THE ULTIMATE HAUNTED HOUSE GUIDE

INTERMEDIATE BUILDS

Motion, timing & the Horizon A builds: the breathing grave at full treatment, the 2-second rule, surveyed layout — and candles that float, stones that peek, skeletons made corpses

SPOOKY AT HEART

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The Beginner book made a yard. This book makes it move — on timers you set, at speeds you choose, behind a fence line that keeps the magic un-touchable.

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Chapter 1 — The Breathing Grave, Full Treatment: The Hidden Motion System

HAUNT #002's grave breathes on THE HIDDEN MOTION SYSTEM: motor, timer, concealment. This is the full treatment — the version where the mechanism is drawn, dimensioned in words, and tuned — plus the genre's second drive (the low-speed motor and cam) documented as the alternate mechanism, with the record's own two-spec flag stated instead of hidden.

What you need

- Air pump, quiet aquarium class — hygger
- Timer relay, 12V programmable — UCTRONICS (set to 4-second cycles, of record)
- Orange spotlights, 2-pack — LOHAS (backlight)
- A hollow foam mound + a small lifting platform
- Dark fabric (mound cover)
- A tombstone for the head of the grave (Beginner Chapter 3)
- ALTERNATE DRIVE (dive spec): low-speed / rotisserie motor · cam arm · burlap over a foam or chicken-wire mound form · zip ties / screws · extension cord

Build it

1. 1.1 The effect standard. A grave mound that slowly rises and falls, as if something underneath is breathing. Subtle, silent, and deeply wrong — guests stare for a full minute before they realize why they are uneasy (Starter Kit Build 2). The Beginner test applies at full strength here: you want movement you almost can't see — about two inches of lift, slow, irregular. If a guest can count the rhythm, slow it down.

2. 1.2 Build the mound. Form the mound over the mechanism: chicken wire or a foam shell over the drive, roughly the size of a shallow grave. Under it, the lifting platform — a small plate that rises a few inches at the mound's crown. Drape dark fabric (or burlap, on the motor drive) over the form, then dress with soil, mulch, or dead leaves until no mechanics show. Set the tombstone at the head.

3. 1.3 Drive A — the series drive (of record). An air pump on the UCTRONICS timer relay, set to 4-second cycles (HAUNT #002's own setting), inflates and releases on rhythm; the platform under the mound translates the cycle into lift. The record frames the system's three legs exactly: MOTOR (the platform does the lifting), TIMER (the pump on the relay is the inhale/exhale rhythm), CONCEALMENT (dark fabric hides everything; orange backlight behind the mound sells the silhouette).

4. 1.4 Drive B — the motor-and-cam drive (dive spec). The genre's classic version (genre dive §1.7, Build #1 spec): a low-speed/rotisserie motor turns a cam; the cam arm lifts a lifter plate under the mound skin, so rotation becomes lift. Assembly order from the dive spec: shape the mound → skin with burlap → mount the motor → fit the cam arm → test the cycle → dress with dirt and leaf litter. The cam profile is the tuning: a smooth cam breathes evenly; a cam with a slightly flattened dwell holds the 'inhale' a beat longer, which is the irregularity that reads as alive.

5. 1.5 The two-spec flag, honestly. The parts map of record carries this warning and this book repeats it rather than resolving it silently: two mechanism specs exist on the record for the animated Breathing Grave — the series' air-pump drive (#002 as produced) and the dive's motor-and-cam drive. Both mechanisms are real and both produce the effect. Drive A is what the series showed; Drive B is the genre-standard build with the fuller diagram tradition. Build A if you want the episode's exact prop; build B if you want the version you can tune. Do not hybridize them mid-build.

6. 1.6 Tuning. Rise height ≈ 2 inches at the crown. Cycle: the record's 4-second relay rhythm on Drive A; on Drive B, the motor's native slow speed with the cam dwell doing the irregularity. If the motion is too regular, the Kit's trick still works: add a second, smaller mound on a different timer — two unsynchronized breathers read as a whole restless plot.

