

SCP Archives Crossover Part 2:
The Case of the Phantom Unicycle

[quirky, upbeat but minor-key piano music. SCP is back in Crestfall, baby.]

Host Narration: Item Number: SCP [REDACTED]. Object Class: Continuing to Ignore, Like My Growing Debt from My Addiction to the Pony Races... never bet on Stallion McGee.

[whip crack!]

Oh Stallion McGee... The following are my best friend—I mean—*Doctor* Ted Kithe’s field notes from his latest excursion to the town of Crestfall, Idaho. He received word that he must return immediately when an old case subject resurfaced with an ominous message: “Beware the One-Wheeled Wonder”...

[ding ding! honk! bicycle horn]

Naturally, Ted packed his overnight duffel bag (the one with the little purple ducks on it) and just shy of midnight, he was on the next train smokin’. On a more personal note, my friendship with Ted has never been better. We listen to sad indie music together. We bond over our mutual hatred of Euclid-class SCPs and our love of chocolate gelato. Life is good at the Foundation.

Ted’s field notes go like this:

[scribbling in notebook]

Ted Narration: 3am – Hey Ted’s Field Notes. It’s me, Ted. Admittedly, I should have gotten some sleep before driving indefinitely in a random direction for hours until I reached Crestfall. But I couldn’t help it. I was... *excited*.

[ethereal, wandering synth music reminiscent of a glass harp, with some eerie bells peppered in for good measure]

I can’t remember the last time I was this excited. Maybe that time I got chocolate gelato with Jon... But! This is different. I’m going to see Maria.

I redacted her name in my last Crestfall case file, but we’re tight now, it’s all good. Maria and I have stayed in touch over the last year. After I helped her talk to her dead husband while he was possessing a phantom bicycle, we knew we were destined to be pen pals.

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Her last letter was... off, however. “Beware the One-Wheeled Wonder”? What could that possibly mean? I knew the only way to find out was to drop everything and rush to her side. You know... ‘cause that’s my job.

[nighttime ambience – crickets, the works]

[scribbling in notebook]

3:30am – I’m back in a bush. Why am I always hiding in shrubbery? 1533 Grumbling Grove waits for me like an old friend. A really weird old friend.

[scribbling in notebook]

3:37am – I was about to knock on the front door when I heard voices coming from the garage.

Andy: I just don’t wanna be stuck anymore, you know bro?

Maria: I see... and how does that make you feel?

Andy: It’s like, I got one wheel in the grave and one out.

[garage door creaking open]

Ted Narration: I eased the garage door open, the soft scraping of rusted hinges reverberating down the aluminum panels. Inside was... a therapist’s office. Cozy furniture piled high with throw pillows; bookshelves lined with psychology publications. There was a wilting fake fern in the corner. Apparently in Crestfall, even the artificial plants are dying. And lying upside down on a faux leather couch... was a BMX dirt bike.

[the chk chk chk of bicycle wheels spinning slowly]

Its wheels spun absentmindedly in the air. Its handlebars sunk into the couch with a look of despair. Sitting next to the bike was none other than the local Wild Man, channeling the phantom bicycle.

[chiming hypnotic whirly-doo stinger]

His eyes were vacant, his mouth hanging open with a crooked grin. The voice that emerged from him was not his own.

Andy the BMX Dirt Bike: Sick tricks on my dirt bike was the only thing I lived for. And then I do like ONE backflip off a cliff, right? (*scoffs, defeated*) And it kills me! How is that, like, fair?

Maria: That's totally valid. Alright, we'll pick this up in our next session.

[wheels riding away, then slowing to a stop]

Andy: Do you think I'm getting close to moving on, doc?

Maria: I know it, Andy.

[WHOOOOSH!]

Ted Narration: With a whoosh the Wild Man snapped back to reality.

Wild Man: *(coughing)* OOFY. That was a doozy-doo! Does Wild Man get overtime for this? Wild Man might have to onion-ize.

Maria: You mean unionize?

[CRUNCH! The Wild Man chews something juicy]

Ted Narration: The Wild Man took an enormous bite from an old onion.

Wild Man *(crunching loudly)*: Who?mmmmm, tasty!

[ding ding! zzzzzzz, riding away]

Maria: You're welcome, Andy! *(noticing Ted)* Oh! Ted. Thank goodness you're here.

Ted: *(letting his guard down)* You're... glad I'm here? Ahem, I mean – *(back to serious, unemotional)* Of course, part of the job, ma'am. I'm a professional.

Maria *(chuckling)*: Are you wearing cologne?

Ted: It's, um, standard issue from the Foundation.

Maria: And the cravat?

