

TRANSCRIPT

Season Break 1: Marshall Street House Investigation

Katherine Moore and Aiden Summers dig into the archives and listen to the audio from their first ever paranormal investigation investigating the horrors lurking in the Marshall Street House... Haunted dolls, strange knocks and a string of unexplained deaths...

Content Warnings:

Depiction of audio distortion.

Discussion of death, body horror, loss of a loved one and blood and gore.

Mention of suicide, self harm and self mutilation.

Cast:

Finn Cresswell as Aiden Summers

Alexandra M. Barrow as Katherine Moore

Sam Dixon as David Marsh

Kate Wilmot as Zahra

Written and produced by Finn Cresswell and Alexandra M. Barrow.

INT. THE WYRD SIDE RECORDING STUDIO

Silence, fading into the faint electric hum of a slightly rural/suburban house. Five knocks that spell out the word "SEE" in Morse Code, they are repeated ever so often more quietly behind Aiden's voice.

AIDEN: The night surrounds you in your new home, strange shapes drifting behind your eyes, on the shadowed walls and across the ceiling. You can't sleep. In fact, you haven't been able to rest at all since you arrived. Every time your eyes start to close, as your breathing slows, it happens. Five knocks. Does it come from the pipes? A rat behind the drywall? Perhaps it's your daughter, unsettled in this new space. No, you checked on her just a moment ago and she was sound asleep.

Whatever they are, they come from the walls, from behind your headboard no matter where in the room you move your bed. From the ceiling when you try to sleep on the sofa. From the cellar. They always end up coming from the cellar. Could this have something to do with the old raggedy doll you found down there, hidden in a crack in the mortar?

Your eyelids droop closed. The knocks are part of you now, can you even remember a night when you didn't hear them? A night away from this house? You know you moved here not too long ago, you must've surely slept then. The knocks couldn't've haunted your nights before.

No. You cannot recall a night without the noises.

Drink helps. It helps you pass out into fitful unconsciousness, fleeing the knocks. The bottle of whiskey, empty now... when did you buy it? Yesterday? This morning? As it slips from your hand and shatters, you wake, screaming, eyelids peeled open, blood flowing across the stone cellar floor.

Your daughter finds your body down there in the dark. No sign of anyone or anything having entered or left the house. The knocks are quiet. For now.

Soft silence of The Wyrd Side recording room.

AIDEN: Hi, bit of a strange one here.

KATHERINE: Proper Wyrd.

AIDEN: Kitty...

KATHERINE: I saw the opportunity, I took it.

AIDEN: Ha. Ha. So, we are still running around the UK sorting out season 2.

KATHERINE: Thorough investigations require a lot of organisation - and there's only two of us, so we've been reading and researching for the last few weeks - finding house plans, electricity schematics. And don't even get me started on insurance claims with the word "ghost" in the title.

AIDEN: Aaaanyway, while we were preparing for some pretty exciting potential investigations, we stumbled across this.

KATHERINE: Marshall Street!

AIDEN: Yup! The Marshall Street Investigation. Our very first in person investigation from a few years back. Apparently it had somehow been deleted from our old hosting platform without us noticing... Not really sure how that happened.

KATHERINE: I followed up with them and they didn't have a clue. They thought we deleted it.

AIDEN: Not that we'd ever do that, mind. So, we're now reuploading it as it was originally released. Lucky for us I still had the files on my backup drive!

KATHERINE: We're professionals. Though, I'm so glad we don't use those torches anymore. Nightmare.

AIDEN: Oh...

KATHERINE: Please tell me you don't still have them?

AIDEN: Uhhmmm...

KATHERINE: If you want to spend all night staring at a three quid torch with a faulty connection, be my guest. Just don't expect me to call that evidence.

AIDEN: We could just use a Ouija Board.

KATHERINE: *[mock groan]* Is it too late to vote for the torches?

Aiden chuckles.

AIDEN: With that being said, I am so excited to listen back to our first real investigation out of the studio.

KATHERINE: The one that started it all.

AIDEN: I'm Aiden Summers -

KATHERINE: And I'm Katherine Moore. Welcome to the Wyrd Side.

THE WYRD SIDE MUSIC

INT. KATHERINE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Phone clicks on and Kitty puts it down on her kitchen table.

KATHERINE: Hold up a second. *[she checks the recorder]* Uh, okay, we're on. You were saying.

ZAHRA: *[from the living room]* Who's that?

KATHERINE: *[calling out]* Aiden. Says David has an idea?

AIDEN: *[on phone]* A promising lead!

KATHERINE: *[to Zahra]* A promising lead.

DAVID: *[on phone]* A story! A real spooky one.

ZAHRA: *[In the living room, overlapping David's last bit]* A spooky one?

KATHERINE: Apparently.

ZAHRA: Ooh let's hear it then!

Zahra stands up from the sofa and heads a few steps into the kitchen, plonking herself onto the chair next to Kitty.

ZAHRA: Hey Aiden, how's it going?

AIDEN: *[on phone]* Hi Zah-

DAVID: *[on phone]* It's going!

ZAHRA: Hi David.

DAVID: I've got a story for them.

ZAHRA: It'd better be a good one - I suggested they come investigate my department's library a month ago, but it apparently wasn't haunted enough to bother.

AIDEN: *[on phone]* We would've investigated!

ZAHRA: I seem to remember you saying "Not enough clear cut sightings".

AIDEN: *[on phone]* It just didn't -

DAVID: *[on phone, interrupting, as if holding a juicy titbit]* Children. Focus. Please. I have important news that's gonna take your show from its three AM filler slot right to prime time listening

AIDEN: *[on phone]* Hey! Our last episode got over -

DAVID: *[on phone]* It's not important. This is the story that's gonna make you.

KATHERINE: Are we ever going to hear it?

DAVID: Prepare yourself. *[David clears his throat]* So. I have a source, who shall remain unnamed.

AIDEN: *[name beeped out]* from your office?

DAVID: *[huffs]* Yeah, but. Look. My source, whoever they may be, came to me earlier today with a story. A rather interesting tale. And I, being the reporter extraordinaire, keen mind, and great friend that I am, figured you guys might be interested.

KATHERINE: We might be, if you told us what it was.

AIDEN: Oh it's worth our time. Go on David.

DAVID: *[dramatically]* So. Imagine this. Fade in. A haunted house. Rumours of multiple deaths... Not boring normal deaths, spooky deaths, ghost activity... lightning strike, thunder rumbles! Extreme pan into the hallway. Slight dutch angle, we're off balance; the whole audience is off balance. There stands the daughter, framed by the the cellar stairs, staring horrified down into the bloody darkness... A scream on the edge of madness, is it hers? Is it the cursed spirit of the house?

Katherine clears her throat quietly.

DAVID: Ouch! Okay, okay. There's this house, it's really haunted. They're making the whole story into a film. Can't say who's involved, but they're big, like blockbuster big. To ramp up interest in

the project, the owners and producers are inviting ghost hunters to stay and carry out investigations.

KATHERINE: But we're not ghost hunters.

DAVID: What if you were...

AIDEN: Wait, David, what did you do?

DAVID: Well, *[beeped name]* chucked me their email, so I got in touch and stuck your names on the list.

EXT. THE MARSHALL HOUSE - DAY

Phone recorder switches on. Car pulls to a stop on a loose gravel driveway, engine turns off, seatbelts unclip. Light road noise and birdsong of a scattered suburban area.

AIDEN: It even looks haunted.

KATHERINE: *[drily]* So much for being objective.

AIDEN: You read what I sent over, right? The history of the area? About the Hellfire Club?

KATHERINE: Of course. Eighteenth Century high society clubs that leant just a little too hard into... *[reaching for the right word]*

AIDEN: Sex, death and magic?

KATHERINE: Yep, that's it. *[stepping out of the car]* I dunno. I think it looks like a normal... Edwardian house. Two up, two down, pretty compact. Maybe a bit dilapidated.

AIDEN: *[stepping out of car]* Most of the local Hellfire Clubs were reported around the High Wycombe area, one of their most famous haunts. It's right around the corner from here.

KATHERINE: *[slightly mischievously, in a very dry way]* Hmm. Maybe they're still hanging around.

AIDEN: Don't say that.

KATHERINE: I saw twitching curtains all down the street as we drove in. You never know who's watching... Waiting...

AIDEN: [*he shivers*] Urgh...

KATHERINE: [*lightly*] Probably the Neighbourhood Watch.

AIDEN: I bet they're not happy with the new owners selling out to Hollywood and having all sorts of folks tramping up and down the street all day and night.

KATHERINE: If I had a haunted house, I'd definitely sell out.

AIDEN: AHA!

KATHERINE: What?

AIDEN: You admitted it! Haunted houses! They're real!

KATHERINE: [*groans*] It was a hypothetical.

