

The Haunted House



By Robert Prins

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“Just a quick sweep of the floor and we’re done,” Nigel announced to himself. He smiled as he viewed the transformation of the cottage. Three months ago, it was a rundown old farm house. Mold covered the walls, a barely-there kitchen, leaking ceilings and holes in the floor. After putting every available hour into it, its glory had been restored, weeds had been cleared from the garden, the lawn was mowed, and a new coat of paint made it ready for their first night together in their new home.

As he left, Nigel looked in at the ‘Haunted House.’ It was the second house on the property, set in a tangle of bush in the next paddock. It had been occupied by a hoarder and was so neglected it was almost falling down. Not that it was actually, haunted. Nigel didn’t even believe in ghosts. There were dirty dishes on the bench, glass on the floor, rotting magazines in a stack, holes in the windows and a front door that wouldn’t close. There was even an ancient piano sitting against the wall and bamboo growing up through the floor in one of the bedrooms. Nigel winced. It was going to be a big job. But right now, he had more important things to do.

The next day Nigel and his fiancée stood at the front of the church. Nigel and Amy gazed into each other’s eyes. Hands held, brand-new wedding rings on their fingers, they had said their vows, and the silence of anticipation filled the crowd who were there for them.

“I now pronounce you man and wife. You may kiss the bride,” the celebrant announced.

Nigel lifted the veil from Amy's face and kissed her. A long and passionate kiss. The tension lifted, the crowd cheered and the wedding celebrations began.

It was the perfect day. Family, friends, photos, food, embarrassing speeches, music and dancing.

After the celebrations ended, Nigel and Amy arrived home to their newly renovated farmhouse for their first night together as husband and wife.

Just after midnight as they lay in bed almost asleep in each other's arms, the sound of badly played piano music wafted through the silence. Nigel tensed. Amy stirred beside him. Nigel sat up, adrenaline racing. Amy's face had gone as white as a sheet. "What's that?" she asked.

Nigel pulled on some trackpants and a shirt. "I'll find out," he said, trying to keep his voice steady.

Heart beating, Nigel tiptoed across the paddock toward the haunted house where the music was coming from. Boards creaked as he stood on the front deck and picked up a piece of decking rail for a weapon. The music stopped. An eerie light came through the door from behind the piano. In the silence that followed, a hysterical laugh broke out. Nigel was just about to run, when a flash of light blinded his eyes.

"That is so good! Great Photo. You should see yourself, Nigel. You look like you have seen a ghost!" Nigel's cousin popped out from behind the piano, his cell phone in his hand. "Happy wedding night!" he yelled, as he ran down the drive.



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An abandoned house stood in the farmyard not far from Nigel and Amy's new house. They jokingly called it the 'haunted house'. But what would Nigel really find when spooky piano music began playing from the abandoned house on the first night of their honeymoon?

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