Haunter's note: Light it from HAUNT #002's own staging: orange backlight behind the mound, fog from the Beginner book's Chapter 2 drifting across it. Motion you discover inside fog and backlight is the strongest minute in a home haunt.

Troubleshooting

- Mound moves in a visible count → the rhythm is too regular or too fast. Slow the drive; on Drive B, lengthen the cam dwell; on Drive A, lengthen the relay cycle off 4 seconds in small steps.
- Lift is jerky → the platform is binding on the mound form. Give the plate clearance on all sides; the mound skin must float on the plate, never hang on it.
- Mechanism audible from the path → the pump/motor is coupled to a hollow form that acts as a drum. Isolate the drive on a fabric pad and bury the form's edges in soil so the mound reads as earth, not instrument.

Video companion: HAUNT #002 — The Breathing Grave. Drive B diagram tradition: genre dive §1.7, Build #1.

Chapter 2 — Uplight Placement: The Yard Map

HAUNT #013 is the survey that HAUNT #004's system needed: where each zone actually goes. Draw the map before you touch a light — on paper, at dusk, from the street.

What you need

- RGB uplights, 6-pack — Onforu
- Orange spotlights, 2-pack — LOHAS
- Flicker flame bulbs — TMAM
- Paper and a pencil (the map itself — keep it; it is next year's setup sheet)

Build it

1. WASH placement. Floods at the two corners of the house, aimed up the facade. One unnatural color, whole wall. Corner placement wraps the wash around the facade's edges so the house reads as a volume, not a lit billboard.

2. ACCENT placement. One uplight IN FRONT of each tombstone cluster, close to the stone, aimed up at its face. The record's warning is the chapter in one line: behind the prop buys you a silhouette and nothing else — a silhouette has its uses (the Watchers), but an accent light behind a stone lights the yard behind the stone and leaves the face you aged in darkness.

3. FLICKER placement. One bulb, one window, placed on the map, not by vibes (the record's phrase and the rule). Choose the window by sightline: the one a guest sees at the end of the path's longest straight, so the flicker owns the deepest view in the yard.

4. The map discipline. The zones themselves are Beginner Chapter 4; fog for the paths between the lights is Beginner Chapter 2; the whole yard composes in Chapter 4 of this book (Cemetery Layout). The map is where those chapters meet — draw all three layers (wash, accent, fog path) on one sheet and the conflicts show themselves before the ladders come out.

Haunter's note: Setup order on the night: wash first (it defines the background), accent second (aimed at dressed, anchored stones), flicker last (it is one bulb; it takes ten seconds and deserves a decision, not a default).

Troubleshooting

- Accent light creates a hot spot on one stone and leaves its neighbor dark → the light is too close. Back it off and widen; cluster lighting is area lighting at small scale.
- Wash shows the siding's texture like a crime scene → the floods are raking at too shallow an angle from too close. Move them out from the wall; the wash should color the facade, not inspect it.

Video companion: HAUNT #013 — Uplight Placement: The Yard Map. System: Beginner Chapter 4.

Chapter 3 — Sound Timing: The 2-Second Delay Rule

HAUNT #016 is the trigger layer's timing rule — the one that decides whether the scream actually lands. HAUNT #005 built the 3-Layer Audio System (Beginner Chapter 5); this chapter times its second layer.

What you need

- PIR motion-sensor MP3 player (trigger) — Waytronic
- Outdoor Bluetooth speaker, waterproof — SumYanHing IPX7
- A walking guest's pace — the measuring instrument is you, at guest speed

Build it

1. Rule 1 — PLACE. The motion sensor sits about two seconds of walking BEFORE the scare point, aimed ACROSS the path, never down it. A sensor aimed down the path detects the guest head-on at maximum range and gives the sound no time to fire in the right place; across the path, the sensor trips at a known point on the walk, and the two seconds between trip and arrival are your working time.

2. Rule 2 — TIME. The stinger should peak as the guest ARRIVES, not as they trip the sensor. Two seconds of walking is roughly six feet of path (of record). Set the player's delay so the scream's peak — not its onset — lands on the arrival step. A scream that peaks behind the guest is a sound effect; a scream that peaks on the guest is an event.