AIDEN: Mhmm.

KATHERINE: As far as I'm aware, my flats only haunted by leaky Victorian plumbing.

AIDEN: To be fair, I thought mine was haunted for a while when David and I first moved in. But apparently he just likes to work late and keeps running to the kitchen for his power bar snacks.

KATHERINE: I don't think David would make a great ghost. He'd be too busy doing double reverse incline tricep dips or something.

AIDEN: And too bouncy. You've seen him after a night out. Like every night this week.

KATHERINE: Ouch.

AIDEN: So energetic. And every night out, if he doesn't bring someone home, he wants to tell me all about his adventures.

KATHERINE: I thought you liked him as your flatmate.

AIDEN: I do! He's lovely, I'm just... I'm just tired. Oh! The ummm...

KATHERINE: House?

AIDEN: Nooo. The recorder.

KATHERINE: *[annoyed at self]* Oh *[bleeped]*.

AIDEN: I'm going to have to bleep that now.

KATHERINE: Shoot?

AIDEN: Better... Where were we again?

Kitty rummages in her pocket and pulls out a jangly set of keys.

KATHERINE: The Chiltern Hills.

AIDEN: Okay, ready to do some expositioning?

KATHERINE: One sec.

AIDEN: Hm?

Kitty leans back into the car and pulls out a rucksack.

AIDEN: Oh. right.

KATHERINE: *[muffled]* I came prepared!

AIDEN: Okaaay, while Kitty sorts out her snacks-

KATHERINE: *[muffled]* Essential ghost hunting supplies, please.

AIDEN: Really a whole pack?

KATHERINE: *[explaining]* We missed lunch.

AIDEN: We had a whole pack on the car ride over.

KATHERINE: We had one pack yes...

AIDEN: BUT WHAT ABOUT SECOND PACK?

KATHERINE: *[confused]* I always bring two. What if we'd broken down and missed dinner?

AIDEN: That's not the... oh never mind.

KATHERINE: Shall we go in? *[she looks up]* Looks like it's about to rain.

AIDEN: In a sec. We need to get some of the history out of the way.

KATHERINE: Here, why don't we move these to the porch while we talk. Grab this?

AIDEN: *[hefting]* Sure thing.

Katherine hands another bag over to Aiden. They continue to unload gear and bags throughout the scene, walking the short gravel path to the front porch several times.

KATHERINE: *[mouth full of biscuit]* Built in 1913-

AIDEN: *[clearly]* Built in 1913-

KATHERINE: *[mouth full of biscuit]* Really?

AIDEN: This is important context! We can't afford for *[gestures emphatically to the phone recorder]* them to not understand.

KATHERINE: *[having finished her snack]* You're right, sorry. *[Aiden gestures for her to go ahead]* Built in 1913 by a well-off family who moved out of London, this house has seen an alarming number of accidents and deaths in its time, marking it out as a must visit in the careers of many "paranormal" investigators.

AIDEN: Hence the film. I think they're going for the "ritual murder" angle as well. Though, even I think the link to the Hellfire Club is a little tenuous. It's about a hundred and fifty years between the last recorded activity nearby and the house's construction.

KATHERINE: Culty paranormal horror sells. So, there's a history of strange events here, do we know if the current owners ever experienced anything odd?

AIDEN: Thanks for the lead in! Yes and no. The family that lives here now have only more recently experienced ghost events and activity around the house, similar to what was reported by the previous owners, and theorised to go back to its very construction...

KATHERINE: Back in 1913.

AIDEN: All the way back. Maybe even further. This house has a story carved into its foundations. A story of shadows and echoes, amongst which lurks a dangerous paranormal force. One that is out for blood.

KATHERINE: *[doubtful]* Maybe. What we can say for sure is that there likely wasn't much on the land before the house. A barn, perhaps small outbuildings for a nearby farm. And the first family to live in the house, the Monroes, moved in shortly after it was built. A family of three, father, mother and their daughter.

AIDEN: And not long after they settled in, the father died.

KATHERINE: We don't know exactly how it happened.

AIDEN: But we do have newspapers from the time that do some speculating-

KATHERINE: In classic tabloid style.

AIDEN: Granted, but if true, they reveal some potentially disturbing information about the weeks leading up to his death. The father hadn't been sleeping much, if at all for almost as long as they were in the house.

KATHERINE: *[unconvinced]* And how did they know this?

AIDEN: Well, neighbours had reported seeing him pacing around the house and grounds desperately searching for some unknown thing, night after night. And he might have just found

something deep in the cellar. That is where his body was discovered. Both him and the room were splattered with blood. Like he'd been tortured.

KATHERINE: Is what the third hand sources tell us. I mean they also speculate that he had business rivals back in the city. And debts.

AIDEN: Yeah, true.

KATHERINE: It could've just as easily been a robbery gone wrong.

AIDEN: Yeah. I suppose we can't say for sure. I guess coroner's reports weren't particularly detailed back then.

KATHERINE: Forensics have come a long way. They'd only just started to use fingerprinting a few years before his death, at least in the UK.

AIDEN: I guess you'd know.

KATHERINE: *[changing the topic quickly]* Anyway. Your ghost events. When did they start?

AIDEN: We don't have any concrete evidence that Mr Monroe encountered anything paranormal, however, with what we now know about the later hauntings... Well. And, a lot of the other investigators have sensed his presence all around the house, still pacing up and down the hallways searching for whatever he was looking for before he tragically passed on.

KATHERINE: *[under her breath]* Sensed his presence. What a load of-

AIDEN: Don't make me bleep you out again.

KATHERINE: *[calling back]* I'm just saying.

AIDEN: Fair enough. We'll see what we turn up tonight.

KATHERINE: But, Mr Monroe wasn't the only person to die in the house. In 1953, the house was sold to George Hooper, a widower, who moved in with his eleven year old daughter, Penny.

AIDEN: Almost immediately after they move in, the pair start to experience strange happenings in their new home.

KATHERINE: The classics. Odd smells, faulty electronics, strange shadows-

AIDEN: And knocking.

KATHERINE: And knocking.

AIDEN: We've actually managed to dig up a copy of Penny's journal from the time and she writes about her experiences pretty extensively. "Five knocks." She writes about hearing them all over the house, but no matter in which room these knocks start in, no matter how much she searched around the house, they always wound up leading her down towards the darkness of the cellar.

KATHERINE: Do you want me to debunk the knocking now or...?

AIDEN: Not just yet. I mean she was only a kid, so the strange noises and dark cellar would've been terrifying. And we know that she only ever went into the cellar once, we'll get into that...

A slight pause, as they put down some bags.

KATHERINE: So. Five knocks. What else?

AIDEN: Urgh.

KATHERINE: I presume with that, you're referring to "The Doll"

AIDEN: Yeah... The Doll. So Penny writes about these knocks over a few months, and it seems that she eventually tells her dad, George. He goes down to the cellar, to see if he can find the source of the noise. It doesn't sound like he found anything obvious, *[reluctantly]* but...

KATHERINE: *[enthusiastically]* But he does find a doll.

AIDEN: Yup. He finds a rag-doll hidden away in a crack in damp stone walls. He then gave the doll to Penny, hoping it would help comfort her.

KATHERINE: And she hated it.

AIDEN: Yeah, can't imagine anyone being happy with the gift of a doll made with human hair...

KATHERINE: Which, to be fair, wasn't that uncommon in some doll making. But still, creepy as *[beep]*.

AIDEN: Really ?

KATHERINE: Sorry. Old habits.

AIDEN: But yeah, very creepy. And to make matters worse, when she tried to get rid of it, leaving it outside, locking it in cupboards etc. It always came back to her. It always ended up sitting in her cabinet... looking straight at her bed.

KATHERINE: We can put that to the test tonight-

AIDEN: As they apparently still have the doll...

KATHERINE: *[teasing]* Apparently? It was one of the highlights of the information pack the owners sent over. I thought you'd be excited to see the original doll?

AIDEN: I mean...

KATHERINE: Not too keen on tackling a haunted doll now the sun's starting to set?

AIDEN: The chances of it actually being the same one? Can't be? Surely?

KATHERINE: If it appears at the end of either of our sleeping bags tonight, it won't be around for much longer.

AIDEN: Well, Penny wasn't sure if it was the doll itself moving or her dad moving it back for her and eventually stopped trying to get rid of it, but then tragedy struck.

KATHERINE: Penny's father dies.

AIDEN: After a particularly disturbed night, she followed the knocks downstairs to the cellar door. And this time, she went down the steps, to discover her father's body, blood painting the walls and floor... she didn't go into too much more detail, for obvious reasons.

KATHERINE: But this time, the coroner did. Eyelids cut away, blood deliberately drained before death. George had high levels of alcohol in his system but even so, it would have been extremely painful and drawn out. Somehow, it was ruled a suicide, because all the wounds appeared to be self-inflicted.

