

READ ME FIRST

THE HAUNTED MILES CHALLENGE

If this letter has found its way into your hands, then it is
already too late to turn back.

The gates of Blackwood Mansion have opened for you, and once you step inside,
there is only one way out. The house has a story to tell... but it reveals its secrets
only to those willing to keep moving.

Before you take your first step, read **The Start**. It is there that your journey begins
and where your fate is set into motion.

When you survive your first mile, pause long enough to read **MILE 1: The Master's
Timepiece**. Listen carefully—the house is trying to tell you something.

After you complete Mile 2, stop once more and uncover **MILE 2: The Ledger of
Stolen Time**. By now, the truth behind the curse will begin to reveal itself,
but so will the danger.

Reach Mile 3, and you will earn the right to read **MILE 3: The Attic's Wrath**. The
final piece of the mystery awaits, and with it, your only chance to escape.

Then run.

Do not look back. Do not linger. Carry your courage all the way to the finish line.

Only after you have crossed the finish should you open **The Finish: Beating the
Clock**. There, you will learn whether you escaped Blackwood Mansion... or not.

One final warning...

The story is meant to unfold in order. Resist the temptation to read ahead. Every
mile reveals a new chapter, every chapter brings you closer to the truth, and
every step echoes through the halls of Blackwood Mansion.

The clock is ticking.

We wish you luck.

You'll need it.

THE START:

The Ticking on Elm Street

The fog on Elm Street doesn't just obscure the morning sun; it swallows it whole. You are miles into your run, locked into that perfect, breathless rhythm where your mind goes blank. *Slap, slap, slap.* Your sneakers hit the damp asphalt like a metronome. It's just you and the road.

Until the rhythm breaks.

TICK... TICK... TICK... It's sharp. Metallic. It echoes through the heavy mist, entirely out of sync with your stride. You slow to a jog, your breath pluming in air that has suddenly, inexplicably turned freezing cold. Looming to your right, framed by jagged, rust-eaten gates, is the Blackwood Mansion. Decades of rot have left the roof sagging like a crushed velvet hat, its boarded windows staring down at you like dead eyes.

"You have to beat the clock..." The whisper brushes against your ear, carrying the scent of dried lavender and old dust. The rusted gates groan, swinging inward. You don't decide to walk up the cracked, weed-choked driveway; your feet simply take you there, pulled by an invisible gravity. You step beneath the rotting portico and press your hand against the heavy oak front doors.

They glide open effortlessly. You step inside.

SLAM. The sound vibrates in your teeth. The deadbolt slides home with a heavy, metallic CLACK. You spin around, yanking the brass handle, but it won't budge. You are trapped in pitch darkness. Then, a pale, pulsating silver light bleeds up through the floorboards, creating a luminescent trail down the hallway.

TICK... TICK... TICK... The sound echoes from deep within the house. It is matching the frantic, accelerated beating of your own heart.

YOUR MISSION: The shadows in the foyer are lengthening, stretching toward your running shoes like skeletal fingers. You have to move, or the darkness will swallow you. Follow the silver light!

RUN to the next mile marker!

MILE 1: The Master's Timepiece

You follow the pulsating light down a drafty corridor, your footsteps muffled by a threadbare carpet. The air grows heavier with every step. You burst into a massive, cobweb-draped parlor and freeze.

The room is dominated by a towering grandfather clock. Its glass face is shattered, and the hands are completely missing, yet the relentless ticking continues. Above the mantle hangs a gloomy oil painting of a pale, terrified young woman. She is clutching a heavy, black-metal stopwatch tightly to her chest.

The temperature plummets. Your sweat instantly turns to ice on your skin. A shimmering, translucent figure manifests in the center of the room. It's the woman from the portrait. But she isn't looking at you. She is trapped in a terrifying loop—frantically checking an invisible watch in her palm, looking over her shoulder with wide, weeping eyes, and mouthing a silent scream.

You take a tentative step forward. The floorboard creaks.

She gasps, freezing in place. Slowly, she turns her head. She extends a trembling, glowing finger, pointing past you toward a darkened study at the end of the hall.

Before you can speak, the house violently shudders. The shattered pieces of glass from the grandfather clock levitate off the floor, hovering in the air. They vibrate with a high-pitched hum, spinning like jagged little daggers. The house knows you are here, and it doesn't want you investigating.

YOUR MISSION: A cyclone of sharp glass is closing in! You need to see what she's pointing at before the room tears itself apart. Sprint down the corridor!
RUN to the next mile marker!

