



Infinity Mirror: From the Walls

Mabel: Infinity Mirror, Part Two – From the Walls. In which an old thread is plucked loose.

[Intro:]

BECCA: Dear listeners, this is Becca De La Rosa, co-creator of the Mabel podcast.

MABEL: And this is the rhizome occasionally known as Mabel Martin.

BECCA: In celebration of our upcoming fifth season, we're going to be running a little competition.

MABEL: A big competition.

BECCA: Our biggest competition, actually.

MABEL: We're going to be offering one of our loyal listeners a chance to stay overnight in the house that inspired the podcast: an empty mansion built over the cliffs of the Irish Sea.

BECCA: We'll pay to fly you over here from anywhere in the world. First class.

MABEL: No entries are necessary. Just keep listening - [GLITCHES]

[BEEP]

[LAUGHTER]

[STATIC]

TRESSA: Pick up, pick up pick up.

[FAINT BEEP]

Hi – Becca? This is, uh, Tressa Davies, could you please call me? When you get a chance? Thanks, I’m. Thanks.

[WALKING NOISES]

What the fuck –

[WINDOW RATTLING. FOOTSTEPS. DOORS OPENING AND CLOSING;
ANOTHER WINDOW RATTLES. PANICKED BREATHING]

Did they – ? They can’t – They can’t –

[SHOUTING] Hello? Can anyone hear me?

[HOUSE CREAKS, ROARS]

Oh, God. Oh my *god*. What – what is –

[STATIC FUMBLING]

“Number four: eat an apple. Tell us what you left behind when you came here.”

This is almost too - [LAUGHS, MILDLY HYSTERICAL] I understand Anna better, now. It helps, having this – [FUMBLES WITH RECORDER] this thing to talk to. But there’s no Mabel on the other end in faerieland, there’s just –

I have to believe that two – two *podcast* creators didn’t ship me over to Ireland from across the ocean, first fucking class, just to murder me in a mansion by the sea. Right? There’s plenty of Irish people worth murdering,

right, that's just a - crazy amount of trouble to go to. I have to believe that, because I'm not stupid. Except, what does that leave? The windows are – not painted shut, not locked, they're just glass fitted into wall, no lines to separate them or shove my fingers under. Organically, like they grew. Apple tree growing apples, old seaside house growing eyes - I tried to break one. I threw a lamp at it. The lamp bounced off and hit me in the shoulder. Which *hurt*, thanks. What if I had seriously injured myself, who's - [LAUGHS] I'm used to people fussing over me, okay. Being watched all the time, in the way that disabled people always are, thought of as fragile or like. I don't know. Delicate, I guess. Half-real, in the way dolls are.

The front door isn't locked, either, it's as though it never had hinges or bolts at all. Only wood, impossible to pick open with my fingernails. I can't – I tried calling Becca, I tried calling my dad, I tried calling the police and the coast guard and even the American embassy. No one picks up.

[CHAIR PULLING OUT]

They're good apples. Red and green, crunchy and little and cold when I touch them.

I'm hungry. What else am I going to do?

[CRUNCHING APPLE]

What do you do inside a story? What do you do when - I don't have a script, it's just me, trying to follow the trail of -

I left behind –

My dad. I live with him. He drives trains, he's not home much. My cats, Amadeus and Parmesan, but I left them with Mrs. Elder down the hall, she spoils them more than I do. The tree in the courtyard, the poplar tree. Uh, less than half of a college degree. My – my books. My notebooks. The doll my mother gave me. [PAUSE] It doesn't sound like much.

Can you –

[CHAIR SCRAPING BACK]

Where –

[SOUND GROWING GRADUALLY LOUDER: SINGING, DISTANT AND DISTORTED. FOOTSTEPS, SHUFFLING]

Hold on, that can't be right.

[FOOTSTEPS. GRADUAL BLURRING IN AND OUT OF SINGING VOICES]

It has to be coming from – there's no *room* on the other side of this, it has to be –

It's coming from the *walls*.

[LAUGHS, BUILDING UP]

Okay. Okay. I get it. It's some kind of game, right? A test? Maybe there was something in the water I drank or - I don't know. Maybe I'm wrong. I said I didn't have a script and I don't but I do have directions, don't I? Questions to be answered? It's easier when this kind of happening comes with instructions. A path laid out. I read enough fairytales as a kid to know that. To know not to - I don't know, deviate. I know about how to bend the rules without breaking them. How to - throw away that wine that will put me to sleep. I ate those berries, didn't I? [LAUGHS] That's why you picked me, isn't it? What other kind of person listens to this show?

This house really is beautiful. I had a dollhouse like this once, big high Georgian ceilings and Persian carpets and bay windows. It belonged to – some friend of my mother's, I don't remember. I used to try to shrink myself in my mind, to project myself inside it. What's it like, only to look at beautiful things all day long? Does it make you a better person? Is that what goodness is, a luxury? In the story Sally isn't good, she's weak and bitter and cruel to Mabel, even when Mabel was just a kid. This house belonged to Becca's grandmother. Was she good? Was she – it's crazy to say "was she Sally", but...Was she? There's a typewriter in this house that knows a secret story I never told anyone, least of all two podcasters from a different continent. How much of the story is –

Whatever.

"Number five: remember the mourning dove."

[AS THOUGH BAFFLED] Remember the –

Oh, no. No, no, no, I didn't –

[SHOUTS] Are you listening to this? Are you *watching* me? Is this a game, am I – am I an experiment, are you – who did you talk to? Did you – did you *hack* me, did you – break in and read my fucking –

[QUIETER, MORE APPALLED] I didn't tell *anyone*.

[NOISES IN THE DISTANCE]

Wait. Wait. Who is - what are you -

[STATIC]

[OUTRO]:

Mabel is written by Becca De La Rosa and Mabel Martin, and produced by Becca De La Rosa. The voice of Tressa Davies is Tressa Evans-Salvemini. The music in this episode was by Meydän, LG17, Fourmi, and (morse), and all of it is available to download from the Free Music Archive at freemusicarchive.org. For more information about Mabel, including a full tracklist and transcript, visit us online at mabelpodcast.com.

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