AIDEN: *[shudders]* It's awful. Poor Penny. To be faced with that, to lose your father like that...

KATHERINE: Yeah. If it was sleep deprivation, I've never heard of anything so severe before.

AIDEN: I've heard rumours of sleep experiments going really wrong.

KATHERINE: Wrong enough to peel off your own eyelids?

AIDEN: Maybe a really extreme case... *[shakes off the horror]* Penny was sent to live with an aunt, later in life she frequently visited mediums and joined seances, trying to contact her dad's spirit, to get an answer... *[aside]* If only it were that easy.

KATHERINE: No, no quick answers.

A slight pause.

AIDEN: So I think we've covered most of it.

KATHERINE: *[putting down a rucksack]* And the latest residents have reported hearing knocks, but nothing more extreme. Yet. And, that's everything out of the car.

AIDEN: Okay. Let's get it in and set up.

Phone recorder clicks off.

INT. THE MARSHALL HOUSE - NIGHT

Phone recorder clicks on. Heavy rain and distant thunder (present but not overpowering the soundscape). A grandfather clock chimes nine times in a distant room. Very faint knocking echoes the last five chimes.

AIDEN: Surprisingly mundane by haunted house standards, it's not really isn't imposing when you get inside.

KATHERINE: Welcome to suburbia.

AIDEN: Two floors, and then a cellar and a roof space slash attic room, which we have co-opted as our sleeping quarters for the night.

KATHERINE: The current owners have moved out to clear the way for the film set.

AIDEN: They've taken a lot of their furniture with them - the movie people'll probably want to set things up their own way. Though they did leave a kettle in the kitchen, so we're all good on the tea front.

KATHERINE: *[drily]* Thank goodness. Okay. We're starting the investigation at midnight. It's just gone nine, so we have some time to prep. Let's go over our gear.

Aiden picks up/points to the equipment as he goes.

AIDEN: Torches,-

KATHERINE: *[disgruntled]* Mmm. Torches.

AIDEN: *[ignoring Kitty's interruption]* We can use them to ask and answer questions, um, radio, to catch any other communications, EVP - uh... this EMF meter I got on the web -

KATHERINE: Suspiciously cheap.

AIDEN: It was a bargain. Oh, spare batteries, of course. Umm... *[looking around, realising the salt is missing]* Wait. Kitty.

KATHERINE: Mm?

AIDEN: Where's the salt?

KATHERINE: Oh, shoot, it's still in the car. Back in a moment. D'you want keep-? *[she gestures at the equipment]*

AIDEN: Sure.

Katherine stands up, grabs her car keys and heads out of the room. A distant front door opens and shuts. Thunder rumbles outside.

AIDEN: Ah. It's just me now. Alone, in this very dark house. Okay. Totally fine. Ah. *[refocusing]* The equipment. Yes. We're packing a pretty typical ghost hunting arsenal. If you've seen any paranormal shows, you'll likely be familiar with a lot of the stuff we've brought. Most of which is designed to help somebody, or something on the other side communicate with us. *[he clears his throat]* Radio... *[radio cracks and sputters to life, it is tuned to no channel in particular, screeching between shows/noise/music]* Ouch. Yeah, that's on. EMF... *[it clicks on and whirs slightly]* Let's get a baseline.... Oh! Three little lights. Is that a good thing? Ah, back to one... Okay, let's see. Turn it on... That's done. Leave it for a minute in the space to get a reading of the background electricity... Mhmm. Why don't we put you over here for a little bit then *[he moves to one side and sets the EMF down. He moves back.]* And onto torches. Kitty's bane. We need to set them almost to be turning on... *[two clicks]* Uh... There we go. *[EMF goes off, radio crackles, perhaps one knock just on the edge of hearing, or is it Kitty shutting the front door?]* AH! Oh gods... Kitty?!... *[things turn back to normal]* Ahem. False alarm. Maybe the torches Mmmm... Could that? No, it's not really evidence, but I can say, I really do not like being here alone. And yet we thought it was a brilliant idea for us to do our own little solo investigations. But, that pretty much covers everything here apart from the salt.

Front door opens and shuts.

KATHERINE: *[calling from the corridor]* I found it!

AIDEN: Right on cue.

Katherine enters the room and tosses the salt cellar at Aiden.

KATHERINE: Catch.

AIDEN: *[Aiden catches the salt]* Wow, that's a look!

KATHERINE: Storms really picked up. And I broke my hair tie. So windblown is the look of the evening.

AIDEN: *[taking a good look at the salt cellar]* Um. Kitty?

Katherine crosses the room and sits down next to Aiden.

KATHERINE: Don't worry, I brought a refill.

AIDEN: A refill.

KATHERINE: I wasn't sure how much we'd get through. Us not having done this before.

AIDEN: *[searching for a way to diplomatically broach the conversation]* Mmm...

KATHERINE: *[proudly]* It's a blend. Sage and salt. You're always talking about its protective qualities, so I thought, hey, why not combine the both.

AIDEN: Umm...

KATHERINE: Sorry is that not the right type? They had himalayan pink, but it was twice as expensive and if we were just going to be chucking it away, I didn't want to waste it.

AIDEN: It's not so much the type of salt...

KATHERINE: Okaaay. So what then?

AIDEN: It's the fact that it's in a salt cellar.

KATHERINE: That's the genius bit. Ready made dispersal. Give it here, c'mon, I'll show you.

AIDEN: Okayyy...

Katherine grinds the cellar in a pretend ghost's direction and the ghost disappears in a puff of impressed ectoplasm and smoke.

KATHERINE: *[mimicking a very impressed ghost]* I'm banished! Oh no! *[proudly]* See?

AIDEN: I... Sure.

KATHERINE: It'll work. I'll stick it on the table for now. Did you take them through the equipment?

AIDEN: Yep, and I think I've set up the baseline for our EMF, so we're pretty much ready to go. So, our plan...

KATHERINE: Our plan... *[pulls out a notebook]*

AIDEN: Ah, a colour coded itinerary...

KATHERINE: How else do you do it? First things first, we're going to be investigating Penny's room, the one with the doll.

AIDEN: That is where a lot of the paranormal activity often begins. Where the knocking seems to emanate from at the start...

KATHERINE: So, we're starting there. We'll have our phones recording throughout the night as it is our main... well, our only source of potential evidence.

AIDEN: There might be little skips and jumps here and there, as I'm not sure you want to listen to eight hours of us wandering around this house.

KATHERINE: But if there is any evidence from our other devices, we'll let you know.

AIDEN: And don't worry, we're not going to add anything. So if it's eight hours of us chatting, and no ghostly noises, well that's just how it happens and it'll be a short episode. We'll have to review the audio afterwards to make sure that we didn't miss anything.

KATHERINE: Mmhm. After investigating Penny's room we'll do a Q&A session with the doll. Alone. *[dramatically]* Dun dun duun.

AIDEN: Not sure why I suggested that.

KATHERINE: Good content.

AIDEN: It seemed like it at the time... Then we are going to regroup and ask some questions in the kitchen, another area where activity was reported. The weird smells and shadows...

KATHERINE: You know what I'm going to say there.

AIDEN: Well, you can say it when it happens.

KATHERINE: Investigation starts at midnight. Let's head upstairs and get some rest.

Ambient noise fades out.

Wind and rain fades back in, thunder rumbles in the distance. The house groans in protest in the storm. There is a drip of water hitting the material of a sleeping bag. Aiden is snoring gently. A quiet, muffled alarm goes off.

KATHERINE: Urgh. Oh. Oh no.

Aiden starts awake.

AIDEN: *[half asleep]* Wha... Be warned ghost, I've got salt!

Katherine tries to extricate herself from a very soggy sleeping bag, making various disgruntled and disgusted noises as she emerges. Katherine paws around for her phone (thankfully outside of the puddle), and switches the alarm off.

AIDEN: You okay?

KATHERINE: *[more disgruntled noises]* Bloody...

AIDEN: *[waking up more, panicking]* Kitty?

KATHERINE: I'm bloody soaked. The sleeping bag is... bloody soaked.

AIDEN: Wha- *[he switches on a flashlight]* Oh...

KATHERINE: You've got to be kidding me. What are the chances?

AIDEN: *[he yawns]* How?

KATHERINE: *[rummaging through her stuff]* Oh my bag...

AIDEN: What's the time? What's wrong with it?

KATHERINE: It's soaked...

AIDEN: How?

KATHERINE: I don't know! There's a leak in the roof.

AIDEN: The roof? *[pointing the flashlight up]* Oh.

She pulls out a very soggy notebook.

KATHERINE: Oh no. The notebook! Our plan.

AIDEN: Ooof, the colour coding.

KATHERINE: I have most of it committed to memory, but...

AIDEN: I knew you would, hang on... Here's my towel.

