

cordelia:

Welcome back!

eleanor:

Hello dear listeners.

cordelia:

This is the Legendary Handbook Podcast. That's my sister Ellie.

eleanor:

And that's my sister Cordie. Mysterious book. Strange moving picture. Possible witch that can hear us. You know the drill.

cordelia:

We have a very familiar, but very special guest today. We are going to hear from our beloved mummy again.

eleanor:

We asked her at Christmas if she could get into the storage unit where she was keeping Brigid's things.

cordelia:

She was only able to get into the unit this week, and has graciously offered to bring over the box of letters her Auntie Brigid wrote her when she was younger.

eleanor:

Mom will also hang out to hear us read one of the entries.

cordelia:

And for those that were wondering, yes, our dad was horrified and delighted when we told him the caroling story.

eleanor:

Mom should be here any minute.

cordelia:

In the meantime, we are going to look at the book's clock to see if it has moved at all.

ELEANOR:

Let's open it up and see.

SOUND: BOOK IS OPENED

cordelia:

Hm...looks like they have moved.

eleanor:

It looks like the hour hand is pointing to...is that an apple?

cordelia:

Looks like it. The minute hand is pointing to what looks like the number one-sixty-six. And the second hand...

eleanor:

That looks like some kind of alchemy symbol. Does that look familiar to you, Cordie? I did a Cirque show a while back where we were the physical embodiments of alchemical elements, we air brushed them on our bodies. It was a great night. This symbol definitely looks familiar, I just can't place it.

cordelia:

That looks like the symbol for Phosphorous. All it did was glow green when it oxidized, but scientists thought it was extra special since they thought it capture light.

eleanor:

Shiny things...yes...good. Let's mark the spots for today.

SOUND: Phone vibrating.

cordelia:

Oh, that's mom! I'll get the door.

eleanor:

I'll mark the page. There doesn't seem to be a pattern yet.

SOUND: Door opening, footsteps.

eleanor:

Hi, mom!

fiona:

Hello my dear. Are you recording?

cordelia:

Yes, we started a few minutes ago while we were waiting for you.

fiona:

So, this is that strange book you were telling me about. What the . . .

eleanor:

That's the weird non-clock we told you about.

fiona:

What's with all the markings on the page?

cordelia:

We've been marking the spots where the hands have pointed. They move almost every time we open the book.

fiona:

You know, Auntie Brigid used to tell me fairy tales that involved clocks like this. She had this really cool necklace that was shaped like a tiny grandfather clock, and all of the stories she told had some kind of strange clock involved. Her storybook characters used them as a map, or a compass, or even a diary. But the symbols' meanings are kept a secret in case it were to fall

into the wrong hands. It was one of my favorite parts of the bedtime stories she told me. I didn't think I'd ever get to see one in person.

eleanor:

Wow, that's. . .that makes so much sense!

fiona:

I'm still a little baffled at how the hands seem to move, though. Is it some kind of hologram, maybe?

eleanor:

We tried that. It doesn't look like it.

fiona:

That is amazing. Oh, here, I have the letters. Can I see the note you girls were telling me about?

eleanor:

Oh, yeah, here.

SOUND: Pages turning.

cordelia:

What do you think, mom? Could this have been written by her?

fiona:

It's familiar, for sure. The language is definitely hers. It sounds like she had such a beautiful time with whoever this was. Let me open the box of letters to compare the handwriting.

SOUND: The box is opened. Paper rustling.

cordelia:

Wow, mom. She wrote you so many.

fiona:

Brigid knew how much I liked opening mail. Sometimes she used to hand deliver them.

eleanor:

Do you remember her having a romantic partner, ever?

fiona:

Not that I can recall. She talked a great deal about princesses and talking foxes, and even the occasional enchanted forest, but never about a lover.

eleanor:

Mom. . . I think she wrote this note in the book. Look at this letter and the note. The penmanship.  
. . .

cordelia:

It looks the same to me.

fiona:

Looking at the two together. . . girls I think this is her handwriting.

SOUND: Page turn.

fiona:

What's this?

SOUND: Envelope opening.

eleanor:

Oh, we found that tucked into the book, there's a piece of dried thistle inside. Did Auntie Brigid have any kind of connection to thistle that you can remember?

fiona:

I think she had a little thistle pin, but she never talked about it. She did tell me a story once about a little person named Thistle. They sold flowers for magic potions in the town square, and were famous for their Thistle, I'm guessing you girls know its significance in witch culture at this point.

cordelia:

We do, it's usually involved in protection spells. What a cute story, mum. Was that all she ever mentioned about Thistles?

fiona:

Yup, just the one story.

eleanor:

Well listeners, we've solved this mystery, at least. This note written on the back of the love entry was by our Auntie Brigid.

fiona:

I'm also still a little baffled as why you girls have this in the first place.

cordelia:

Well did Nanna ever tell you if she's

heard anything about Brigid recently?

fiona:

Unfortunately, no. Oddly enough, she didn't completely shut me down when I mentioned her. She got a little teary, but said she hadn't heard anything about or from her. I didn't tell her about the book, though. I didn't want to overwhelm her.

eleanor:

That's perfectly reasonable.

cordelia:

So, so far, the mystery of who sent us the book is still unsolved. Would you want to hear an entry, mum?

fiona:

Sure!

