

#### **EPISODE 4:**

CORDELIA:

What do you mean, you didn't send us a book?

ELEANOR:

We got this weird book in the mail last week, and you're the only one who sends us stuff like this.

FIONA:

Girls, you know I would have let you know if I was going to send you something. Which, by the way, did you get the itty bitty gas lamps I sent you?

CORDELIA:

Yes, they're adorable. But that's not the point, mom!

ELEANOR:

If you didn't send us this book, then who did?

FIONA:

I have no idea.

CORDELIA:

Well, your Auntie Brigid's name is in this book, mom.

ELEANOR:

There was even a blank note with letterhead with her name on it!

FIONA:

What does the letterhead look like?

CORDELIA:

It's black letters with pretty swoopy penmanship. It almost looks handwritten.

FIONA:

That's definitely Auntie Brigid. She used to write me little notes all the time and send them to me in the mail. I used to love getting her letters, even though she lived down the street.

ELEANOR:

Do you still have them?

FIONA:

Of course I do. All of her belongings are in a storage unit downtown. It was all left to my mother and I, and we didn't have the heart to sell any of it.

CORDELIA:  
The plot thickens!

ELEANOR:  
Do you think we'd be able to see some of Auntie Brigid's stuff?

FIONA:  
The storage facility is closed due to the pandemic at the moment. But. . .maybe I'll call your Nanna and ask her if she's heard from Brigid.

CORDELIA:  
Do you think Nanna knew about this book?

ELEANOR:  
Yeah, maybe Nanna sent it!

FIONA::  
I doubt it, but it couldn't hurt to ask. She was really upset about Brigid's disappearance, though. Even now, she still doesn't like to talk about it, that's why I don't think she sent you the book. But I'll certainly ask if she's maybe heard from her. This could mean she's alive, girls.

CORDELIA:  
Listeners, we may have cracked a cold case!

ELEANOR:  
Yeah, if we can find out where this was sent from, maybe we can trace it!

FIONA:  
Slow down there Paul Holes. Let's rule out your Nanna first.

ELEANOR:  
Okay, fine. Wait. . .who's Paul Holes?

FIONA:  
He's the cold case detective that helped catch the Golden State Killer. Keep up.

CORDELIA:  
Yeah, Ellie, keep up.

ELEANOR:  
Shut up!

FIONA:

Be nice to each other, you two.

CORDELIA:  
Yes, mommy.

FIONA:  
Alright, well, I'll let you two get back to solving mysteries. I'll give you a ring after I talk to Nanna. But brace yourselves, Auntie Brigid is a touchy subject for her, she may not tell me anything.

ELEANOR:  
That's okay, mom. Thanks for offering to talk to her.

CORDELIA:  
Yeah, I don't think it would be a good idea if we did. If she doesn't like talking about her, and we're not supposed to know about her, she'd probably shut down pretty quick.

FIONA:  
You know your Nanna, she'll hold all of her emotions in the middle of her chest, and keep them there.

ELEANOR:  
And maybe admit one feeling after some whisky.

FIONA:  
Yes, well, I'll talk to you both soon. I love you!

ELEANOR:  
Love you too, mom.

CORDELIA:  
Talk soon, love you, bye!

FIONA:  
Bye girls!

ELEANOR:  
Well that was. . .enlightening.

CORDELIA:  
Do you think Auntie Brigid is still alive?

ELEANOR:  
That would mean she's been in hiding all this time.

CORDELIA:

Yeah, but hiding from who?

ELEANOR:

Or what?

**(there is an uncomfortable pause.)**

CORDELIA:

Could that be why she sent us the book?

ELEANOR:

Who knows. This book is. . . I don't know. Do you think it's listening to us? What if it knows where Auntie Brigid is?

CORDELIA:

Ellie, that sounds a little out of left field.

ELEANOR:

Does it, though?

CORDELIA:

A sentient book? Ellie, I know you've got an artistic mind, but maybe we need to get a little fresh air.

ELEANOR:

What if we got another perspective on this?

CORDELIA:

That's a good idea, actually. Maybe let's go for a walk, clear our heads, and I'll give Mel a call? She's in my program, but her specialty is Written Language and its Evolution.

ELEANOR:

Is this the same aforementioned Mel? The amazing scholar who is also an artist and held her very own art exhibit?

CORDELIA:

Yup! She's fabulous.

**SOUND: facetime ringing sound**

MEL:

Hello!

CORDELIA:  
Hey, Mel! How are you?

MEL:  
I've been managing. Drowning in readings and papers, and for once, I'm thankful for it.

CORDELIA:  
Same. You remember my sister, Ellie, right?

MEL:  
Yes, of course! Hi, Ellie! It's really nice to see you!