Aiden hands Katherine a towel. She takes it and starts towelling off.

KATHERINE: Well... Well, we're up now.

INT. THE MARSHALL HOUSE - NIGHT

Inside Penny's room, occasional creak. Phone recorder is switched on and there are a few seconds of shuffling before Aiden starts talking.

AIDEN: *[he yawns]* Now that Kitty has had a chance to dry off, I've just about woken up and the tea's brewed, we're ready to start our investigation.

Katherine makes a disgruntled noise.

AIDEN: Some of us are better rested than others. We're upstairs in the back bedroom, Penny's room, where, according to her diary, she first heard the strange knocking.

The pair wait for a few seconds, as if prompting the knocks to sound. The house creaks slightly and very faint thunder can be heard outside.

AIDEN: I suppose it would have been a little too much to ask to hear the knocks on cue...

KATHERINE: No such luck. The bedroom supposedly hasn't changed much since Penny lived here. The rooms small, it only just fits the little cot bed in the corner, and there's this tall glass doored wood cabinet taking up most of the space.

AIDEN: Urgh...

KATHERINE: What else... Forget-Me-Not blue wallpaper, carpet, one small window facing out the back over the garden - it's cute. Did I forget to mention the incredibly creepy doll sitting in the cabinet?

A very very faint knock.

AIDEN: *[whispered]* It is definitely staring at us.

KATHERINE: Lots of new people coming through over the last few weeks. Probably the most she's seen in a while.

AIDEN: *[unconvinced, whispering]* I don't like it.

Katherine leans forward to take a look and knocks on the glass door of the cabinet.

KATHERINE: *[to the doll]* Hi there. I hope you're going to cooperate tonight.

AIDEN: Don't, please.

KATHERINE: Ah, she's quiet enough.

AIDEN: Well, you've started us off now. So let's see what the doll has to -... No, nope, nope it is definitely staring at me. Right across the room towards us.

KATHERINE: From where she was put to face the door? Anyway, she's got big button eyes, she can't help but stare. Maybe she likes you? Don't worry, I'm still up for going first, as a test subject, so I'll let her know you aren't interested.

AIDEN: *[Harumph]* On that note, we've agreed to each spend fifteen minutes here, alone in the room, to try and reach out and open ourselves up to any communication from any entity that might be here. Then we'll head out and around the house to see if anything has been

awakened. We will be trying to contact the spirits of those who died here, the entity which caused disturbances in the house, and perhaps the spirit that reportedly haunts this very doll. The latter two might even be one and the same...

KATHERINE: Let's try and get an answer to that? *[sarcastic]* What irrefutable, scientific methods are we employing?

AIDEN: For this first round of questioning, we're going to use these two- *[he pulls two torches out of a pocket]* -finely tuned torches. Flashlights for our more international listeners...

Aiden hands Katherine the torches.

KATHERINE: Thanks.

AIDEN: They should be good to go. I put new batteries in earlier today, just make sure you don't twist the ends too tight or too loose, or they won't work.

KATHERINE: Mhm. That's what'll stop them from working.

Aiden gives Katherine a look.

KATHERINE: Sorry, right, open mind. Hey, look at that, this ones turned on already.

AIDEN: That's probably just us jiggling it about.

KATHERINE: Right.

AIDEN: Remember what to look out for: timely changes, consistent answers to the same question-

KATHERINE: I remember.

AIDEN: I know you do. Just in case. I'll be downstairs in the living room if you need me. Just yell and I'll be right up.

KATHERINE: Are you going to be alright downstairs?

AIDEN: Yeah, I'll be fine.

KATHERINE: Okay. Turn the lights off, would you?

AIDEN: Really?

KATHERINE: Isn't that what they do on all the other shows?

AIDEN: Okay...

Click as Aiden switches the main room lights off.

AIDEN: Fifteen minutes on the clock. Good luck...

Aiden leaves the room and his footsteps fade down the corridor.

KATHERINE: *[to the doll]* It's just you and me now. *[to the phone recorder]* We've colour coded our torches with tape - red and blue. I'm going to set them down on the lip of the cabinet, a good few feet away from me.

Katherine sets the torches down on the cabinet.

Red to the left, blue to the right as I'm looking at them. That way, I can't somehow accidentally influence how -

The red torch switches off.

Oh. The red one's just gone off. *[to the doll]* Was that you, creepy doll?

A slight pause as Katherine sits on the edge of the bed. She shifts uncomfortably.

Um... I haven't done this before. Aiden probably should have gone first to explain how this is supposed to work, but... *[she considers what to say]* In essence, as the torch heats up when it's on, and cools down when it's off, bits inside the tube expand and contract, just by a fraction - enough to either complete or break the circuit. And that makes the torch switch on and off randomly, making it look like the ghost is interacting with the torch, and, if you're lucky with the timing, actually answering questions. It's really just physics. *[sigh]* But, I promised Aiden I'd keep an open mind and try it his way. So why don't we give it a go.

Katherine takes a large breath in. Thunder rumbles distantly.

Uh... Anyone that's here. Any... Anything? Hi? I'm Katherine, Katherine Moore, here with The Wyrd Side podcast, Wyrd with a Y. Do you even know what a podcast is? Well, you're being recorded, so if you do speak, or... whatever, I'm taking that as a sign you're ok with it. *[pause]* I'm here if you want to talk to me, or... show me a sign? *[pause, unsure]* You can use the torches. The things on the cabinet that are lit up if you don't know... Anyway, if someone - or something, is here, and wants to chat, can you turn off the blue one?

The red torch turns on.

[to the audience] Okay, we have our first action of the night. The red torch has just turned on. *[out loud, enunciating more clearly]* I asked you to turn off the blue torch, not turn on the red one. But, that's fine, maybe you're just warming up. Can you turn off the blue torch?

Katherine pauses for a second, and then makes a disgruntled noise as the red torch turns off.

The blue one. Not the red one. Blue. *[pointing]* That one.

Katherine waits for a second and then gets up off the bed and picks up the blue torch .

[musing] Maybe I screwed it in too far?

The blue torch promptly switches off.

Oh, great, now the blue one goes off. Honestly. Why am I even bothering with this? It makes no sense. I am talking to myself in an empty room.

Katherine unscrews the blue flashlight slightly, then places it back on the cabinet. She sits back down onto the bed.

Round Two. Hello otherworldly entities, I'm Kitty, welcome to the house. Though technically you've been here longer than we have, so... uh... look. If there are any presences, poltergeists, or demons that want to chat, I'm here. Did you know that your roof has a leak? *[pause]* Was that you messing with us? *[pause, to the doll]* Hey, doll, feel free to chime in whenever you feel like it. *[goading]* Disappear, come on, open the cabinet, jump out and scare me. Come on. If you can't even turn a torch on and off on command, you can't be that powerful. Prove me wrong. I dare you.

Katherine waits for a few seconds.

Nothing. Disappointing, but hardly unexpected.

Katherine shuffles around on the bed.

The torches are now just sitting there, they're not even turning on and off anymore. I'm going to try a simple yes/no Q&A. If you're here *[to herself]* which you're not, *[out loud]* change the blue torch from on to off or vice versa if the answer is yes, and the red one if the answer is no. *[enunciating]* Are you here? *[pause]* Didn't think so... Did you kill Penny's father?

The blue torch turns on, the red torch turns on then off again.

Hm. The blue torch switched on, that's yes, and the red one has just switched on and off again, that's... no? If that's communication, that means yes... and no? Maybe? Could you make up your mind? Did you kill Penny's father? *[pause]* No answer. Or, no fluke leading to the torch randomly turning on and off. Urgh. *[under her breath]* Come on. Do it for Aiden. *[out loud]* Is your name... Uh... John? George? Hmm. Peggy? Margaret? Maggie?

The blue flashlight turns off.

Oh you like the name Maggie. That's a yes for Maggie - the blue torch has just switched off. I'm now sitting in the dark.

The red flashlight switches on.

Oh wait. That's the red one, switching back on. So that's no to Maggie. How about... Damian? Willow? Sebastian? Emilia? Amy?

Katherine's voice fades out.

Katherine's voice fades in.

KATHERINE: Michaelangelo? Jemimah? *[pause]* Peter?*[pause]* Tom? Jim? Spooky Jim? Balthazar the Evil?*[pause]* C'mon. Give me something to work with. I'm running out of names.

AIDEN: *[from downstairs]* That's time!

KATHERINE: Finally. *[calling out]* You want to come up? *[to the doll]* Well, this was fun, whoever you are. Now, don't torment Aiden too much or we'll be having words.

Aiden comes up the stairs and enters the room. Click as he switches on the light.

AIDEN: Any luck?

KATHERINE: Oh yes. They were very chatty.

AIDEN: Really?

KATHERINE: No. I sat here for fifteen minutes and monologued.