SOUND: Pages turning.

fiona:

My god, how do you girls pick just one to read? There's so many!

cordelia:

I know. We usually do a three and one rule.

eleanor:

Yeah Cordie got to pick it last week because we found an entry about communication and language. So it's my turn this week!

fiona:

Alright, alright no need to get snippy.

cordelia:

How about mom picks them and you pick the one we read Ellie?

eleanor:

Perfect.

fiona:

Oh, okay! Um. . .let's see. . .

SOUND: Pages turning.

fiona:

"Forbidden Fruitcake," page fifty five. . ."Large, Bronze, and Cruel," page, oh gosh, those are all Roman numerals, hold on. . .XXVII. . .ten, ten. . .oh, page twenty seven!

cordelia:

That's so extra to put the page number in Roman numerals.

eleanor:

So extra. Pick one more mom!

fiona:

Okay. . .um. . ."Things Out of Place" page four eighty nine.

eleanor:

I want to see what a recipe of a Forbidden Fruitcake looks like.

fiona:

Alrighty, page fifty five. . .

SOUND: Pages turning.

fiona:

That is. . .it looks like it's completely redacted.

cordelia:

Let me see. . .oh my god, it is completely redacted!

eleanor:

Except. . .look, down towards the bottom of the page, it says, "Bake at six hundred degrees for as long as can be endured." That is hilarious.

cordelia:

I would love to know why the entire thing got redacted.

fiona:

It's forbidden!

SOUND: Laughter.

eleanor:

Okay, well, since the Forbidden Fruitcake is actually forbidden, let's go with "Things Out of Place", you know how often I lose things.

fiona:



Okay, page four eighty nine."Things Out of Place: Uncanny Objects(Excerpt taken from unused section of THKTT Field Operative Training Manual v17.028, section 64. Original title: "Objects of Indeterminate Origin: Assessment, Process, and Containment")Let us say that, while in the field, you have discovered an object- or many- that are by your own measure clearly not where they should be. Perhaps you have found a nice pair of new socks sitting neatly in the icebox (see: CASE # DOK51014). Perhaps you have awoken in the middle of the night to find an intricately carved and ash-blackened yak skull resting on your dresser, and it won't stop whispering ominously when you approach it (CASE # DOC01338). Perhaps you have discovered an old rusty sword sheathed impossibly in an ancient stone dais in the middle of the woods, or in an alley in the city (CASE # PKT00004). Perhaps you have noticed thorny vines growing out from your digital device that begin to overtake any object you set it upon overnight, but do not seem to affect its usability (CASE # DOK80991). The first thing to do is stop; Take a deep breath, assess your surroundings, and determine the threat of this uncanny object (hereafter referred to as the Object of Indeterminate Origin, or O.I.O.). While surreal objects are statistically unlikely to pose a threat, an operative must always be vigilant. That which seems dangerous may sometimes be benign, and that which seems comical or harmlessly strange may be life-threatening."

This is...quite something.

eleanor:

See what we mean?

fiona:

It definitely reminds me of the bedtime stories Auntie Brigid told me as a kid.

cordelia:

I wonder what THKTT is.

eleanor:

THKTT...thick---t--thicket?

cODRELIA:

Wait...thicket...as in "beware the thicket"?

fiona:

Girls, what are you talking about?

eleanor:

The book left us this message in numbers that turned out to be, "beware the thicket, she is watching."

fiona:

That sounds terribly ominous.

cODRELIA:

That's what I said.

fiona:

Has anything weird happened recently? Are you girls being stalked?

eleanor:

I don't think we're being stalked, mom. The book just led us to this weird code with numbers. I don't think it's a big deal. `

fiona:

Well as long as you both feel safe, that's all that matters to me.

cODRELIA:

Why don't we get back to what O.I.O's are? Ellie, you want to read?

eleanor:

Sure!"O.I.O. could be a sign of any of the following:The harmless-though-terrifying (DOC01338: whispering yak skull was meant to be a surprise gift from subject's domestic partner- a collector of morbid curios of mild but harmless enchantment)The beneficial-but-tragic (PKT00004: finder of sword attained political office as direct result of removal, but subsequently mistakenly murdered a family member and died from injuries sustained during altercation)The seemingly explicable but dangerous: (DOK51014: Socks were left in freezer by subject's presumed roommate, who claimed to have been drunk and confused. Ice cream was later found in roommate's dresser drawer. Roommate was revealed to be a REDACTED attempting to kill subject to take their skin.The absolutely and urgently life- or reality-threatening. (DOK80991: Unexpected plant growth originating from pager was first symptom of the E2.91 DSTH incursion: see page REDACTED for further details on incursion-level threats).When assessing the threat level of an O.I.O, it is always best to remain vigilant. Even if a thing appears innocuous or has

been given an explanation, keep your wits about you and keep watch for signs of otherworldly activity. If you have reason to suspect that an O.I.O is the result of an S.R. or A.R. incursion, take appropriate and immediate action. Appropriate action will differ depending on the severity of the situation, but can usually be classified into one of the following: Contain: if the object in question poses no immediate or obvious threat (for instance, gives off a menacing or "bubbly" aura, but is not obviously

changing the environment, it's shape, or the thoughts of those near it) but is in a place in which it might interact or fall in to the hands of the general populace, follow the Field Containment Protocol as detailed in section 67 of this manual."

cordelia:

Sounds very thorough.

eleanor:

This manual was definitely preparing the employees for just about anything. What do you think, mom?

fiona:

I think a talking yak skull sounds amazing and I am going to tell your father that's what I want for Christmas next year.

cordelia:

I want that for you. Is there more to the entry?

eleanor:

Yes, you want to read the last bit?

cODRELIA:

Yes! "When to Flee: if the object in question poses an immediate or obvious supernatural presence (for instance, tears tiny visible holes in reality when moved, moves itself when unobserved, laughs threateningly when looked at, or animates all cupric alloys brought within a certain distance of it), run. Just run. Get away as fast as you can, by whatever means necessary. As always, make certain that you have not left any body part or fluid near it, and be certain that you have not spoken your name aloud in the object's presence. If either of these mistakes have been made, fleeing may prove useless. If it is determined that the object

poses no threat, and, despite initial appearances, is actually where it belongs, it is no longer classified as an O.I.O, and can be safely left in place. Now, if the operative seems to have misplaced an object of importance--such as a spyglass, your cloak, or your pet rock, there is an old method to locating your object before it is swallowed by the void. The gods of Appalachia will point you to where you need to go, so long as you spin a butter knife and ask for their help. The gods will use the knife to show you where your missing object is. Take heed, though, as this method will not work if your object has been stolen by the Fae. You will need to negotiate with them on your own, as per the THKTT section of the employee contract, THKTT is not responsible for any and all shenanigans the operatives may get themselves into with the Fae Folk. Debt. Recall. Loans. Since the classification of O.I.Os are somewhat indistinct and left to the discretion of individual operatives, it is important to make sure that vigilance does not turn into paranoia. Except in very fringe cases, standard misplacement of ordinary objects should be expected and can be safely ignored. While it is advisable to contact your department handler if you are uncertain of the best course of action, it is imperative that operatives and employees do not clog channels with personal anxieties. A jar of mayonnaise mistakenly left on the counter is not cause for alarm. A jar of mayonnaise that seems to be multiplying or gaining sentience, though, is. In the following section, we will look closer into some case studies, and assess their successes, failures, and what the correct course of action might be given a similar situation. It

is important to study these cases carefully, to better equip you for the things you may encounter in the field. (as per the terms of the THKTT employee contract, employees may not log time spent in personal study as hours worked and may not log mandatory self-education for overtime pay. Hours logged in work-related training may be used to redeem badges as recognition of expertise. This section may be counted after a review test as 1/5 point towards the "New Day, New Danger! Level 2" badge.)

eleanor:

Hm...so interesting, but what's with those three random words at the end of that one paragraph?

cODRELIA:

Not sure. Maybe it's another code?

eleanor:

That's definitely something to put out to the listeners. Listeners! Let us know if you can figure out what "Debt, Recall, and Loans" might be code for!

fiona:

Well. . .that is quite something. Can't say I am surprised that Auntie Brigid had this whacky thing. It makes me miss her so much.

eleanor:

I can imagine. I don't know what I'd do if Aunt Maggie went missing like that.

cordelia:

Or Auntie Orla.

fiona:

I am a little comforted by the fact that you girls have this in your possession now since it belonged to her. Though how you got it worries me a bit. There's been no weird activity around your building, right? No weird

stalkers or anything?

eleanor:

Nope.

cordelia:

So far just normal pandemic activity here.

fiona:

Alright, well, you know if there's any weirdness to call me or your father.

eleanor:

Yes, mom.

cordelia:

Well listeners, we hope you enjoyed hearing from our mom today, I know I did.

eleanor:

Yes, and remember if you're going to have your parents over, be safe! Would you like to send us off, mom?

fiona:

Oh, sure! Um. . .goodbye, listeners! Thanks for listening to this podcast, it makes me so happy to see my girls doing something so interesting.

cordelia:

Tune in next time to find out where this mysterious place is. Maybe if we figure it out we'll pay it a visit.

eleanor:

And remember, always keep a butter-knife on hand in case you lose something!

all three:

Goodbye!