Ted: Why did you send for me?

Maria: Ever since we helped my husband let go of this world and pass into the afterlife, I realized this could be my calling.

Ted: Talk therapy for bicycles?

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Maria: To help spirits move on. These phantom bicycles have unfinished business keeping them here. I help them finish it.

Ted: Seems like it's going well. Why do you need me?

Maria: There's... one bike I just can't crack. No matter what I do, it won't open up. Won't even say a word. It's... it's the One-Wheeled Wonder.

[honk! ding! bicycle horn]

Ted: Ah! Geez.

[scribbling in notebook]

Ted Narration: Behind me – a silver unicycle stood tall and still. It seemed to... glare at me, keen and intense.

[zzzzzooooooooommm!]

[intriguing, slightly circus-y piano and organ music]

Suddenly, it rolled forward on its single wheel, zipping around the room, before settling near the couch.

[honk!]

The phantom unicycle taunted us with its half-deflated horn, daring us to solve it – like its existence was a riddle. A really judge-y riddle.

[mysterious, ringing "judge-y riddle" stinger]

Maria: Any ideas?

Ted: My extensive training at the Foundation has prepared me for the most dangerous anomalies in the world... Don't you worry. We'll have this bike squeaking in no time.

[echoing SLAM! as if we're going down to the clinker to get some answers]

[clock ticking rhythmically]

Ted (dialogue fading in and out as time passes): Where were you on the night of the 23rd? What happened on the 23rd? You tell me... *(fading)* You got a family? Couple-a tricycles at home? Be a shame if someone popped their tires... *(fading)* You call yourself a bike? You only got one

wheel. You're not half the bike these other speeders are. Well I guess you're exactly half...
(fading) I'm sorry what I said about you only having one wheel and all, it's... it's actually really impressive... why don't you just tell me about yourself, huh? How 'bout it? ... *(fading)* SAY SOMETHING. ANYTHING. WHAT GIVES???

(fading) (crying) I'm a failure of an agent. Who am I if I can't even do this simple thing? *(fading) (calmed down, reflective)* I think it all goes back to when I was 5. The only anomaly I couldn't secure, contain, or protect... was myself.

[clock ticking fades...]

Maria: Ooooookay then. Good try, champ.

Ted *(panting)*: I can go again. Throw me in, coach.

Maria: As weird as it was, I think you did your best. I guess we'll just never know who the mystery unicycle is. A soul trapped forever in this painful farce we call existence, shackled eternally to the mortal coil of this cruel earth.

Ted: Well when you put it like *that*—

Maria *(long sigh... then shrugging, suddenly casual)*: Eh, you can't win 'em all. You want some popcorn?

[scribbling in notebook]

Ted Narration: I felt a pang of icy guilt in my chest. An ache in my heart I didn't know existed. All I wanted to do was be there for Maria. To help her and impress her and maybe afterwards we could go out for some hot chocolate at Carlson and Carlson's Delicious Pastry Shop, where the Carlsons serve those delicious pastries... you know *(clears throat)*, 'cause it's my *job*. That's what a good agent does.

[scribbling in notebook]

4:03am – I'm lost. This may be my toughest case yet.

[THUMP – a rubber thud as a bicycle tire hits the pavement]

Ted: Huh?

[THUMP – the tire hits the pavement again]

Ted: Wait a second...

Maria: What is it?

[*THUMP*]

Ted: The way the unicycle is stamping the ground like that. It's almost like it's...

Wild Man (*bellowing horse whinny*): NEEEEYYYYAAAAAHHHHH! NEEEEYYYY. NEY.

Ted Narration: The Wild Man let out a whinny. He shook his jowls and stamped his leg.

Ted: It can't be...

Maria: Ted, what's going on?

Ted: It's... it's...

[*echoing horse whinny, distant whip crack!*]

Ted: Stallion McGee.

[*fast whirring tape record rewind, circus organ music, drum roll, ding! clock ticking. magical flashback harp transition.*]

Host Narration: It was at that moment that Dr. Ted Kithe was catapulted into his past, deep in the annals of history, in the fog of long lost memories.

[*fiery WHOOSH!*]

[*emotional memory piano music, with some light wistful vocalizing*]

He was five years old. He had fallen face-first into a small puddle, but he didn't have any upper body strength, so he was drowning. His very short life was flashing before his eyes.

[*bubbles as Ted drowns*]

That's when a feral horse came charging out of a field of sunflowers.

[*galloping*]

It galloped with the fury of a thousand storms, and with a swift kick of its hooves, it flung Ted out of the puddle and saved his life.

[*return of the magical harp*]

[horse whinny!]