3. Rule 3 — TEST. Walk it yourself at guest speed and count. Move the sensor, not the prop, until the landing feels unfair (the record's test standard). The sensor is light and repositionable; the prop is dressed and anchored. Every timing problem in this system is a sensor problem until proven otherwise.

4. The same logic, everywhere. The record closes with the generalization this book teaches as doctrine: the same timing logic runs the launch in HAUNT #020 (Professional book, pneumatics) — a jumpscare is a sound-timing problem with air attached. Master the 2 seconds here, on a $30 player, before you time a cylinder.

Haunter's note: Sensor discipline: PIR units need a warm-up after power-on before their detection settles (the SFX dive's control-layer note). Power the trigger layer first, dress the yard while it warms, test last.

Troubleshooting

- Scream fires as the guest leaves the scare point → the sensor is too close to the point, or aimed down-path. Move it two seconds earlier and across the path.
- Scream fires for guests on the sidewalk who never enter → the sensor's cone reaches past the path. Angle it down and across; the trigger zone is the path, not the neighborhood.

- Double-fires on one guest → no lockout. Where the player supports a retrigger delay, set it past the group's pass time; where it doesn't, aim the sensor so a guest crosses its beam once, decisively.

Video companion: HAUNT #016 — Sound Timing: The 2-Second Delay Rule. System: Beginner Chapter 5.

Chapter 4 — Cemetery Layout: Fence, Path, Sightlines

HAUNT #018: random tombstones aren't a cemetery. Layout is the difference. Every system in the Guide lands in one yard — this chapter lays the yard out first, with THE LAYOUT TRIANGLE.

What you need

- Fog machine, 400W — VIRFUN (the fog layer)
- RGB uplights, 6-pack — Onforu (the focal lights)
- Foam tombstones (aged, Beginner Chapter 3) behind a low fence line
- Low garden edging / low fence material (the frame)

Build it

1. Leg 1 — FENCE. A low fence line frames the scene and quietly keeps guests, and their feet, out of the gear. The fence is a contract: inside it, the dead; outside it, the audience. It also hides the ground line where cables, stakes, and chiller duct live.

2. Leg 2 — PATH. One clear route through the yard, and curve it. An S-curve reveals one scene at a time; a straight path spoils the whole yard from the gate. Every curve is a curtain: what is around it is a reveal, and reveals are the currency the whole Guide trades in.

3. Leg 3 — SIGHTLINES. From every step on the path, one lit focal point owns the view. Machines, cables, and cords hide BELOW the sightline, behind the fence and the shrubs. Walk the path at guest height — including kid height — and whatever you can see that isn't a scene is a defect to bury, reroute, or dress.

4. Composing the layers. Build the fog layer with Beginner Chapter 2, place the lights with Chapter 2 of this book, anchor every stone with Beginner Chapter 8. The layout is drawn before any of them go in — the triangle is a plan, and the plan is what makes ten good builds into one haunted place instead of a yard sale of effects.

Haunter's note: The layout chapter is also the safety chapter in disguise: the fence keeps feet off cables, the path keeps guests out of fog-slick grass, and the sightline rule keeps every mechanism invisible *and* untouchable.

Troubleshooting

- Yard reads as a collection, not a place → two focal points are competing in one sightline. Kill one light or turn one scene off-axis; every view gets one owner.
- Guests shortcut across the plot → the path's curve fights the natural desire line. Move the path to where feet already want to go, or fence the shortcut — never scold a guest for the layout's failure.

Video companion: HAUNT #018 — Cemetery Layout: Fence, Path, Sightlines.

Chapter 5 — The Floating Candle: Rated Suspension, Honest Sway

Horizon A Build #2 (genre dive §1.7), with the Work harvest correction applied: the reveal is static/sway — a passive line cannot bob a candle up and down, and this book does not pretend otherwise. Five to seven lit candles hang over a dark porch, drifting almost imperceptibly in the night air — impossible for one second, then you see it, and the seeing is the delight.

