

• Scantic River Productions •

presents

Rocking Chair

or, Settlement



• A Horror Musical Podcast •

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CHAPTER ONE

• TALES OF THE RED LION INN •

SOMEBODY:

Rocking Chair; or, Settlement.

Say it with me:

ALL VOICES:

The trumpet sound: a shiv'ring frost,

The shining chill becomes a quake.

*"Rise up!" the call: "The Damned, the
Lost—*

The Restless Throng, Arise, Awake!"

A cruel jape, the knell for fools;

A pyrite mock of Judgement Day.

Though dressed alike, the robes and jewels

Are costume gems for pageant play.

Take up your sticks and stones and bricks,

Your names, your faces, grins, and tears.

Your oldest jests, your oldest tricks

Are young again for willful ears.

A fire is burning somewhere near;

Play on, ye ghosts! And we shall hear.

SOMEBODY:

Chapter One: Tales of the Red Lion Inn

I've always had trouble believing in death.

Sure, I know people die. I know people who

have died. But the science of it— Would

any scientist really support a hypothe-

sis with so little data? Okay, I have read

studies. Brainwaves, right? Or, really—

Brainwaves then brain-crash. No mas.

And when it comes down to it, who we are

is what our brains tell us we are. Right? ...

and then there's philosophy. Which I personally find useless. There are so many steps and proofs to solve before you can apply philosophy to your self, your every day life. Philosophers and scientists aren't very fun at parties, come to think of it.

But we have to think about death, right? It's all there really is to think about. Every subject kind of funnels there. "How was work today?" "Great! I earned money to get food so I wouldn't starve to death!" See? Okay, I might have skipped a few steps—take that as proof that I'm actually very fun at parties.

Lately I've been a little—away from myself. Or away from what I thought my self is. I still go out, I talk to people, I get coffee. But I'm sort of watching myself as I do it. I'm not there. And I just, sort of, started googling about death. I'm not really anxious to get firsthand experience, believe me, my therapist was not getting what I meant when I told her. But, you know, it's interesting. It's interesting that no one really talks about it but are constantly talking about it?

It doesn't take long to find ghost stories. The internet is full of them. You'd think with modern technology these fairy tales would have gone the way of the dodo. Ghosts? I know a lot of friends have some reason they believe in them. Kind of a core memory to hold on to. I get it, it's com-

forting. I don't tell people what I really think: we would know if there were ghosts or not at this point. Ectoplasm has been debunked, creaks and shrieks. The Loch Ness Monster is a toy submarine.

In case you can't tell, I don't believe in ghosts. Brainwave; brain-crash. But I believe in haunted places. Or, I believe that haunted places are different than anywhere else on earth. They're special, for whatever reason.

I've been traveling more. It started with a midnight tour around the City a few months ago, and we got to go into a crypt under this old church. For the first time, in a long time, I was there. I mean there. Ghosts, no. And the tour guide needed a shower. Haunted? Well, I finally felt something.

I tried to get a couple of friends to join me when I started digging through vlogs, a few podcasts. That was funny enough. They didn't want to join me when I wanted to start exploring myself, which was... not not understandable. In any case, I rented a car every couple of weekends and found some haunted areas nearby.

Some unpaved roads, a couple graveyards. There are a lot of interesting mansions, but I kind of stopped looking at those, because they're usually the exact same kind of abandoned Victorian house



in a bad neighborhood. The only thing haunted about them was age old white male supremacy.

The fact is, everything lost its luster. It was fun going to graveyards in the middle of the night alone, but then you also realize you're just getting your socks soggy in a damp, dewy field, and you go back to the crummy basement you rented. I almost gave up the ghost (don't groan) when I heard a story from my sister-in-law at brunch.

SOMEBODY & SISTER-IN-LAW:

There's a haunted town near where I grew up,

SOMEBODY:

She said,

SOMEBODY & SISTER-IN-LAW:

It's like, the most haunted place in the world. It's all overgrown by woods. No one will go there. And no one comes back.

SOMEBODY:

Haunted town, huh? That intrigued me. There are houses and graveyards, but the thought of wandering the woods at night with a flashlight, I hate to say it, enthralled me. Maybe this was it. This could be the grand finale of my weird episode. So this time I would splurge, I would book a room at a creepy old inn nearby, I'd take a week off from work, and I would have

the time of my fucking life. I had butterflies it felt so right.

I caught the train that went East along the sound and then North at the rivermouth. There was a bus, and a dreary darkness enveloped the fluorescent and rickety thing. A wet fog hid the trees from the headlights, and it started to drizzle. I shivered.

