

# **BOHEMIAN SPIRIT**

**A Screenplay by Steven Lancefield**

### 1. EXT. BOHEMIAN THEATRE. NIGHT

The Bohemian Theatre sits silently on the deserted Brighton Pier, looking dilapidated but with a hint of faded glamour. The paintwork is peeling off the window sills, and one window has been smashed.

### 2. INT. BOHEMIAN THEATRE. NIGHT

The rows of seats are empty in the deserted theatre. A shaft of moonlight from a cracked window highlights the wooden, dusty stage furniture. There is silence, until the sound of a flute can be heard, echoing, playful.

The closed stage curtains start to flutter and start to separate slightly of their own accord. The crack between the curtains show a pair of steely, bloodshot eyes peering out, before fading into the gloom of the theatre as if they were never there.

### 3. EXT. GARY AND SAMANTHA'S FLAT. DAY

GARY is unpacking boxes with SAMANTHA. They are a handsome couple in their mid twenties. SAMANTHA looks stressed. GARY leaves the unpacking and moves to his desk, tapping away on his laptop.

SAMANTHA

Shirking already, Gary?

GARY

It's called job hunting, dearest.

SAMANTHA

You'll be lucky. Winter in a seaside resort.

GARY

There's a lot going on here. Much more than the city. And smell that air.

SAMANTHA

Yeah, hmm, donuts and cheap hotdogs, lovely.

GARY

Can you just give it a chance? For me?

SAMANTHA

Yeah, I will. Once we've found work so we can afford to pay for this nine hundred pounds a month seaside flat.

GARY beckons SAMANTHA over to the laptop. A website has a request in bold for a cleaner for an immediate start.

GARY

Now, if that's not luck, I don't know what is.

SAMANTHA

A twice weekly cleaning job won't pay the rent, Gary.

GARY

It's a start.

SAMANTHA

Seriously though, cleaning some rundown old seaside theatre?

GARY

Living the dream!

SAMANTHA

(LAUGHS) Yeah, Gary, living the bloody dream.

3B. EXT. Bohemian Theatre. Day

GARY rushes towards the Bohemian Theatre, situated on the pier. He takes a breath and then enters.

4. INT. BOHEMIAN THEATRE.NIGHT

GARY rushes into the theatre auditorium. MRS.GRAVES stands up from the seating area, tapping her watch.

MRS.GRAVES

You're late.

GARY

I know. Sorry.

MRS.GRAVES

Don't let it happen again. Right, the stage needs mopping, and the curtains will need dusting. Mind you get the stage sparkling. Nelly Bartow and her dancing monkeys were on earlier this evening, made a helluva mess.

GARY

Dancing monkeys? Only in Brighton.

MRS.GRAVES

For the kids show, they were men in suits. You really are from the big smoke, aren't you.

GARY

I guess so.

MRS.GRAVES

Dressing rooms need a good going over. Should take you a couple of hours. The Bohemian Theatre's old, Victorian, collects dust like there's no tomorrow. Then lock up, and keep those keys safe.

GARY

That's fine. It'll be fine.

MRS.GRAVES

It better had. Oh, and...

MRS.GRAVES looks around, before starting to speak. She stops himself and hands over the keys.

MRS.GRAVES (cont'd)

Goodnight, son.

GARY

See you later.

5. INT. BOHEMIAN THEATRE FOYET. NIGHT

MRS.GRAVES steps outside, pausing in the theatre foyer. She shakes his head sadly.

MRS.GRAVES  
(UNDER BREATH) A life for a life, so that the dead  
may walk again.

MRS.GRAVES leaves, closing the door behind her with a slam.

6. INT. BOHEMIAN THEATRE. NIGHT

GARY is mopping the stage area. He pauses by the side of the stage, bored. Fidgeting, he picks up the mop handle, and starts to sing “New York, New York” into it.

GARY is stopped in his tracks by an unearthly tune that rings out from somewhere in the theatre, soft and melancholy, recognisable as the sound of a flute.

GARY  
Hello.. Hi, is anyone there?

The tune continues, lower.

GARY (cont'd)  
Samantha, if that's you, it's so not funny sweetheart...

GARY pauses by the stage curtains and rips them open. Nothing is there except an old dummy, rocking in the breeze from the curtains.

GARY laughs, looking around for the source of the noise. He heads up into the audience seating, sits down and waits.

Slowly but surely, the figure of a downcast, translucent male appears on the stage, playing the flute. GARY stares on in awe as THE SPIRIT plays his haunting tune, before looking up at GARY, pleadingly.

GARY  
Bloody hell...

7. INT. GARY'S FLAT.BEDROOM. NIGHT

SAMANTHA is asleep in bed when GARY enters, turning the lights on. GARY looks pale and shocked.

SAMANTHA

Jesus Gary, what's wrong?

GARY

I've just seen the most crazy thing, Sam, in the theatre. After the show finished. Between eleven and half eleven exactly.

SAMANTHA

What did you see, sweetheart?

GARY

A ghost, Sam. I only saw a bloody ghost, some Victorian guy with a flute. And tomorrow, tomorrow you'll see it too.

SAMANTHA groans, rolls her eyes and turns over.

8. INT. BOHEMIAN THEATRE. NIGHT

GARY and SAMANTHA sit in the audience seating. SAMANTHA is looking at her watch.

GARY

Any minute now.