What you need

- LED taper candles, flameless
- Clear fishing line
- Eye screws / hooks (rated for the load — the candle is light; the rating is the doctrine)

Build it

1. The rig. Pick the rig point: a branch, a beam, a porch joist — overhead structure you trust. Cut lines at staggered lengths. Tie or loop each candle to its line, hang the lines from eye screws set into the structure, and adjust heights after dark until the constellation reads as random, not arranged. The mechanism diagram is one card: overhead point, clear line drops, LED tapers. At night the line is invisible — that's the whole trick (dive spec, of record).

2. The honesty note (harvest patch F01). A suspended candle sways; it does not travel. Any version of this build that shows candles bobbing vertically on plain line is showing you a mechanism it isn't naming. If you want vertical motion, that is a different build with a drive — this chapter is the static/sway candle, hung well. Hung well is enough: the sway of seven candles at seven heights in a light breeze outperforms most motorized props, because the audience can't file it.

3. Composition. The dive's staging note still governs: compose the candles WITH the yard's other builds in frame — above the breathing grave, along the cemetery path. The series is a yard accumulating, and the candle chapter is where a single porch becomes a scene.

Haunter's note: Cost context from the dive: viewer cost ≈ $15–20 — labeled UNVERIFIED in the dive's own record and repeated here as indicative only. The parts are commodity; the craft is the hanging.

Troubleshooting

- Candles read as 'hung' instead of 'floating' → the lines are catching light. Use the thinnest clear line that holds the candle, keep light sources below the rig (uplight, not downlight), and hang after dark so you judge the effect in its real conditions.
- Candles tangle in wind → lines too long for the spacing. Shorten drops or widen the constellation; a tangled candle announces the rig louder than any visible line.

Source: genre dive §1.7 Build #2 spec · parts map of record, queued-builds section.

Chapter 6 — The Tombstone Peeper: The Crank-Slider

Horizon A Build #3, with the Work harvest correction applied as the mechanism of record: a head rises slowly from behind a tombstone, pauses, sinks back — one pivot does almost everything, but a pivot with a counterweight does not drive itself. The drive is a crank-slider, and this chapter builds that drive.

What you need

- Foam tombstone blank
- PVC or wood pivot arm
- Counterweight
- Low-speed motor (shares the Breathing Grave's motor class)

Build it

1. The mechanism. The motor turns a crank. A connecting rod from the crank pin drives the pivot arm's lower end, so rotation becomes a slow rise-and-fall arc at the arm's top, where the figure rides. The counterweight balances the figure so the motor works against friction, not gravity — a balanced peeper runs on the smallest motor in the class and runs quietly. Rise, dwell at the top (the crank's geometry gives a natural slow at the arc's peak), sink, rest. One full cycle, endlessly, seamlessly.

2. The build order (dive spec, drive corrected). Cut the foam tombstone → mount the pivot base behind it, hidden → attach the figure to the arm → balance the counterweight until the arm floats neutral → connect the crank-slider and set the arc stop so the figure clears the stone's top edge by a head, no more. A figure that rises too high reads as a puppet; a head that barely dares to look is a haunting.

3. Clearance and load. The harvest gate on this build is a clearance/load check: the figure's arc must clear the stone through the whole cycle (foam flexes; check at the arc's extremes, not the middle), and the counterweight must be secured so it can never drop — a counterweight is a suspended mass over a mechanism guests stand near. Pin it, cage it, or place it where a fall lands in soil behind the fence line (Intermediate Chapter 4's contract).

Haunter's note: Cost context from the dive: viewer cost ≈ $20–35 — UNVERIFIED in the dive's record, indicative only.

Troubleshooting

- Figure rises but won't sink → the counterweight is over-balanced or the slider binds at the arc's top. Re-balance toward neutral and check the rod's alignment through the full revolution, by hand, motor off.

- Motion reads mechanical — same speed up and down → that is the crank telling the truth; soften it with a slightly offset crank pin path or accept a slower motor speed. The genre's answer is slower, not fancier.

Source: genre dive §1.7 Build #3 spec, drive per Work harvest patch · parts map, queued-builds section (two-spec flag of record).