MILE 2: The Ledger of Stolen Time

Adrenaline floods your system. You duck under a flying shard of glass and sprint blindly down the hall, throwing your shoulder into a heavy mahogany door. You tumble into a decaying study, kicking the door shut just as a barrage of glass shatters against the wood behind you.

You back away, chest heaving. The study is deadly silent, save for the relentless TICK... TICK... TICK... vibrating through the floorboards.

In the center of the room sits an ornate desk. Upon it rests a leather-bound ledger, lying open and entirely untouched by the thick layer of dust covering the rest of the room. You creep forward, your eyes scanning the spidery, yellowed handwriting:

"I HAVE BOUND HER SOUL TO THE MIDNIGHT STOPWATCH. IT DOES NOT TRACK TIME; IT STEALS IT. AS LONG AS THE WATCH TICKS IN THE ATTIC, SHE REMAINS A PRISONER TO THIS HOUSE. ANYONE WHO CROSSES THE THRESHOLD WILL FIND THEIR OWN TIME TICKING AWAY, UNTIL THEY JOIN HER IN THE WALLS."

The mystery snaps into focus. The ghost isn't trying to scare you—she's warning you. The master of the house cursed the stopwatch, and now your own time is running out. The front doors won't unlock until that watch is stopped.

Suddenly, the shadows in the corners of the study begin to bleed together. They detach from the walls, pooling on the floor and rising into a towering, shifting mass of freezing black mist. It has no face, but you can feel its malice pressing down on your chest, suffocating you.

YOUR MISSION: The entity that guards the watch has found you, and its icy grip is reaching for your throat! You need to find that stopwatch before your time runs out. Dash to the main staircase and race to the highest floor.
RUN to the next mile marker!

MILE 3: The Attic's Wrath

Your lungs burn. Lactic acid screams in your legs as you scramble up the rotting, groaning wooden stairs. You hit the top landing and kick the attic door completely off its hinges.

The space is pitch black, suffocating under a blanket of pure dread. The ticking is deafening here—*TICK! TICK! TICK!*—hammering against your eardrums like a physical blow. A single, pale beam of moonlight pierces the gloom, illuminating a velvet pedestal in the center of the room.

There it is. The Midnight Stopwatch.

It is forged of pitch-black metal, cold and heavy, its second hand spinning wildly out of control. You lunge across the room and snatch it off the pedestal. The moment your fingers wrap around the cursed metal the ticking instantly stops. A terrible, agonizing silence falls over the attic.

You wait, breathless. Then, the house roars.

The floorboards buckle and snap beneath your feet. The phantom woman appears beside you, her eyes wide with a mix of fragile hope and sheer panic.

"Take it past the threshold! Take it outside!" she cries, her voice ringing clearly in your mind.

Behind her, the towering shadow-entity erupts through the floorboards, expanding until it fills the ceiling. The air turns to freezing slush. It lets out a sound like twisting metal and snapping wood, lunging straight for you.

YOUR MISSION: The Master of the house is right on your heels! Clutch that stopwatch tight and flee! You have to carry it off the property line to break the curse before the darkness catches you.

RUN for your life to the finish line!

THE FINISH: Beating the Clock

You barrel down the grand staircase, taking the steps in dangerous, desperate leaps. Your running shoes pound a frantic rhythm against the wood. The black mist snaps at your shoulders, sending painful, electric chills down your spine.

The walls of the house seem to shrink inward, groaning in protest, trying to crush you before you can escape.

You can see the grand foyer ahead. The heavy oak doors are rattling violently in their frames, fighting the lock. You lower your shoulder. You grip the icy stopwatch as hard as you can, brace for impact, and hit the doors with every ounce of momentum you have left. **CRASH!**

The heavy wood splinters and the doors burst wide open. You stumble out into the blinding, bright sunlight of Elm Street, sprinting past the rusted iron gates just as they slam shut behind you with a final, defeated groan.

You collapse onto the damp pavement, your chest heaving, safely off the property grounds.

Slowly, you open your clenched fist. The heavy black stopwatch gives one final, weak tick. Then, the glass face shatters into fine sand. The dark metal crumbles away, leaving absolutely nothing in your palm.

You look back at the Blackwood Mansion. The dark, oppressive aura surrounding it is gone, evaporating into the crisp morning air. In the highest attic window, the young woman from the painting stands bathed in sunlight. She is smiling. She places a hand over her heart, gives you a profound nod of gratitude, and fades away into the light, finally free from her endless loop.

You did it. You outran the Master, shattered the curse of the Midnight Stopwatch, and survived the Blackwood Estate.

Congratulations on conquering the mystery and finishing the race!