The door flies open - Sarah Jane pushes them all out.

CHILD (CONT'D)

We all fall down!

The door slams itself shut behind them!

CUT TO:

27

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. GALLERY -- CONTINUOUS

27

SARAH JANE, CLYDE, RANI and TOBY - through the door.

A massive BANG on the other side of it! Like a wrecking ball.

Toby looks at Sarah Jane, almost breathless with excitement and triumph.

TOBY

Still say there's no such thing as the paranormal, Miss Smith? I only wish the Professor were here to see it...

(bitterly)

And my father.

RANI

(to Sarah Jane)

Your watch. Did it pick up something alien?

SARAH JANE

The readings were... confused.

TOBY

Alien?

CLYDE

Now, that's more like it. Aliens I can handle.

TOBY

Alien?

SARAH JANE

We have to track down the source of whatever is happening here. We have to stop it and bring Professor Rivers back.

(CONTINUED)

27

CONTINUED:

27

TOBY

And how do we do that?

RANI

We do what we always do. We look for clues.

CUT TO:

28

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. ENTRANCE HALL -- NIGHT

28

SARAH JANE, CLYDE, RANI and TOBY are in the entrance hall. Sarah Jane is taking in the whole house, scanning again.

SARAH JANE

My readings are different now. There are still energy signatures that I don't recognise - neither human or alien, but it's less intense - almost dormant.

Toby scans with his hand-held EMF meter.

TOBY

The EMF readings have gone back to normal, as well. But those readings in the nursery were completely unnatural.

SARAH JANE

Unnatural, but not supernatural. There's an energy-source somewhere in the house. If we can locate that, we'll be on our way to finding the Professor.

RANI

So we split up?

SARAH JANE

I don't think so, Rani. Professor Rivers vanished somehow in the blink of an eye, and the same thing may have been happening here for centuries.

CLYDE

Yeah. But it's a big house, and we don't know how much time we might have.

SARAH JANE

All right. But you two stay together. And don't take any unnecessary risks.

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED:

28

CLYDE

Hey, nothing to worry about - everybody knows Luke's the loose cannon in the gang!

And Clyde and Rani take off towards the study.

TOBY

I need to check the EMF levels through the house.

SARAH JANE

See what you can find out. But be careful.

CUT TO:

29

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. RED ROOM -- NIGHT

29

RANI and CLYDE slip in. Look around.

CLYDE

Okay. The study. Always a good place for clues.

As Rani pulls the sheet off the desk, and starts to go through the drawers.

RANI

And this place doesn't look like it's been touched since the last people disappeared.

CLYDE

Just be careful Around here I wouldn't be surprised if there really was a skeleton in the cupboard.

CUT TO:

30

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. MIRROR ROOM -- NIGHT

30

SARAH JANE walks cautiously into the large, empty music room. The lights flicker, threatening to go off, casting creepy shadows off the shrouded furniture.

Sarah Jane, despite herself, is a little freaked.

SARAH JANE

Jumping at shadows, now. You're letting this place get to you.

Then from behind her: a voice

(CONTINUED)

30

CONTINUED:

30

ELIZABETH (O.S.)
Please, you must leave here.

Sarah Jane swings around - and sees ELIZABETH and JOSEPH standing there, holding hands. Sarah Jane freezes - recognizes them instantly, but can't believe what she's seeing... (The tapping has stopped.)

SARAH JANE
You're Lord Marchwood's children... But
you can't be...

And momentarily the children flicker and fade in and out...

ELIZABETH
We want our father.

SARAH JANE
Your father?

ELIZABETH
He keeps us from him.

SARAH JANE
Who does?

ELIZABETH
You must leave the house. Before he comes for you. All of you.

SARAH JANE
Who? Who will come?

The children are clearly scared.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)
And was it you that opened the book?
Were you trying to warn us? About Erasmus Darkening?

ELIZABETH
He will take you all. You will never leave.

The lights begin to flicker. With each flicker the children appear to have moved back a step.

SARAH JANE
Don't go. I want to help you!

And then the lights go out. Just for a second or two. When they come back up, Elizabeth and Joseph have vanished.

(CONTINUED)

30

CONTINUED: (2)

30

And then she hears something: claws against glass. Tapping. Tapping. After a beat of listening, she leaves the room, determined.

CUT TO:

31

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. RED ROOM -- NIGHT

31

RANI and CLYDE are still searching the study. But Rani has found something. A folder of hand-written sheets, pictures and plans.