AIDEN: Oh.

KATHERINE: I haven't had to improvise so much since GCSE drama. I had a staring competition with Maggie. She won. Y'know, normal witching hour activities.

AIDEN: Maggie? The doll? You got a name?

KATHERINE: Uh... Got a name might be a bit strong. The torches did the whole on off thing.

AIDEN: Wow, okay. I'll see what I can get.

KATHERINE: Great. I'll be downstairs *[with humour]* resting my voice. I've left the phone on the bed, it's still recording.

AIDEN: Any other activity?

KATHERINE: I think you should go and see for yourself. Bias and all that. Do watch out for the blue flashlight, I don't think it's working.

AIDEN: *[a hint of nervousness]* Okay.

KATHERINE: *[reassuring]* You'll be fine. I'll see you in fifteen.

Katherine crosses the room and hesitates at the door.

KATHERINE: Lights on or off?

AIDEN: Um... Leave them on? I don't think having them off improves communication. Makes for better TV, everything looks scarier in black and green, but... as we are an audio show... Much more important to remove any iron or salt rather than turn the lights off.

KATHERINE: If you say so. I'll leave them as is. Good luck.

AIDEN: Thanks.

Katherine leaves the room and heads downstairs. Aiden crosses the room and sits on the bed.

AIDEN: *[nervously]* Hello? You may call me Aiden. I'm here to speak with you, if you're willing. I would love to find out why you're here, why this house in particular? I mean you no harm, I just want to talk. *[pause]* Are you here? If you can hear me, please, touch those torches. That will switch them on or off and I'll know you're trying to communicate.

A pause as Aiden looks at the torches.

Nothing yet. *[to self]* Kitty might have scared them off. GCSE Drama indeed... *[to room]* Hello? Spirits of this house, whatever might be inhabiting this doll right in front of me, I call on you to answer. Answer however you can. Give me a sign. Change the temperature in the room, switch the lights on or off. *[realisation]* Oh, um, if you're the knocking entity, could you knock?

A pause and then a single knock can be clearly heard quite close by.

[surprised] Ah. Okay, um. Okay.

Aiden lets out a shaky breath.

Thank you for answering? Could you confirm that it was you knocking? The knocking entity that is. How about... Knock once for yes, and twice for no? *[pause]* Am I speaking to the knocking entity, the one that led Penny down to the cellar, the one that may have interacted with, and led to the deaths of her father George Cooper, and the original owner of the house, John Monroe?

A pause, as Aiden waits for an answer.

Hello? Are you -

Just as Aiden is about to answer, a knock can be heard much closer, from behind the cabinet in front of him.

Oh shi- *[bleeped]*

Aiden stands up, picks up the recording phone and slowly approaches the cabinet a step or two in front of him.

[whispered] Hello? *[quietly, to audience]* The knock sounded like it came from behind the cabinet. The one that the doll is in. I'm just trying to take a look around the back- *[stretching]* I can't see anything, it's too dark. *[realisation]* Ah!

Aiden picks up the blue torch from the cabinet shelf, and screws it firmly in place. He clicks the torch on.

I've just got the blue torch, screwed in so it doesn't turn off on me. It's just a normal light now. There's a slight gap between the cabinet and the wall, I can just about peer behind if I press right up to one side. Is that? I think... I think there might be something down the back of the cabinet. It looks like- *[he readjusts, trying to get a better look]* Uh... A piece of paper? Maybe card? I can't move the cabinet, it's too heavy, but I might be able to just reach the piece of paper if I... There we go. I can... Got it.

Aiden reaches behind the cabinet and pulls at the piece of paper, which sticks for a second before coming away from the back of the cabinet.

It's... Uh... It's a child's drawing. The papers yellowed and the drawings faded a bit, but I think three figures... it's a kid, triangle skirt and pigtails. They're standing next to an adult, or at least a much bigger person, and a smaller... uh... It's hard to tell, it's a really simple drawing. A child's drawing... Could it be Penny and her dad? He's holding hands with... *[uncomfortable]* Mmmm. Oh. That's a... He's holding hands with a rag doll. The doll. The one sitting not two feet away from me in the cabinet. Um... It's all pencil, but the girls skirt, the dad's trousers and all of their eyes are scribbled in. In red.

Aiden steps back, knocking into bed frame, and jumps slightly.

I don't like this. I hate this. I'm just going to put the drawing down for a second.

Aiden puts the drawing down on the bed, and sits down next to it.

Surely that can't really be Penny's drawing. So many people have been through the house, there's no way the cabinet can't have been moved, or... I don't know. Cleaned? It can't be.

"SEE" is spelled out in knocks, three measured knocks, a pause and then a single knock, another pause, another knock, moving away from the recorder.

[nervous, but brave] Hello? Are you trying to communicate? Are you here? Did you leave me that drawing for us to find?

The lights go out. The bulb in the blue torch is burnt out and the red flashlight switches on and off a few times. Aiden fumbles with the blue torch he's holding, and drops it on the carpeted floor. Aiden scrambles backwards and thumps against the wall. He sinks down to the ground.

Oh gods why now. Hello? Anyone there? No? *[Small]* Kitty? No. Be brave. This is important. Ahem. All the lights have gone off. The red torch just went berserk and the blue one's bulb went, utterly burnt out. I can't see anything. *[he searches around, then speaks to the doll]* Look I can hear you and I want to speak with you but I really need to see- Can you just touch the flashlight again?

The red flashlight (on the cabinet) switches back on.

Oh gods... I mean, thank you. These were brand new... A year's warranty at least. And the bulb just... it looks singed... lots of condensation. How?

He fusses with the flashlight for a few seconds, clicking the on/off button, to no avail. A knock, very close to the recorder.

I'm sorry. I'm here. The light's not important. Uh... Are you the entity that has been haunting this house?

A single knock, slightly further away from the recorder towards the door.

Oh my.... Okay... This is big. What do you want? Wait, yes or no questions. Do you want me to follow you?

A pause as Aiden waits for an answer. Silence. Aiden takes a step towards the door.

Hello? Are you still here?

A pause, as Aiden waits for an answer. A floorboard creaks.

I'm going to follow you. Is that ok?

Aiden stands up, leaving the child's drawing on the bed as well as the blue flashlight. He holds the phone recorder as he moves towards the doorway. A knock can be heard close by, and then another, slightly further away. Aiden moves into the corridor and slowly starts down the stairs. The occasional stair creaks as he steps on it. Another knock, further down.

[excited whispering into the phone as he walks] I can clearly hear knocking moving around the room, leading me out, towards the stairs. Oh...The rest of the house is dark. *[Louder voice]* Kitty? Can you hear me? I'm following the knocks! But, it's actually knocking. Clear knocking. Maybe it's some sort of poltergeist? They're known to start by knocking on the walls and floors, and if it's actually the same entity that Penny wrote about? I've not seen any sign of things moving or any other activity aside from the knocking. *[He pauses, shaking, takes a deep breath]* What if the deaths are more connected to the knocking than we originally thought. I can't believe it. This is happening.

Footsteps as Kitty comes around the bottom of the stairs from the direction of the kitchen. She shines a torch up the stairs. They both jump.

KATHERINE: *[from the bottom of the stairs]* Aiden?

AIDEN: *[slightly blinded from the light, whispered]* Kitty! Did you hear them?

KATHERINE: Hear who?

AIDEN: The knocks. It was so clear. Can you point that torch somewhere else? Away from my eyes?

KATHERINE: I... Sorry. *[she moves the torch beam away from Aiden's face]*

AIDEN: Thanks.

KATHERINE: No. I didn't hear anything.

AIDEN: Did you hit the lights on your way down? Or...

KATHERINE: The lights tripped. About a minute ago. I was at the fuse box, outside, but I think it's a power cut from the storm. I couldn't see lights from any of the neighbouring houses.

AIDEN: The lights went out upstairs as well.

KATHERINE: Yes. A power cut.

AIDEN: Yes, but no, I was talking to- Well. Something, and this knocking started. And it led me to the drawing.

KATHERINE: Drawing?

AIDEN: I found this picture. A child's drawing, stuck down the back of the cabinet. I, uh... I left it upstairs. But the knocking led me right to it, Kitty. Like it wanted me to find it.

A faint knock in the distance.

AIDEN: There! Did you hear it?

KATHERINE: No, I-

AIDEN: Shhh! Listen.

They both wait for a few seconds, almost holding their breath.

KATHERINE: I don't hear anything.

AIDEN: I'm not joking. I heard knocking just now, upstairs. It was answering my questions, actually responding to what I was saying. It led me to the drawing, and it led me out of the room down here. Exactly like what Penny wrote about in her diary.

KATHERINE: I didn't hear anything from down here. Just thunder.

AIDEN: It was clear. And then the lights went out. And my torches.

