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in, looking into old houses. Joanne: I know Nan was there, 'cause she grabbed me by the hand. Ella: It's your mother--all side roads and old houses. Joanne: (Nan) said, "I'm getting the hell back to the car." She said, "I'm not staying here." (Just old empty houses, you would go in.) Ella: But the door was off of this one. Not right off--hanging off. So we didn't break in or anything. And the windows, all the glass was in them. But the sink, and the cupboard--their cupboards were spot? less, weren't they? There wasn't a speck of dust anywhere. Joanne: We used to find things. Like us kids used to find little globes or something, and we'd take them home. You know, like little treasures. They were just like little playhouses, we'd go through them. Well, all of us were there that day. And the stairs, they just went POOF! like that, and the dust came up. There was no rumble, it was just like POOF!--all at one time--the whole steps. (Dropped.) Dropped. Ella: And they didn't drop all in one. It seemed like all the steps came apart. Like everything just came.... (It wasn't going to have you going upstairs.) No. But what I can't understand was that part of that kitchen--I can never figure it. I'll never forget it. And even the kitchen window was gleaming. And the rest was nothing but cobwebs. Joanne: It was even like a brand- new cupboard, wasn't it? It had like a cover on it, like linoleum. And it was all really shiny. It looked like the kids were using it for a playhouse. But they couldn't have ever have got it that clean. You know what I mean? It looked like it was brand new. Ella: There were no footprints there, only ours--you could see ours in the dust and the dirt. I don't know how they could keep one part that clean--how one part could come to be so clean, and the rest in such shambles. 'Cause the rest was just dirt, wasn't it? I don't know if that house is there now or not. But I wouldn't want to go back in it. Joanne: Well, you wanted us to go back. Ella: Oh yes, I wanted to go back one day after to see if we could move the cup. Joanne: It's not far from that one-- remember the one that had the skull-and-crossbones painted on it? We wouldn't go in that one at all! No way. Somebody had spray paint or something. Ella: But yet everybody got this feeling about this house as soon as ever we started walking through the grass. The grass was tall. And Mom said, "I don't want to go in there. There's something funny about that house. I don't want...." I said, "Mom, that's only...." "There's something wrong with that house. There's something wrong somewhere." There was something radically wrong. I can still see that cup on the plate, that clean. Joanne: You could see Charlie's knuckles turning white. It's like a little thin tin one. It was like a thin tin cup. Ella: Or a thin, thin china or something. It would not budge a bit. Didn't want to budge a bit. It's both of them, too, those big boys took turns trying to get it off. Joanne: We thought it was nailed on or something. Ella: Or glued on. But at the same time, you'd think they would have broken it. Joanne: Yeah. Or moved that box. Didn't Charlie and Walter try to, like, one of them get up on the other's shoulders, after the stairs fell? They were doing like that. Ella: Oh yes, that's when they went down through the floor. Joanne: They got up on the landing, like, at the very top. And it went down through the PIPER'S TRAILER COURT Featuring: Fully Licensed



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