ELEANOR:  
It's nice to see you too! Good to know there are. . .other people out there.

MEL:  
So, what's up? You said you had a weird question.

CORDELIA:  
Yeah, I have a bit of a. . .well, an out of the blue kind of question. It involves a book.

MEL:  
Ooooh! You know I love books.

CORDELIA:  
That you do, that's why I figured you'd be the best person to ask.

MEL:  
Ask what?

ELEANOR:  
Well. . .I think it's best if we just show you.

**SOUND: rustling sounds as cordelia picks the book up to show the "camera"**

MEL:  
Hm. . .that looks really old. Where did you get it?

CORDELIA:  
It was sent to us in the mail.

MEL:  
No return address?

ELEANOR:

Nope.

MEL:

And it wasn't that weird scam thing?

CORDELIA:

Definitely not. It. . .well, let me open it.

**SOUND: BOOK IS OPENED.**

MEL:

Is that supposed to be a. . .

ELEANOR:

A clock? Yes. Wait. . .Cordie. . .

CORDELIA:

Holy shit!

MEL:

What?

CORDELIA:

The hands. . .they've moved.

ELEANOR:

Last time we looked at this picture of the clock. . .I could have sworn the hands were in different places. They had been pointing in opposite directions when we first opened the book.

CORDELIA:

Now. . .now it looks like they're pointing in the same direction. . .what's that word there? It looks like the Latin word "Esse". . .

MEL:

"To be".

ELEANOR:

And on the other side of the clock. . ."Non esse"

MEL:

"Not to be". . .what did you get your hands on, Cordie?

CORDELIA:

We thought it was some kind of vintage volume our mom found in a thrift shop, but she didn't send it to us.

ELEANOR:

And it has the name of a relative we've never met in it.

MEL:

Woah, how strange.

CORDELIA:

What's even stranger is that this particular relative disappeared a long time ago, gone without a trace. There's no way she could know about us.

MEL:

Unless she's been in hiding all this time.

CORDELIA:

Those were our thoughts exactly.

MEL:

But why send it now?

ELEANOR:

Maybe she knew how bored we'd get during quarantine?

CORDELIA:

Speak for yourself, I have like, eight and a half assignments I could be doing right now.

MEL:

Me too, but this is way more interesting. What is the book about?

ELEANOR:

It reads a bit like a "How To" guide, but. . .a little haunted.

MEL:

Haunted?

CORDELIA:

One of the entries in it was instructions on how to suddenly change your shoe size. . .by cutting off pieces of your feet. Some of the entries are pretty lighthearted, though. The first one we read was "How to find your way home when lost in the woods".

MEL:

Do you think you could read me one? I'm so intrigued!

CORDELIA:

We usually do a three and one rule.

ELEANOR:

Where one of us picks three entries, and the other picks one out of those three.

CORDELIA:

But in this case, since you're our impromptu special guest, why don't we let Mel pick the entry?

ELEANOR:

Sounds good to me! Can I be the one to pick them, though?

CORDELIA:

Sure, brat.

**SOUND: eleanor blows a raspberry at her sister.**

**SOUND: eleanor picks up the book, flips to the table of contents.**

ELEANOR:

Okay. . .let's see here. . .

(reading from book):

"Common Magic Potions: Tinctures for All Seasons" page four-sixty-seven. "Starblinding" page three-sixty, subsection Omega. And. . ."Ouch! My Paw! And Other Times Not to Trust Tigers" page one thousand and thirty.

MEL:

Wow. . .um. . .let's do "Ouch! My Paw!" That sounds fun.

CORDELIA:

Alrighty, here we go!

(reading from book) (entry by jen cowitz)

As people have moved into cities, encroached on wilderness, and developed weapons to render such beasts inert, we have lost our fear for creatures like lions, bears, tigers, and most dangerously, hippopotami, and opt for awe and wonder. While a healthy appreciation and respect for nature is much needed, one must remember that these creatures are highly invested in our failure to recognize them as honed, cunning, and treacherous.

Tigers, while less intelligent than the average housecat, put the vast majority of their talents into tricks, manipulation, and the dramatic ending of lives from the deadly gifts nature has given them. In broad strokes, if they are alive, they are trying to either eat you or extinguish you as a threat. Regardless of thorny paw, toothache, or crimped tail, you are simply no match on foot.



There are, however, instances in which one can, in fact, trust a tiger:

Tigers are lazy, but they have no intention of being seen as such. Offer a tiger a gift of food and, with enough groveling, it will insouciantly allow you to pass.

As well, tigers are excessively proud, and should you come across one, bargaining your life on a good riddle can often help you weasel your way out of a devouring. Better yet, propose that the last tiger you saw called the one before you stupid, filthy, langorous, or cheap, and the tiger is sure to start a fight with the "other" tiger rather than pick their teeth with you. This is best performed if there is, in fact, at least one other tiger nearby. If the other tiger is present, laud and debate the merits of both.