KATHERINE: As in, the ghost answered a question?

AIDEN: No. The bulb went in one torch and the other flickered on and off. But it shouldn't have broken like that... we'd-

KATHERINE: Stress tested them pretty well.

AIDEN: Exactly.

A clear knock, right above their heads. Aiden jumps.

AIDEN: *[whispered]* Tell me you heard that.

KATHERINE: *[whispered]* I heard it.

AIDEN: *[calling out]* Hello? I'm sorry if you didn't want me to follow you, but... Oh, this is Kitty. You may have met her before.

KATHERINE: *[trying to get his attention]* Aiden?

AIDEN: We just want to talk. Is that ok?

A knock, slightly further off.

AIDEN: Gre- *(he was going to say great)*

Just as Aiden is about to speak, he is interrupted by a second knock.

AIDEN: Oh... Two knocks for no. They don't want to talk.

KATHERINE: Aiden. Where exactly did the knocks come from?

AIDEN: Uh.. From the wall behind the dolls cabinet and in the walls going down the stairs. *[pointing]* Um.. Just there. Then just now, above us. In the ceiling. Why?

KATHERINE: Remember the plans we looked at? Of the house?

AIDEN: Yeah.

KATHERINE: There's a pipe that runs from the upstairs bathroom, next to Penny's bedroom on the floor above us, along the floor and down next to the stairs. *[pointing]* All the way to the kitchen outlet.

AIDEN: You're not seriously suggesting that all this time I've been talking with the plumbing?

KATHERINE: It's a possibility.

AIDEN: They answered my questions.

KATHERINE: We can't rule it out.

AIDEN: I-

Just as Aiden is about to speak, the radio crackles to life in the living room, cycling quickly between different channels.

AIDEN: EVP!

Aiden and Kathrine hurry into the living room. The radio is loud, Aiden picks it up.

REPORTER 1: *[distorted]* As tension grows, it is unlikely that peace will ever be achieved.

The radio crackles and jumps channels.

KATHERINE: Can you turn that down?

AIDEN: *[ignoring Katherine]* Hello? Did you want to communicate with us through the radio?

The radio crackles and fades back to static, which slowly blends into the background.

KATHERINE: Don't look at me like that. I haven't touched it.

AIDEN: Something is trying to communicate with us. I can feel it. *[calling out]* We're here to listen. Are we still talking to the knocking entity?

A faint knock.

KATHERINE: *[clearly]* Confirm that you are the knocking entity by knocking once. *[a brief pause]*
Now, if you don't mind.

A pregnant silence as they wait for a second or two.

KATHERINE: See? Random timing equals...? *[waiting for an answer]*.

AIDEN: Maybe it just needs a second or two to... I don't know.

KATHERINE: Maybe it doesn't exist and we're scaring ourselves over nothing.

A loud bang. They both jump.

AIDEN: Ah! *[He throws the salt cellar towards the door, it crashes and smashes open]*. Oh...

KATHERINE: *[unsettled]* I- uh...

AIDEN: I'm not sure why I...

KATHERINE: You threw the salt cellar.

AIDEN: I threw the salt cellar.

KATHERINE: Did that scare it off?

A knock from outside in the corridor.

AIDEN: I guess not? Do you want us to follow you?

A knock from outside in the corridor.

KATHERINE: *[whispered]* Yes.

AIDEN: Okay. Before we go anywhere, I'm stocking up.

KATHERINE: I'm not sure you should be carrying anything too expensive. Y'know. In case you decide to throw it at the ghost.

AIDEN: I was on high alert... anyway, I'm bringing the EMF reader. Do you want anything?

Aiden starts to scoop up salt and hooks the EMF to his belt.

KATHERINE: Um... *[she shakes off the nervousness]* No. I'll stick with the torch. I can hold the recorder. Then you'll have hands free just in case.

AIDEN: Good idea.

KATHERINE: Wait, don't waste your time picking up the salt. *[pointing]* The refill.

Aiden hands the phone recorder to Katherine.

AIDEN: Brilliant.

A knock echoes from the corridor. The pair head towards the cellar.

AIDEN: That bang earlier... It came from the cellar.

KATHERINE: Well at least I know that you're here and not down in the darkness with your eyelids peeled off.

AIDEN: I was really trying not to think about that.

KATHERINE: Sorry.

The pair stop in front of the cellar door. The knocks are muffled now, as if they come from inside the cellar itself.

KATHERINE: *[breathing out]* Here we go.

Katherine unlatches the lock on the cellar door, and pushes it gently. The cellar door opens slowly, with an almost comically loud creak. A switch is flipped a few times.

KATHERINE: It won't work. The lights are still gone.

AIDEN: Right. Power cut.

Pregnant pause.

KATHERINE: We should go down.

AIDEN: We should. Should we?

KATHERINE: This is ridiculous. It's just a cellar.

AIDEN: *[uncomfortable]* Mm.

KATHERINE: A musty old cellar.

AIDEN: *[uncomfortable]* Mhm.

KATHERINE: Nothing down there but dust.

AIDEN: Mm.

KATHERINE: No reason to delay. I'll go first, I've got the torch.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

The old wooden stairs creak as Katherine and Aiden start slowly down the steps. The cellar is small, musty, with old brick walls. The pair stop at the bottom of the stairs, pausing for a second or two.

KATHERINE: *[muted]* We've just come down the stairs into the cellar.

AIDEN: It's quite cramped down here, despite it being completely empty...

KATHERINE: It's a good thing neither of us are too tall or we'd have to stoop.

AIDEN: Imagine coming down here as a child. Without a light, in the middle of the night and...
[he trails off, shivers] Doesn't bear thinking about.

On the recording, some minor crackles of static.

KATHERINE: There's a small storage space to the left under the stairs, and if I'm right, there should be... Yep. Two rooms, one leading into another to the right.

AIDEN: Into the first room?

KATHERINE: Sure.

They move forward a few steps into the first room.

KATHERINE: Oh, uh, just mind the step.

AIDEN: Right. *[pause]* This is... This is where Penny found her father. Splayed out... I... urgh. It's got a hard floor, covered in a layer of dust. No outward evidence of anything that happened here though...

KATHERINE: There's a crack.

AIDEN: What?

KATHERINE: You're standing on it. There.

Aiden moves a step to the side..

KATHERINE: Right there.

Aiden and Katherine squat down to take a closer look.

AIDEN: I wonder if this is the spot where... Well, you know.

KATHERINE: Where he died?

AIDEN: *[quietly]* Yeah.

KATHERINE: Probably. It's not a very big room, this is about the only point where a grown man could lie down flat *[taking a step away, measuring the room by eye]* There's not much space to move around. If an artery was hit the blood would have coated most of the walls at this distance.

AIDEN: Mm. What a horrible place to die. Poor Penny. *[pause]* Poor George.

The pair pause for a moment, holding their breaths, unsure where to go next.

AIDEN: Something feels off. I can't put my finger on it.

KATHERINE: I know what you mean.

AIDEN: *[surprised]* You do?

KATHERINE: Well. Not like that. But don't you think this is quite a small space?

AIDEN: *[considering]* Umm... I guess? Is it smaller than you expected?

KATHERINE: Yes.

AIDEN: It's not a huge house, to be fair. Do you have the plans?

KATHERINE: A casualty of the earlier soaking.

AIDEN: Ah.

KATHERINE: I'm sure that there was a coal chute on there.

AIDEN: Wasn't it blocked off?

KATHERINE: Yes, but wouldn't there still be an outline on the wall, or... I don't know. Something?

AIDEN: That is weird.

KATHERINE: I haven't heard the knocks since we came down the steps. Interesting, as there's no plumbing down here.

AIDEN: I heard it answer... though right now. Here... I'm not sure I want it to have.

KATHERINE: *[Distracted]* At least the doll isn't here. Hmm. It's... Look at that... huh...

AIDEN: What? Kitty? Don't walk off please.

KATHERINE: The room's three metres long tops, I'm not going anywhere. *[realising]* Hold this.

AIDEN: Oh, hang on *[he shifts his bag of salt and grabs the proffered phone recorder]*

KATHERINE: Here. Come and look at this.

AIDEN: That's a wall. Kitty is gesturing to one of the side walls... and now she is giving me a look.

KATHERINE: Yes. It's a pretty good job, wouldn't you say?

AIDEN: I suppose? These sorts of houses are still standing all over the country, they built solid houses back then.

KATHERINE: Exactly. But if we turn to *[turning]* this wall. This is a cheap job. The mortars completely loose and I think I can even... *[slight scraping]*

AIDEN: *[realising]* Oh. It was built at a different time. After the original cellar.

KATHERINE: *[focused, still working the brick, slight scraping]* Mhmm.

Katherine starts to work the brick out of the wall, wiggling it slightly from left to right. Slight scraping noises.