Chapter 7 — Zombie Arm Groundbreaker: One Motor, One Wave

From the genre dive's harvest: a single oscillating motor, an arm waving from ground level — cheap, legible, and the friendliest first motor build in this book (harvest rank: effect 4, simplicity 4, cost $).

What you need

- Low-speed motor (the oscillating class — a gutted oscillating fan's neck drive is the genre's donor mechanism, per the SFX dive's F1 family)
- A zombie arm prop or a built arm (glove, sleeve, stuffing over a light frame)
- Ground cover: soil, mulch, leaf litter, a cracked-earth dress (foam or fabric)

Build it

1. The mechanism. An oscillating drive swings its output shaft through a fixed arc and back — the fan neck's whole job. Mount the drive at ground level, couple the arm to the shaft so the wave reads at the wrist, and dress the base until the mechanism vanishes into the plot: the arm emerges from cracked earth beside a stone, not from a visible machine.

2. The staging. Ground level is the discipline: the arm waves from the dirt line, low and wrong, where guests don't expect motion. Place it at the path's edge inside the fence line (Chapter 4) so it performs inside the scene, at the distance a guest's peripheral vision catches first. A wave that starts in peripheral vision gets a double-take; a wave stared at directly gets a critique.

3. Why one motor matters. This is the F1 family's entry lesson (SFX dive): rotation → oscillation → character. The same drive class, re-costumed, rocks chairs and stirs cauldrons in the Professional book's planned chapters. Learn it here, at ground level, for the price of a fan.

> **Haunter's note:** Keep the drive's arc clear of the fence and the path: an arm that slaps the fence on every cycle announces its arc and its limits in one sound.

Troubleshooting

- Wave reads as a machine waving → the arc is too wide or too fast. Narrow the coupling point toward the shaft (shorter throw) and let the glove's looseness add the irregularity.
- Arm stalls at the arc's ends → the load is off-axis. Re-mount so the shaft's plane matches the arm's swing plane; side-load is what kills small drives.

Source: genre dive §1.4 harvest (#5) · SFX dive F1 mechanism family.

Chapter 8 — Moving Portraits: The Frames That Change

An indoor build, cheap and very adaptable (genre dive harvest): portraits on a hallway wall that are not the same portraits when a guest looks twice.

What you need

- Frames with glass (thrifted, mismatched — uniformity is the enemy)
- Printed portrait pairs: the sitter, and the sitter *changed* (the two-state print set)
- OR a small screen/tablet per frame for the swap version
- Matte prints (gloss telegraphs the trick under haunt light)

Build it

1. The static version. Print each portrait in two states — composed, and wrong (eyes darkened, head turned a few degrees, a second figure in the background who wasn't there). Hang state one. Between groups — or between a guest's first pass and their return down the hall — swap to state two. The scare is the argument afterward: 'that wasn't like that before.' 'Yes it was.' It wasn't.

2. The screen version. A tablet behind a frame's mat, running a loop that holds the composed portrait for minutes, then cross-fades to the changed one and holds. The change must be slower than attention: a fade a guest can catch mid-change is a video; a portrait that is simply *different* now is a haunting. This is the Beginner Haunted Mirror's discipline (Chapter 7 of the Beginner book) pointed at a wall of ancestors.

3. Print craft. Age both states identically — same paper tone, same vignette — so the only difference is the wrongness. Print at the frame's full size; a small print floating in a big frame reads as a poster, not a portrait.

Haunter's note: Hang portraits in a sequence a guest walks along, and put the boldest change in the middle frame: the first change primes suspicion, the middle one confirms it, and the last frame — unchanged — becomes the scariest, because now they're checking all of them.

Troubleshooting

- Guests spot the change happening → the loop's fade is too fast or too frequent. Lengthen the hold; rarer is stronger. One change per guest-visit is the ceiling.
- Portraits read as prints, not paintings → gloss and bright whites. Print matte, tone the whites down to cream, and light the wall dim and warm (Beginner Chapter 12's palette).

Source: genre dive §1.4 harvest (#19) · Horizon A candidate list, SPOOKY_BUILD_QUEUE.