RANI

Clyde, look at this. Someone was researching the house and the people that disappeared.

CLYDE

Didn't do them much good, did it? They still all vanished.

There's a list of names and dates...

RANI

Look - this list of people goes all the way back to 1655. Lord Marchwood and his children.

CLYDE

And your friend Erasmus Darkening...

Clyde has found an old, yellowed photocopy of the earlier picture of Darkening together with typed notes.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

This looks old.

Rani takes it and starts to read...

RANI

"I am unable to find any historical records of Erasmus Darkening. But Marchwood's household accounts prove he existed. Stories that Darkening was responsible for disappearances from local villages are impossible to substantiate. Perhaps the answer lies in the secret passage."

CLYDE

You did just say "secret passage"? As in whoever wrote that went looking down it - and maybe never came back.

(CONTINUED)

31

CONTINUED:

31

RANI

We should show this to Sarah Jane.

But Clyde has another sheet of paper from the folder...

RANI (CONT'D)

What's that?

CLYDE

It's a map. Of the secret passages.
And guess what? There's one in Toby's
control hub.

CUT TO:

32

EXT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. TERRACE -- NIGHT

32

SARAH JANE steps cautiously through the garden doors from the music room. The sonic lipstick is in her hand. There's a full moon throwing silvery light across the garden.

She takes another cautious step forward.

SARAH JANE

Hello? Is there anybody out here?

There's just the rustle of nearby bushes. Moonlight shadows moving around her.

Sarah Jane is on edge. Takes another step forward.

SARAH JANE (CONT'D)

Whoever you are, I'm not here to hurt you. I promise.

And that's when Sarah Jane hears the inhuman growling sound from off to one side - she turns, and sees...

FX SHOT: A CREATURE. It's indistinct, more shape than features but with big, glowing inhuman eyes.

THE CREATURE's POV - charging at Sarah Jane!

Suddenly another figure is there - LORD MARCHWOOD.

LORD MARCHWOOD

Save yourself, my lady!

Lord Marchwood steps out of the shadows, draws his sword and lunges forward at the unseen creature...

LORD MARCHWOOD (CONT'D)

Get thee back to the Netherworld!

(CONTINUED)

32

CONTINUED:

32

Sarah Jane instinctively covers her head - as the creature's growl turns into a roar.

PRAC flash of blinding white light!

And then - silence.

In the distance somewhere an owl hoots.

Sarah Jane finds herself alone - no creature, no Lord Marchwood...

CUT TO:

33

NT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PANELLED ROOM -- NIGHT

33

RANI and CLYDE slip into the empty control hub.

CLYDE

When me and Luke were being held prisoner by those nutty gorgon nuns he got us out by opening a secret passage.

He sets to pressing and pushing on the panelling.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

It's just a question of finding the right panel to press - or something...

And then notices a hinged panel. And grins.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

And - hey presto!

As he opens the panel - and is met with a solid brick wall on the other side.

Rani laughs and steps backwards - accidentally pushing another panel which triggers... a bookcase which slides aside revealing the secret doorway...

RANI

Now that's magic.

She looks into the passageway beyond...

RANI (CONT'D)

Looks pretty dark down there...

Triumphant Clyde pulls a small torch from his pocket.

(CONTINUED)

33

CONTINUED:

33

CLYDE

Never leave home without one. Specially if you're going somewhere with Sarah Jane Smith.

Turns the torch on and steps into the dark passageway.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

You coming?

RANI

Well someone's got to hold your hand, haven't they?

And with a smile, she follows him in - and the bookcase slides back into place.

CUT TO:

34

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. SECRET PASSAGEWAY -- NIGHT

34

CLYDE and RANI make slow progress. The torchlight is feeble.

RANI

Couldn't you have brought a bigger torch?

CLYDE

What, and spoil the look of my jacket? I'm not just an action hero, you know. I'm a style icon.

And Clyde walks into a mass of spiderwebs. Cries out and appears in his torchlight covered in dust and web.

Rani laughs.

RANI

Yeah. Very Spider-Man.

She grabs the torch.

RANI (CONT'D)

Come on.

And she leads on down the dark passageway.

CUT TO:

35

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. GRAND STAIRCASE -- NIGHT

35

As TOBY comes down the stairs, preoccupied with his EMF meter, SARAH JANE (a little shaken) comes out of the music room. He visibly jumps.