As one is prone to do in these situations, the two became fast friends. Inseparable. The foal became a stallion, and the boy became a man. The sunflower seed industry tanked and the Kithe family had to sell their farm... and their friendly neighborhood horse, to survive.

They sold him to the local derby, where he raced against the fastest horses in the county... and beat every single one of them. Most thought it was because of how he was built, but Ted knew... every race, Stallion McGee was imagining that little boy, drowning in a really small puddle, needing to be saved.

Until last week, when Ted and I went to visit the derby. I bet on Stallion McGee, knowing full well he would win. One furlong, two furlongs... Stallion McGee was always in the lead. And then Ted and Stallion locked eyes. Something changed, emotion swelled, and Stallion McGee ran straight out of the derby and never came back... I lost a lot of money that day.

Ted (*tears in his eyes*): Is it really you, Stallion McGee?

Wild Man: Naaayyyaaahhhh!

Ted: I've missed you so much, buddy.

Wild Man: Naayyaah...

Ted: You came... looking for me?

Maria: You can understand horse?

Ted: No, no... I can just... feel it. We always had a bond. (*to Stallion*) What happened to you?

Wild Man: Neeeyyaaahhh! Neyah. Neyaaahhh...

Ted: He escaped from the derby... he ran for miles and miles, not knowing where he was going... lost and searching... poor guy ran out of steam. I'm so sorry I wasn't there for you, Stallion. Not then, or now.

Wild Man: Neyyyyy...Neyyyyy.

Ted: I know, pal, I know... you lived a good, long life. I only wish we could have spent more of it together. What can I do to help?

Maria: How can we help him move on if he can't talk?

[honk!]

[scribbling in notebook]

Ted Narration: The phantom unicycle sprung into action, speeding around the garage, knocking over lamps and bookcases.

[zzzzzoooooommm! clang! crash!]

Utter destruction in its excited path. It zipped around me in circles, practically bouncing off the walls.

[zzzzzoooooommmmm!]

Ted: He... he doesn't need to talk... he needs one last ride.

[fade in: honk! ding! zzzzzzip! Ted rides the unicycle around]

Ted (trying to balance while riding): Whoa! Easy, Stallion. Haha! That's it! Steady...

[scribbling in notebook]

Ted Narration: 6:45am – Stallion McGee and I rode for hours. Riding a phantom unicycle wasn't quite the same as riding a horse, but it still felt just like old times. By the time the sun was rising on the horizon, we said our goodbyes, and the great Stallion McGee trotted peacefully into the afterlife.

[twiddling birds at dawn]

Maria: Well you looked like you were having fun.

Ted: I haven't felt that young since I was... young. (*chuckles awkwardly*) ...Well... I guess that's it then.

Maria: I always appreciate your help, Ted.

Ted: Always happy to help... Maria.

[feet walking away]

Maria: Hey Ted?

Ted (turning on heels a little too enthusiastic): Yeah?

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Maria: Would you wanna maybe... get some hot chocolate at Carlson and Carlson's?

Ted: How did you...?

Maria: I took a peek in your field notes. Couldn't help it... You wanna go or what?

Ted: Yeah... *(chuckles)* Yeah, I'd like that... d-don't look in my field notes.

[quirky, upbeat but minor-key piano music: THE REPRISE]

Host Narration: That concludes Dr. Ted Kithe's field notes. All we know is that when Ted returned to the Foundation, he had a skip in his step and a smile that wouldn't quit. Some things are meant to be left a mystery. We all make decisions we regret. There will always be moments in our lives we wished had gone differently. But yesterday is yesterday. What matters, what *truly* matters, is what we do today.

...You owe me a lot of money, Ted.

[whirring of tape recorder. click! the recording snaps off.]

[conclusion-y eerie synth music]

Credits (Pacific S. Obadiah): This episode was made in collaboration with the brilliant minds behind the podcast *Death by Dying*. Currently, they're raising funds for Season 2, and you can donate to their Indiegogo at deathbydyingpod.com/donate. It's an incredibly talented team and they make a hilarious and wonderful dark comedy show, and I highly encourage you to check it out if you haven't already. "Phantom Bicycle Part 2" was written by Evan Gulock. This episode featured special guest star Niko Gerentes as the Wild Man. Our host and narrator is Jon Grilz. Ted Kithe was Atticus Jackson. Maria was Nichole Goodnight. Our script curator is Jesse Hall. And our music is done by the incredible Tom Rory Parsons. I'm your showrunner and sound designer Pacific S. Obadiah. And our producers are Tom Owen and Brad Miska. For more information, visit scparchives.com.