Chapter 9 — Corpsed Skeleton: Wrap, Melt, Stain

No motor at all — a transformation build and a genre rite of passage (genre dive harvest: effect 4, simplicity 5, cost $). A bargain skeleton becomes a corpse with three materials and patience. As a chapter it is a process, not a mechanism — and the physical-truth rule applies to process too: every step below is the real craft, in the real order.

What you need

- A plastic skeleton (the standard articulated kind)
- Clear plastic sheeting / plastic wrap (the skin)
- A heat gun
- Stain — wood stain or thinned dark paint (the rot)
- Optional: a little cotton or latex for tendon texture

Build it

1. Step 1 — Pose first. Decide the corpse's final pose before any corpsing: reclined in the coffin (Beginner Chapter 9), seated against a stone, reaching from the plot. Corpsing locks a pose; pose is storytelling, so pose like it matters.

2. Step 2 — Wrap. Wrap the bones in clear plastic sheeting, unevenly — tight where tendons would pull, loose where skin would sag. Overlap seams along the limbs' undersides. The wrap is the skin layer; its wrinkles become the corpse's wrinkles, so wrap with intent, not coverage.

3. Step 3 — Melt. Heat gun on a low-to-medium setting, kept moving: the sheeting shrinks, puckers, and fuses into something organic and wrong. Work in passes and step back often — the line between 'corpse' and 'melted toy' is about ten seconds of heat. Ventilate: you are heating plastic. Outdoors or a open garage, always, and never leave the gun resting on the work.

4. Step 4 — Stain. Stain settles where rot would: joints, recesses, the low side of every bone. Apply, then wipe back so the high points keep a bone pallor under the grime. Two thin passes beat one thick one — a corpse is translucent decay, not brown paint.

5. Step 5 — Rest. Let it cure fully before dressing the scene. A fresh corpsing under haunt light looks wet; a cured one looks old. Old is the goal.

Haunter's note: Safety, plainly: heat gun + plastic = fumes and burns. Ventilation, gloves for the stain, and the gun never points at anything you aren't corpsing — including the skeleton's own thin sections, which warp past character into damage.

Troubleshooting

- Skeleton still reads as a toy → the wrap was too uniform or the stain too even. Add a second, partial wrap layer at the torso and hands, and deepen stain only in the joints.
- Plastic melted through in spots → heat lingered. Patch with a fresh sheeting scrap fused at the edges — a patch, honestly worked in, reads as a wound, which this prop forgives.

Source: genre dive §1.4 harvest (#6) · Horizon A candidate list.

Chapter 10 — The Levitating Object: The Hidden Support

A static illusion (genre dive harvest): a teapot pours forever into a cup it never fills, or a lantern hangs in a doorway with nothing above it. Tabletop scale, one hidden relationship: the support you cannot see.

What you need

- The object (teapot + cup, lantern, book — anything with a story)
- A rigid support rod or strip (steel or stiff acrylic), matte black or painted to the background
- A weighted base hidden inside the lower element
- Background-matched paint

Build it

1. The principle. The support runs where the eye doesn't audit: inside the pour stream, behind the object's own silhouette, along the line the scene already draws. A teapot's support hides in the falling 'water' — a clear or dark rod inside a stream of hot-glue or resin reads as the pour itself. A lantern's support runs flat against the door frame's shadow edge, painted to the frame.

2. The build. Anchor the support to a base with real weight — the illusion fails mechanically before it fails visually if the base can tip. Fix the object to the support's top, then view from every audience angle and move the support within the object's shadow until no angle betrays it. Light from the front-side, never from behind: backlight silhouettes the support into a confession.

3. The discipline of stillness. A levitating object must not tremble. Any sway reads as 'hung,' and hung is death to this illusion (compare Chapter 5's candles, where sway is the charm — different illusion, different physics, different promise). Rigid, weighted, still.

Haunter's note: Judge it in a photograph. The camera finds supports the eye forgives — and guests will photograph this one, so the photo *is* the acceptance test.