SAMANTHA

You're mental.

GARY

I'm not mental, as you'll see.

SAMANTHA

It's Brighton, gone to your head.

GARY

No, it's the spirit of what appears to be a long dead Victorian music hall performer, as you'll find out.

SAMANTHA

Yeah, whatever. (PAUSE) Bored now.

GARY

(COUNTING DOWN FROM WATCH) Three, two, one, and here he comes, bang on time...

THE SPIRIT appears, dolefully playing his tune. SAMANTHA stares, open mouthed.

SAMANTHA

Good God, but that's...

GARY

I know, sweetheart. It's a ghost. It's our ghost.

SAMANTHA

"Our" ghost?

GARY

He's going to make us very rich, Samantha. We're going to book ourselves up a little show. Assuming this bloke spirits up every night, bang on eleven, like he's done so far, we've got ourselves a world first, a chance for the paying public of Brighton to see a real live ghost appear in front of their eyes.

SAMANTHA

You're crazy.

GARY

Yeah, and we're strapped for cash. This week's rent?

SAMANTHA

Yes?

GARY

Consider it paid.

9. INT / EXT Montage

GARY and SAMANTHA put a mass of posters up on every public space around Brighton ; The Pavillion, The Pier, The Brighton Wheel, The Laines.

GARY sits in the box office as money exchanges hands. He looks up and there is a queue of people wanting tickets. GARY smiles.

10. INT. GARY AND SAMANTHA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

GARY is in bed, SAMANTHA is asleep next to him. He catches a glimpse of THE SPIRIT moving in the gloom outside his bedroom.

GARY gets to his feet, and looks outside. Convinced he was dreaming, he walks to the bathroom. On the bathroom mirror are written the words "A LIFE FOR A LIFE", scrawled in red lipstick.

Suddenly, THE SPIRIT appears behind GARY's shoulder in the reflection. GARY screams.

11. INT. GARY AND SAMANTHA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

GARY bolts upright in bed, crying out. SAMANTHA wakes up with a jolt.

SAMANTHA

Gary... Gary, are you okay?

GARY

Bad dream. Opening night nerves, I guess.

SAMANTHA

Gary, should we really be doing this? Could this be messing with things we don't understand, things we should leave well alone...

GARY

It'll be fine. Trust me.

GARY turns over, wide awake, eyes alert.



12. INT. BOHEMIAN THEATRE. BOX OFFICE. NIGHT

In the box office, SAMANTHA looks in amazement at the queue of people waiting to enter the auditorium.

GARY glances over from the doorway and opens the doors, giving a thumbs up gesture to SAMANTHA.

13. INT. BOHEMIAN THEATRE AUDITORIUM. NIGHT

GARY makes his way to the centre of the stage.

SAMANTHA stands in the sidelines as the lights come up.

GARY

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls. You're here for one reason and one reason alone. To experience a world first. Here, in Brighton this evening, your one and only chance to see a real spirit, straight from Heaven, or, if you like, the depths of hell. He played his last haunting note oh so many years ago, but now he's back to entertain you, the bohemian performer who won't stay dead, the spirit of this very theatre...

The audience clap and cheer. Once the applause fades, the audience start to look nervous as nothing happens.

GARY fidgets, and looks at SAMANTHA nervously.

Slowly, the figure of THE SPIRIT appears. The audience gasp and raise their cameras, video cameras and iphones.

THE SPIRIT plays his tune again, but this time stares fixatedly at GARY with what appears to be malicious intent.

Concerned, SAMANTHA wipes away a tear, and leaves the auditorium for the dressing rooms.

14. INT. BOHEMIAN THEATRE DRESSING ROOMS. NIGHT

SAMANTHA sits on a chair, and starts to sob, uncontrollably.

15. INT. BOHEMIAN THEATRE AUDITORIUM. NIGHT

As the audience cheer, GARY takes a bow as THE SPIRIT fades away.

Talking excitedly, the audience gather their cameras and exit out of the theatre.

GARY smiles as they leave, relieved.

16. INT. BOHEMIAN THEATRE DRESSING ROOMS. NIGHT

Gary enters the dressing rooms. SAMANTHA faces away from him in her chair.

GARY

Sweetheart, we just made ourselves a grand!  
I've had emails on the phone about TV appearances,  
it's really happening for us!

GARY nears the chair, suddenly looking concerned.

GARY (cont'd)

Sweetheart?

SAMANTHA's head lolls back, lifelessly, her face drained, her eyes bloodshot.

GARY screams.

17. EXT. PIER. DAY

GARY is dressed in a smart black suit. He walks along the pier, alone, in his own world.

GARY places a bouquet of flowers and a photo of SAMANTHA outside The Bohemian Theatre, and turns to head back to the beach.

VOICE

A life for a life, so that the dead may walk  
again...

GARY turns around with a start. He notices a strange figure standing by the pier railings, looking out to sea.

The figure turns. It is THE SPIRIT, restored to full health, wearing modern day clothes.

THE SPIRIT smiles at GARY, and raises a finger to his lips, a plea for silence.

18. THE BOHEMIAN THEATRE. NIGHT

A translucent figure of a female musician, dressed in Victorian clothes, fades up in the corner of The Bohemian Theatre.

SAMANTHA raises the flute and starts to play, her face sullen and haunted.

The curtains in the theatre close of their own accord.

FADE TO BLACK.