

"I'm sure you'll adore it!" assured the overhyped salesman. "It even has the biggest fireplace in the hemisphere!" I smiled weakly, tired from the eight hour drive into the countryside. The estate had been sold fully furnished with all the possessions of the previous owner. Wondering why such a beautiful house was being sold, I inquired if the proprietor had had an accident of some kind. The man laughed and replied that the owner has been missing for over ten years. As he walked away, he said that legally if a house has not been used for over a decade the owner has "forfeited the rights of ownership" and have then, therefore put their house up for "sale". Clearly caring more that he had sold the mansion, he strutted off with a smile on his face. Sighing, I walked down the path and through the front gate. I surveyed the front yard as the gate creaked shut behind me walking to the porch.

It took some time finding the well polished keys as my pockets were positively overflowing with bits and bobs. Over the next few days, I made an inventory of all the furniture and accessories, mentally trying to acclimatize to my new surroundings. By Thursday of the following week, I was able to successfully navigate from the bedroom to bathroom to the kitchen. The sheer size of the entire property was mind boggling. That Sunday, I spent the day plotting the various cabins, cabooses and cabanas onto a makeshift map before exploring the house itself. I started from the bottom up beginning with the studio, followed by the lounge room, etc. Eventually, at nightfall, I finished examining the final hallway when I noticed it.

Right in the middle of the ceiling was a tiny hatch leading to what I presumed would be the attic. Curiously, I prodded the hatch with a nearby broom, trying to push the cover to the side. Running back downstairs and outside to a maintenance shed, I hefted a ladder to my chest and wobbled back towards the house. After many failed attempts of getting through the door way and up the stairs I finally made it to the hallway. Setting up the ladder was quite simple and smooth but climbing up it was quite another story. Groaning, I eventually reached the top and I simply stared in shock of the sight of a body elegantly clothed in a tuxedo suit lying on their chest sprawled across the middle of the attic floor!

A dark red stain had seeped into the floorboards colouring the floor maroon red in a halo around the body. The edges of the suit were tattered and frayed and a decaying odour floated around the room. Grimly, I flipped the skeletonised man onto his chest revealing the source of his death. There were five wounds total, four in the back and a final blow through the neck, the blade still remaining in the latter. It was clear that this was murder and had surely been committed some time ago. I presumed that all possible leads had run dry after years of neglect. Nonetheless, I wrapped up body in a nearby linen after checking the pockets for identification, revealing the deceased to be none other than the previous owner! Knowing that calling the police would bring unnecessary troubles to my new mansion and life, I decided to enjoy a little bonfire. Later at the housewarming party, one of the guests inquired what kept the fire burning so long. I replied "Just some junk from the attic," with a twinkle in my eye.