Troubleshooting

- Support visible in photos → it catches a highlight. Matte it flatter and re-angle the key light; a support in shadow is invisible, a support in specular is a diagram of the trick.
- Object drifts off-level → the base shifted or the support flexed. Re-weight the base and shorten the support's free length.

Source: genre dive §1.4 harvest (#9) · Horizon A candidate list.

Chapter 11 — Poison Apple & the Morphing Statue: Two Tabletop-Scale Effects

Two small builds that share a chapter because they share a lesson: a single light source, honestly used. One LED makes a poison apple glow in a hand or a bowl (genre dive harvest: tabletop, fairy-tale recognition). One blacklight makes a statue change its face.

What you need

- A prop apple (or a real one, night-of)
- One LED + coin cell or a small battery pack (the glow heart)
- A hand prop or a bowl (the presentation)
- A statue or bust prop
- UV-reactive paint + a matching non-reactive paint (the two faces)
- A UV blacklight source (Yacolit class, per HAUNT #008/#014)

Build it

1. **11.1 Poison Apple.** Hollow the apple from the base, seat the LED inside, and let the fruit's own skin be the diffuser — a real apple glows like a coal; a prop apple needs its interior thinned or a frosted inner surface to glow evenly rather than spot. Present it offered: in a hag's hand at the path's edge, or in a bowl of dull apples where one is lit. One lit apple among dull ones is a story; a bowl of lit apples is a store display. Battery discipline: coin cells dim across a long night — test the glow at hour four, not hour zero, or use a wired pack hidden in the bowl.

2. **11.2 Ghostly Morphing Statue.** Paint the statue twice: the daylight face in ordinary paint, the second face — eyes, mouth, the wrong expression — in UV-reactive paint, invisible under normal light. Under blacklight the second face surfaces through the first and the statue changes. The craft is registration: the two faces must share the sculpture's real features (the UV eyes sit in the statue's actual eye sockets) or the morph reads as graffiti instead of possession. Light it on a switch or a timer: normal light, the ancestor; blacklight, the tenant. The Glow Test (HAUNT #014) applies — test your paints under your bar before the statue gets either face.

Haunter's note: Both effects are threshold effects: small, close, and timed for the guest who leans in. Place them where the path slows — at the fence gate, at the coffin's shoulder — never in the fast walk-through where tabletop scale gets missed.

Troubleshooting

- Apple glows with a visible hot spot → the LED points at the skin. Turn it to fire into the fruit's core or add a diffuser layer; the glow must come from the apple, not from a bulb inside an apple.
- Statue's second face shows in daylight → the UV paint is visible as a sheen difference. Match the paints' finish (matte to matte) and test under the actual daylight the statue will sit in.

Sources: genre dive §1.4 harvest (#11, #10) · Horizon A candidate list.

Chapter 12 — The Dollar-Store Skeleton Upgrade: $1.25 to Pro-Prop

The before/after build (genre dive harvest: huge search demand for cheap, simplicity 5). The dollar-store skeleton is a toy because of three specific failures — shiny, jointed like a toy, and the color of a pool noodle. This chapter fixes the three failures, in order, for the price of the paints you already own from Beginner Chapter 3.

What you need

- A dollar-store skeleton (the $1.25 class, price of the record's naming)
- Matte spray (the shine killer — Beginner Chapter 3's base discipline)
- Dark wash / stain (the age)
- A few screws or glue + wire (the pose lock)
- Optional: Chapter 9's sheeting for a partial corpsing

Build it

1. Fix 1 — Kill the shine. A full matte coat. Shine is the sound of plastic; matte is the beginning of bone. This is the 3-Coat system's base coat pointed at a whole figure instead of a stone.

2. Fix 2 — Age it. The wash: dark tone into every joint, socket, and tooth line, wiped back from the high points. A toy skeleton is one color; a real one is fifty. The corpsing chapter (Chapter 9) is this fix's big sibling — a partial corpsing (hands, ribs, skull) upgrades this build into that one at half the time.