SARAH JANE

It's all right, Toby. It's only me.

TOBY

Are you all right, Miss Smith?

SARAH JANE

I'm not sure.

TOBY

They do exist, Miss Smith. And we could be on the verge of something so enormous here.

SARAH JANE

Is that why you're so jumpy?

TOBY

I'm not "jumpy", I'm excited.

As he leads into the panelled room, and the control hub.

CUT TO:

35A

INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. PANELLED ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

35A

*

TOBY is heading for his equipment, SARAH JANE behind him...

TOBY

This could be the scientific discovery of all time. The ultimate question answered. Is there life after death.

SARAH JANE

And that would mean you could prove yourself to your father? I'm presuming that he doesn't approve of your area of research.

Toby looks at Sarah Jane for a long moment, painful memories surfacing ...

*

TOBY

Science has a very short sighted view of the paranormal

*

*

(CONTINUED)

35A CONTINUED:

35A

SARAH JANE
For good reason.

TOBY
There is nothing scientific about
ignoring phenomena because they don't
fit with your view of the universe, Miss
Smith.

SARAH JANE
Believe me Toby, my view of the universe
is very detailed. And I understand
humanities need to believe in some sort
of afterlife, but whatever is happening
here ghosts do not exist.

Toby turns to the monitoring equipment, simmering

TOBY
Well, I have those EMF readings for you.

Toby is reaching for a readout and suddenly the TV
monitors are all filled with a close-up of ERASMUS
DARKENING. Only Sarah Jane sees it.

SARAH JANE
Darkening!

Toby looks up, but Darkening has vanished.

TOBY
Where?

SARAH JANE
He's gone.

TOBY
Are you sure you don't believe in
ghosts?

CUT TO:

36 **OMITTED**
AND
37

36
AND
37

38 **INT. ASHEN HILL MANOR. SECRET CHAMBER -- NIGHT**

38

RANI and CLYDE push open the door into the dark secret
chamber. It's deep in dust - but is much as in Sc 2 -
Darkening's equipment and huge old books picked out in
Clyde's torchlight on the big old table.

(CONTINUED)

38

CONTINUED:

38

RANI
Look at this place!

CLYDE
I take it all back. Everything else -
that was not creepy. This is creepy.
This is Creepsville, Transylvania.
Look at this stuff.

Clyde looks at one of the books. Bound in leather and
ironwork. Alien symbols. Alien writing.

CLYDE (CONT'D)
This is Hogwarts Tim Burton Style. This
is Harry Potter Gets A Close Shave Off
Sweeney Todd.

RANI
Clyde, do you know where we are?

CLYDE
Well, it isn't Santa's workshop.

RANI
According to the legend, Erasmus
Darkening spent two years working in a
secret chamber beneath Ashen Hill Manor.
This is it. It's all for real.

Clyde draws a finger through the deep dust.

CLYDE
At least, he hasn't been around in a
while.

RANI
Maybe this is it. The reason for
whatever's going on here. If this part
of the legend is true -

CLYDE
Then maybe he really did make those two
kids disappear.

RANI
And Professor Rivers.

CLYDE
Rani, this guy lived hundreds of years
ago.

Rani starts to look around.

(CONTINUED)

38

CONTINUED: (2)

38

RANI

And I know what I saw in the pavilion.
It was him. Darkening.

CLYDE

Well, I've got to admit, I've seen some weird stuff, but there's weird and then there's this place...

Rani opens an esoterically carved ancient cupboard... To reveal a mass of what looks like electronic equipment - but designed and built 340 years ago. It is covered in cobwebs.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

And what was I saying, again?

RANI

It's like electronics but from hundreds of years ago.

Rani wipes away some of the thick cobwebbing - to reveal glowing lights...

RANI (CONT'D)

And it's still working!

The sound of footsteps in the darkness behind them...

Rani and Clyde spin around. But it's too dark to see.

RANI (CONT'D)

Who's there?!

And from the darkness...

DARKENING (O.S.)

Welcome to my dominion. My halls of granite. You have crossed my threshold of your own free will - and by my will you shall stay...

And out of the darkness looms ERASMUS DARKENING, his staff outstretched, about to touch them...

DARKENING (CONT'D)

For all eternity!

Rani and Clyde shrink back in shock and horror.

CUT TO:

EPISODE ENDS