AIDEN: So what, they walled off this part of the cellar?

KATHERINE: I knew it was bigger on the plans.

AIDEN: Kitty!? Don't - you're going to break it.

A faint knock can be heard in the background, barely perceptible. FREE in morse code.

KATHERINE: *[excitedly]* It was already loose, I've just given it a little wiggle. Aha!

Katherine pulls a brick free from the wall.

KATHERINE: Hold this? I can't quite...

Katherine hands the brick, without looking, to Aiden as she tries to peer through the gap. He struggles to hold everything.

AIDEN: Can you see anything? What's-

Aiden looks at the brick and shouts in alarm, dropping the brick with a crash.

KATHERINE: Holy... Aiden! You gave me a heart attack.

AIDEN: It's...

KATHERINE: What? Are you ok?

AIDEN: The brick. It's covered in...

KATHERINE: It's quite black... Soot? *[gasps]* The hidden coal chute!

Katherine spins back around and peers excitedly through the hole, poking the torch in the gap to see better.

AIDEN: No. It's covered in markings... These are sigils, witchmarks...

KATHERINE: Oh that's not all... Aiden, you are going to want to see this.

AIDEN: Am I?

KATHERINE: I've just found the rest of the cellar... And there's a bricked-in archway.

AIDEN: Where?!

KATHERINE: On the opposite wall. Covered in symbols. Scratches? More of those, what did you call them? Witch marks?

AIDEN scrambles forward to the hole in the wall.

KATHERINE: Take a look.

Katherine steps to one side and Aiden peers through the gap. He gives a sharp intake of breath.

AIDEN: Witch marks... No... shine the light up a bit! There... Stop! Those aren't witch marks. See? Not the same kind of symbols, anyway, they look all scratched out... Oh no... Kitty...

KATHERINE: Yeah?

AIDEN: What's that staining? All over the floor?

KATHERINE: Shove over.

Aiden steps to one side.

KATHERINE: Uh... Oh, on the lower bits of the walls?

AIDEN: Mhmm.

KATHERINE: It's not blood. Could be flood damage? These sort of cellars get flooded all the time.

AIDEN: You're saying that even after a man died in this room?

KATHERINE: Not on that side of the room. There's hardly any staining on this side, I bet the owners blocked it off after a particularly bad flood. I mean, maybe the film crews started set construction early?

A thump as if someone jumped up and down a few floors above them. Different from the knocks.

AIDEN: Ah! What the hell? Where?!

KATHERINE: Upstairs!

AIDEN: Wh-

KATHERINE: Our stuff! I swear if the roof has ruined our gear even further I'll...

KATHERINE sets off running up the stairs. AIDEN pauses for a moment in shock.

AIDEN: Wait for me! Please!...

AIDEN runs up after her, fumbling with his phone after exiting the cellar, calling someone. The click of a phone being picked up.

DAVID: *[On the other end of the line, faint hype music playing in the background]* Boo! How's it going?

AIDEN: *[Panting, trying to speak and hurry after Kitty]* Not funny! We need...

DAVID: *[on the other end of the phonecall]* Takeout? Pizza?

AIDEN: I don't need pizza, I need holy water...

DAVID: *[on the other end of the phonecall]* I don't think they deliver that...

AIDEN: David! Please! The church, down the road from us. Surely they'll have some?

DAVID: *[on the other end of the phonecall]* Wait. You're actually serious?

AIDEN: Yes! I'm serious! We need it!

DAVID: *[on the other end of the phonecall]* Well if godless heathens like us are up at 3am, I guess the priest has to be as well! Sounds like it's going really well.

KATHERINE: *[from the room ahead of AIDEN]* Aiden? Come on! Why are you on the phone?

AIDEN: I'm getting us holy water!

KATHERINE: That's not a-

AIDEN and KATHERINE skid to a halt at the door to Penny's bedroom.

DAVID: *[on the other end of the phonecall]* I will not let you down. I'm getting you holy water Aiden! I've never woken up a vicar before... Later!

AIDEN: David!

David hangs up the phone.

KATHERINE: Oh.

AIDEN: Kitty?

KATHERINE: Huh..

AIDEN: Oh no, no no no...

KATHERINE: [*Unsure*] It's just fallen out of the cabinet...

AIDEN: Uhuh... The creepy, haunted, doll fell out of the locked cabinet, as we were investigating and heard knocks.

Thunder rumbles in the distance.

KATHERINE: We don't know that the cabinet was locked and we're right in the middle of a storm.

AIDEN: That's not going to knock the doll out of the cabinet! It's passing anyways, it sounds miles off.

KATHERINE: Hmm. You said you found the drawing down the back of the cabinet. Could you've nudged it? Moved it?

AIDEN: Mmmm.

KATHERINE: Okay. Yes. It's creepy. But we have to keep a level head.

AIDEN: Can we just... Maybe... Ignore the doll for a bit and get our stuff down to the front hallway? I don't like it up here.

KATHERINE: You didn't like it in the cellar...

AIDEN: Yes. I can not like it anywhere in the house. Nearest the door is the safest place right now.

KATHERINE: We'll camp out in the kitchen. I'll check the breakers again, hopefully the powercuts over and we can get some caffeine. I'm exhausted. Shall I put her back?

AIDEN: NO! Ahem. No.

INT. THE WYRD SIDE RECORDING STUDIO

Soft silence of The Wyrd Side recording room.

AIDEN: We made it out of the house, largely unscathed.

KATHERINE: I don't think you've ever looked so relieved to see the dawn.

AIDEN: I couldn't wait to be out of the house if I'm honest. It was awful.

KATHERINE: The power came back on at about four thirty, and David came careening up the drive at six on the dot.

AIDEN: He actually found holy water.

KATHERINE: Well. Mm. When Aiden splashed it all over the front door, and himself, no evil spirits fled the house, so jury's out.

AIDEN: I felt better.

KATHERINE: Then that's what counts. We recorded all our time in the house, as promised, but nothing else happened after the event with the cabinet.

AIDEN: The house was quiet.

KATHERINE: We went downstairs. Aiden got as close as he could to the front door without actually sitting out on the porch, and we waited. I may have fallen asleep again sometime around five.

AIDEN: I don't know how you could go back to sleep after what we experienced.

KATHERINE: I can sleep anywhere. It's my superpower. Except for planes.

AIDEN: We handed the keys back to the owner that morning and apologised for the mess. They were... surprisingly ok with it.

KATHERINE: Well, we got "evidence", didn't we?

AIDEN: Yeah we got evidence...

KATHERINE: And trauma.

AIDEN: One word for it.

KATHERINE: Ok. Let's work through each piece in turn. Least to most compelling.

AIDEN: Where would you put the torches on there?

KATHERINE: Do you even have to ask?

AIDEN: Let's start with them then.

KATHERINE: That'll be quick.

AIDEN: Okay, so you didn't have much luck getting concrete communication with them in your isolation session.

KATHERINE: No. None of the responses were correct, or really even timely. And torches have been disproven multiple times.

AIDEN: Also, Spooky Jim? Balthazar?

KATHERINE: I'll tell you what I told the doll - I ran out of names and they were giving me nothing to work with.

AIDEN: Mm.

KATHERINE: We had a solid seven and a half minutes of me name calling.

AIDEN: Which I had to edit out but also listen closely to several times to see if there were any hidden knocks.

KATHERINE: You're welcome. Can we scratch torches off the list yet?

AIDEN: Okay, but what about my experiences with them? One torch blowing its bulb. They shouldn't do that new.

KATHERINE: Unusual, but not unheard of. Faulty bulb. And you said yourself there was condensation. They could've gotten wet in "the incident".

AIDEN: They were in my pack the whole time. Nowhere near the sodden mess of sleeping bag on your side of the room.

KATHERINE: Mm. Not solid enough to put on the list.

AIDEN: Well, people can keep that piece of info in mind when we go over the next few bits of evidence.

KATHERINE:-I'm sure that their logical minds will do with it what any rational person should. *[stage whisper]* and discount it. *[out loud]* Now. Do you want to talk about the knocks and radio together?

AIDEN: Well, let's go with the radio and EMF, seeing as they both ended up being equally disappointing.

KATHERINE: The radio switched on by itself, as you heard. Aiden thought -

AIDEN: EVP, yup, it was spooky.

KATHERINE: But we checked the recording and nothing.

AIDEN: I spent hours combing over the audio.

KATHERINE: He's not lying. Multiple hours.

AIDEN: I was excited. Could you imagine? Actual EVP? Voices? It would be perfect.

KATHERINE: It would be an experience.

AIDEN: But yes. After going through the audio repeatedly, there is no EVP when the radio is playing. Bar a little crackle on the phone recording when we go down into the cellar, but even I think that is just static.

KATHERINE: And nothing on the EMF.