3. Fix 3 — Lock the pose. Toy joints flop to neutral; corpses hold a decision. Wire or screw the joints into one committed pose — head turned, one arm raised mid-reach — and dress it into the scene so the pose is a sentence: reaching for the gate, climbing from the plot, sitting in the chair it died in.

4. The before/after discipline. Photograph the skeleton as bought, under haunt light, before you touch it. The upgrade's proof — and the build's whole social life — is the pair of photographs. This is the harvest's note on the build: before/after IS the hook.

> **Haunter's note:** The dollar-store upgrade is the Beginner book's aging doctrine wearing a new skeleton: same matte, same shadow, same life. If Chapter 3's stones aged well in your yard, this chapter cannot fail — it can only be rushed.

Troubleshooting

- Upgraded skeleton still reads cheap → the joints are at factory neutral. The pose is the price tag: commit it harder, and add grime specifically at the joints where the toy articulation shows.
- Wash made it muddy instead of old → too much tone, left too long. Wipe back harder; bone should dominate, grime should argue.

Source: genre dive §1.4 harvest (#7) · Horizon A candidate list.

Chapter 13 — Safety Foundations: Outdoor Power & Cable Doctrine

The safety chapter runs in every book of the Guide, unchanged — because every level plugs in, and because a haunter who adds motors adds loads. HAUNT #019 is the record; the doctrine below is Beginner Chapter 11, carried verbatim in substance, with the Intermediate load note added.

What you need

- Outdoor-rated extension cords
- A GFCI-protected outlet
- A covered weatherproof box
- Flat cable covers
- Timers

Build it

1. Rule 1 — DRY. Connections live off the ground, inside a covered weatherproof box, with a drip loop in the cord before the box so water runs down the loop instead of into the plug.

2. Rule 2 — RATED. Outdoor-rated cords only, on a GFCI-protected outlet. Add up the watts on the circuit: a standard household circuit is 15 amps / 1,800 watts nameplate; plan at 80% — 1,440 watts — for loads that run for hours. Devices print their draw on the label; the label wins over any number in this book.

3. Rule 3 — ROUTED. Cables along edges and fence lines, never loose across the walk path; where one must cross, under a flat cable cover.

4. The Intermediate note. This book adds motors — small DC loads, but they arrive with power supplies, and power supplies are mains devices. Every supply lives in the weatherproof box on the GFCI run, and only the 12V line travels to the prop (the SFX dive's genre-standard architecture, and the Professional book's whole power doctrine). A yard of 12V props on one boxed supply is a safer yard than a yard of extension cords — count the supply's draw in the power chapter's arithmetic, not each motor's.

Haunter's note: A tripping GFCI is a report, not an inconvenience. Never defeat or bypass one to keep a show running. Find the wet connection by halving the run, then box and drip-loop the guilty joint.

Troubleshooting

- Breaker trips after adding a build → re-run the paper arithmetic; split machine loads and light loads across two circuits.
- A motor's supply runs hot in the box → it is undersized for the load or the box is sealed in sun. Size supplies with headroom and shade the box; heat is the review your wiring gives you before the failure.

Video companion: HAUNT #019 — Outdoor Power & Cable Safety. Safety review: see the build report.

Planned Contents — In Production

Professional preview — in this book's final pages, the Professional Builds launch chapters (Projection Mapping, Pneumatics, the Flying Crank Ghost) are the road ahead. The Intermediate book's own next layer — the Life-Size Crypt Fog Chiller, the Rocking Tombstone, and the Modular Cemetery Fence — is in production and joins this book as chapters complete, announced to owners of record. Nothing on this page is a chapter you are missing today; it is the map of where the Guide goes next.

How completion works: chapters are added to the same books as they clear the verification standard — never as a seasonal edition, never as a new purchase for owners of record. Announcements ride the Spooky At Heart page and the list first.

Parts links in this book are Amazon searches for the exact part class each build uses, on the Spooky At Heart Associates tag — check the current listing against the build before you buy. As an Amazon Associate, Spooky At Heart earns from qualifying purchases. Prices marked 'of record' are the figures stated in the HAUNT series records and dives at their writing; live prices move, and this book never pretends otherwise.

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