ELEANOR:

A little shorter than the standard one, but you get the idea.

MEL:

Well. . .that was. . .

ELEANOR:

See what we mean?

MEL:

Yeah, what a fascinating find! And there's no publisher or date listed?

CORDELIA:

Nope, the only authority mentioned at all is in the Publisher's Note. . .but the company's name is impossible to read.

MEL:

Hm. . .so they left a note, but no name?

ELEANOR:

Yeah, it's this long, strange letter that sounds like a lawyer's wet dream.

CORDELIA:

It almost reads like a contract.

MEL:

I wonder. . .you didn't give the book your name, did you?

ELEANOR:

I--what do you mean by "give it our names"?

MEL:

Did you write your names anywhere in the book?

CORDELIA:

We did.

ELEANOR:

There were two lines at the bottom of the publisher's note. . .and the page wouldn't turn unless we signed it!

MEL:

Oh, dear.

BOTH SISTERS:

What?!

MEL:

I just--this sounds a lot like the stories I used to read about the Fae Folk. Like, this book sounds like something they would write.

CORDELIA:

I didn't even put that together.

ELEANOR:

Yeah, I can't believe I didn't either. . .Nanna always told us to stay away from the Fae.

MEL:

I'm totally not trying to freak you out, but I am a little superstitious, as you know. Has anything weird happened around the house? Or have you had any bad or strange dreams?

CORDELIA:

Nope.

ELEANOR:

Not that I could tell.

MEL:

Well, that's good. Maybe I'm wrong. It does sound a little crazy saying it out loud.

CORDELIA:

Oh, Mel, we have been feeling a little crazy since we got this thing. It's entire existence is a mystery, and it only seems to get more complex.

MEL:

Did you ask anyone else in your family if it's some kind of heirloom?

ELEANOR:

Our mom said she'd ask our Nanna about. . .well, about the relative that went missing. Her name was Brigid.

MEL:

Like the goddess?

CORDELIA:

I suppose. We've never heard about her. She was our Nanna's sister, but she went missing when our mom was a teenager.

MEL:

And her name is in the book as well?

ELEANOR:

Yup, there was also a note with her letterhead in the box when it arrived.

CORDELIA:

We decided to try doing an unboxing video, but the footage got all corrupted, so we started reading the entries in podcast form.

MEL:

That sounds like a lot of fun! Maybe when things are a little safer I could take a look at it. It sounds like a piece of history or something.

ELEANOR:

Yeah, I just hope it's not housing a Trickster God or anything.

MEL:

Well. . .I don't think so. But I would be careful sleeping in the house with it. Maybe put it in the box each night. Just in case.

CORDELIA:

That's some solid advice.

MEL:

Let me know if you find anything else out about your Great Aunt. What a strange and wonderful tale this is turning out to be.

ELEANOR:

Yeah, strange being the operative word.

CORDELIA:

Thanks for your input, Mel. I really appreciate it. We'll let you get back to the million assignments you have going.

MEL:

Of course! You know I'm always ready to talk about the odd and mystical.

CORDELIA:

That's why you were the first person I called. Bye, Mel!

ELEANOR:

Thank you!

MEL:

I feel honored. Talk soon! And. . .maybe sprinkle some salt around your house. Love ya, bye!

**SOUND: hang up sound.**

ELEANOR:

I'm gonna go get the salt shaker right now.

CORDELIA:

I still can't believe the clock hands moved.

ELEANOR:

Let's look and see if they moved again.

**SOUND: PAGES TURNING.**

CORDELIA:

Nope, still pointed to "Esse".

**SOUND: PAGES TURNING.**

CORDELIA:

Oh my god, Ellie, look at this.

ELEANOR:

What?

CORDELIA:

Is it me, or is there a third line under "This Book Belongs To" ?

ELEANOR:

I---oh my god, there is.

CORDELIA:

This is. . .let's close it for today.

ELEANOR:

Yeah, I feel like I need to go to church.

CORDELIA:

Jesus is a biscuit!

ELEANOR:

Let him sop you up!

**SOUND: they laugh. a moment of tension is broken.**

CORDELIA:

Well, thanks for tuning in, we'll be back next week.

ELEANOR:

We know this was a most unusual episode, but we're grateful you've stuck around!

CORDELIA:

Tune in next week to see if our Nanna told our mom anything!

ELEANOR:

Or if the book's clock hands move again!

CORDELIA:

Or if the Fae have come to claim our souls because we gave them our names!

ELEANOR:

Hope we don't die!

CORDELIA:

Toodles!

ELEANOR:

G'bye!