AIDEN: Yup. I'm beginning to wonder if I should have sprung for the more expensive model.

KATHERINE: You got your money's worth, that's for sure.

AIDEN: Maybe something to figure out more for later investigations...

KATHERINE: Sure. Onto the more... I hesitate to use the word compelling here, but...

AIDEN: Yes! The knocks, bangs and general activity in the house.

KATHERINE: I didn't hear anything in my solo investigation.

AIDEN: Perhaps you were just warming them up?

KATHERINE: That's me, the curtain opener.

AIDEN: So maybe, when I got in, with a more...open mind, they managed to make themselves known.

KATHERINE: My mind was open! I really tried, Aiden, I promise.

AIDEN: I know. I'm sorry.

KATHERINE: I played good cop, bad cop and all.

AIDEN: Can I be bad cop next time?

KATHERINE: You can.

AIDEN: Yes.

KATHERINE: Back on track.

AIDEN: There were several cases of immediate and cognisant responses to questions.

KATHERINE: Points in your favour. And, true to the stories, the knocks did lead us down from Penny's bedroom to the cellar.

AIDEN: That is true.

KATHERINE: Oh. I've just thought of something we should've done.

AIDEN: Oh?

KATHERINE: We should've set up recorders around the house. We don't know that the knocks weren't happening elsewhere.

AIDEN: Aaaand, more chances for EVP to be captured.

KATHERINE: If that's what you want out of it.

AIDEN: It is. Very much so.

KATHERINE: Mm. Is now a good time to bring up the drawing you found?

AIDEN: Yeah. I could have sworn that I put it on the bed. But when we looked. It wasn't there. I checked...

Katherine slides it across the table towards Aiden. He screams.

KATHERINE: Recognise this? I found it in the kit box.

AIDEN: That's the... that's the drawing...

KATHERINE: Yes. I didn't put it in there. Did you?

AIDEN: No! I don't think so? I think I would have remembered handling a clearly cursed image of bloody death.

KATHERINE: Hm. That's what I thought. For our listeners, I had to cart all our kit downstairs as *[pointed]* someone wouldn't go back upstairs.

AIDEN: Hey, I took everything out to the car... in the rain.

KATHERINE: Fairs fair. I didn't mind. I thought I'd just check. Finding the drawing in our kit is strange then.

AIDEN: Even looking at it now...

KATHERINE: I might get it framed you know. Like a memento of our first ghost hunt.

AIDEN: Mm..

KATHERINE: Hang it right... there.

AIDEN: Hang it in your house if you want to. Not in the recording studio.

KATHERINE: Done. I need to brighten the place up a bit. Could David have slipped it in the bag?
As a joke?

AIDEN: He never went inside, and we didn't mention anything like that to him, and our stuff was all pretty much packed away in the car at that point anyway.

KATHERINE: Mm.

AIDEN: So, creepy drawing, the doll, the knocking, everything leading us down to the cellar where we found...

KATHERINE: Thanks to yours truly-

AIDEN: Another, even more secret cellar.

KATHERINE: It's slightly less exciting a story than what we originally thought.

AIDEN: We told the owners about finding the room behind the wall.

KATHERINE: They already knew that there was a space there, but they'd never needed to get in. They got in touch with the film company, who brought in an expert in to date the room and the markings.

AIDEN: It dated back to the mid-18th Century. Most likely farm outbuildings.

KATHERINE: Pretty exciting in itself, but likely not a crazy murder cellar.

AIDEN: Yeah, but they said the movie might have more details. Tune in and find out and all that.

KATHERINE: Before we finish up, do you want to say anything about the witch marks?

AIDEN: Yeah, so very quickly, witch marks or apotropaic marks are warding symbols and sigils made at key entrances and exits to houses, and spaces; doorways, windows, chimneys and stuff. They were often, like the ones on the brick, references to the Virgin Mary or the christian god, others seemed to be enochian, or other languages and supposedly blocked access to or from a space from evil entities.

KATHERINE: Very cool to have found some in situ, and yes, I do feel slightly bad about pulling out the brick. But had I not done that they would have stayed hidden - so pros and cons.

AIDEN: But what could that brick, and those witch marks been keeping out?

KATHERINE: Or keeping in?

AIDEN: I guess we'll have to keep our ears open for any knocking in the future...

A sharp rap under the table.

AIDEN: Not. Funny.

INT. THE WYRD SIDE RECORDING STUDIO

Soft silence of The Wyrd Side recording room.

AIDEN: Oh goodness. Did we not...

KATHERINE: - Think to edit any of that out?

AIDEN: Apparently not. Well, *au natural* was certainly a style choice.

KATHERINE: We didn't even come to any solid conclusions on the case? We left it completely open ended.

AIDEN: A sense of mystery? Leave 'em wanting more?

KATHERINE: Mmm.

AIDEN: Well, we can do so now. I think it was haunted.

KATHERINE: Of course you do.

AIDEN: And I suppose you don't?

KATHERINE: Obviously not.

AIDEN: Okay, I admit the evidence is not as convincing as our New Forest cases, our Jenny Greenteeth encounter or some of the stuff we're looking into for Season 2, buuut...

KATHERINE: But...

AIDEN: But the knocks are pretty decent as far as evidence goes, and to be fair, the film...

KATHERINE: The film?

AIDEN: It never came out. The whole saga was plagued with accidents, illnesses, electric faults, lost film, insomnia, directors fleeing the set...

KATHERINE: That could be any horror film production. They ran out of money and the actors jumped ship.

AIDEN: Mm. So they say.

KATHERINE: Finding the cellar was a shock.

AIDEN: It was, and that arch? Good spot on your part.

KATHERINE: Thanks. I wish we'd thought to take some photos.

AIDEN: We wouldn't have been able to publish them anyway, that was part of the contract for our recording there.

KATHERINE: Yes, but we could've analysed the witch marks - worked out what the symbols were supposedly keeping out/in.

AIDEN: [*Shivers*] After what we now know to be real? We might be better off not poking our heads in any further, and I'm the one saying that.

KATHERINE: With what we suspect. You really didn't like that house, did you?

AIDEN: Or the doll. And you still have that bloody drawing up.

KATHERINE: I do. Has its spot just above the kitchen table.

AIDEN: Urgh. Okay, so in conclusion, the evidence that the house on Marshall Street is haunted is ephemeral at best-

KATHERINE: Non existent.

AIDEN: There was an undeniable sense of dread around it. Several people died in horrific circumstances within its walls.

KATHERINE: It was atmospheric, and a tragic setting. Even I got the shivers.

AIDEN: So, regardless of any of our opinions on the haunting or not, it is important to remember there are people affected by whatever did happen and they deserve our respect and whatever peace they were able to find.

KATHERINE: And thanks again to the owners of the house for letting some really inexperienced people wander around their home.

AIDEN: I'm just glad they moved out when they did, before anything else happened.

KATHERINE: As far as we're aware, no one's living there at the moment.

AIDEN: Actually they have opened up the house full time to paranormal investigations.

KATHERINE: Huh. Sounds like they have gone full Tourist Attraction mode. Fancy popping in and saying hi to our friend The Doll?

AIDEN: *[Bleep]* No.

— — —

FINN: Hi there! I'm Finn.

ALEX: And I'm Alex, and we're the creators of The Wyrld Side.

FINN: Thank you so much for listening to our midseason episode where we delve into the very beginning of Aiden and Kitty's story.

ALEX: Like Aiden and Kitty we're still working on Season 2, hopefully with fewer ghosts.

FINN: We don't have a concrete date for Season 2 being released - we're a two person team with full-time day jobs and unfortunately this is currently a passion project. No high quality sock or mattress money just yet.

ALEX: But don't worry, Season 2 is in the works, and we promise to keep you updated with our progress as we go.

FINN: In the meantime, we are going to put out a couple more of these Midseason Episodes and the Q and A in between now and the release of Season 2. We really hope that you enjoy these little tangents.

ALEX: Thank you all for engaging so much with our little show, every like, every recommendation, every piece of art and comment brings us an inordinate amount of joy.

FINN: The reception you've given us is staggering and we are so grateful.

ALEX: If there's one thing you can do to support The Wyrd Side, it's to keep engaging with the show. Share it with your friends, share it with you mum, leave us a review, and most importantly, keep listening!

FINN: Thank you.

ALEX: Thank you.

In this episode of The Wyrd Side, Aiden Summers was played by Finn Cresswell, Katherine Moore by Alexandra M. Barrow, Zahra by Kate Wilmot, David by Sam Dixon, and Reporter by Freya Womersley. Additional sound effects by Zapsplatt.com and Pixabay.

The Wyrd Side was written, directed and produced by Finn Cresswell and Alexandra M. Barrow. Sound editing by Finn Cresswell. Dialogue editing by Finn Cresswell and Alexandra M. Barrow.