Last stop; not there yet. I had set up a car to come pick me up and take me the twenty some odd miles up the hills to the B&B. The man who drove me was older than the usual drivers I met in the city, and unlike the city, he was gabby. But I answered his questions—

SOMEBODY & DRIVER:

From around here?

SOMEBODY:

No.

SOMEBODY & DRIVER:

From the city?

SOMEBODY:

Yes.

SOMEBODY & DRIVER:

Seeing the leaves?

SOMEBODY:

Maybe.

—If only to pass the time until I could go to the bathroom. His questions answered, he took upon himself to talk about the area since I'd never been to it. What was of first and foremost importance was that

SOMEBODY & DRIVER:

The woods around here are absolutely haunted, so truly inhabited by specters that the local government is compelled to keep people away from them. And the people who do wander where the black brook runs into the dark trees—do not come back, or come back changed.

SOMEBODY:

I smiled disingenuously. He believed me.

His eyes haunted the rearview, twinkling at my willing engagement. “Eyes on the road,” I warned as we hit a pothole. He snorted, and explained that

SOMEBODY & DRIVER:

There's no avoiding this on old country roads. Carriages paved them, not cars.

SOMEBODY:

I eyed the sheer edges and noted all that guarded us from the cliffs below were expressionless markers that looked remarkably like headstones.

- SHOVEL -

At last— and rather suddenly— we arrived next to a row of tall hedges which hid a red barn with a little red door, above which a sign swung in the wind:

ALL VOICES:

“Red Lion Inn”

SOMEBODY:

it creaked. I thanked the driver as he popped the trunk, and I pulled my coat over my head and dragged my luggage through the little red door. I loved every minute of it.

- FIRE CRACKLE -

As I pridefully and mysteriously slammed the door open this solemn night, I caught several amber eyes looking at mine from around a colonial and fire-furnished parlor. A grandfather clock ticked at me in the small foyer, as if clicking its tongue for tracking in the damp. A man who— I kid you not— was wearing an apron over a blue coat with golden buttons leapt up from his armchair and strode over to me, fiddling in his pocket. It was as if he just remembered I would be here, and of course I was supposed to be here in the first place, but confound it he lost the time and had wanted to double check that the maid had prepared my room correctly. He relayed as much to



me as he handed me the key to my bedroom, and led the way up a spindly stairwell in the dark. As I was swept up to the landing, I couldn't help but see the crimson and black parlor and its three or four inhabitants guide me up with their stares.

The wood was oak or walnut, black and polished so it caught a little bit of the fire, though it was long behind us. The host kept his elbows tucked in, and I decided to follow suit.

SOMEBODY & HOST:

Walls in these old houses are built closer together.

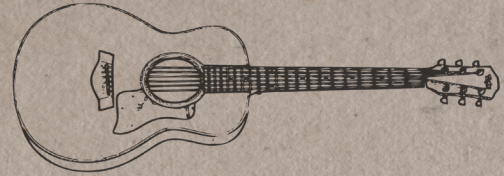
SOMEBODY:

We found my room, which was a cozy, full mattress on a Victorian frame, a wide window with a flat seat by it, a desk with a dim, yellow lamp just hardly bright enough for reading, and a framed charcoal piece depicting what I guessed were the woods outside. It was all perfect. My shepherd nodded in his own satisfaction, and bid me come down for a drink on the house with his companions.

With relish, I unpacked my clothes, showered in the small washroom, and threw on a sweater to go down to the parlor— It seemed wrong to wear my old hoodie.

As I came down, I heard muttering and sputtering, former from the guests and

latter from the crinkling birch. Above the fireplace hung an old guitar, emblazoned with a kind of intricate lace of vines and flowers. The head resembled a skull, which looked like it was winking at me.



My host greeted me with a tall hot toddy, rich with cinnamon and cloves, and had me sit right next to him. Surrounding us were four other individuals: a young man whose thin, black clothes showed off wild tattoos, and whose shaggy hair made me glad I had a rinse. Next to him was an old lady, doing what else but knitting through her spectacles which danced with the embers. It looked as if she were clad in her own handiwork, and she smelled of stale cigarettes. Across from her was another woman, about forty, and wearing clothes that made you want to check the label. She had glasses too— but these were large and chic. And lastly, the man on the other side of my host creaked along in an old rocking chair in a red cigar jacket. He was large, jowled, and, if you can believe it, smoking a fat stogie. I glanced at my host, who pointed at a fan above us.

SOMEBODY & HOST:

(whisper)

The fire hardly goes up the chimney anyways,

SOMEBODY:

he whispered.

He whispered because the man in the rocking chair was telling a story. I couldn't catch what was going on this late in, but it didn't seem authentic. That, and his phrases were in rhythm with the chair, so I couldn't concentrate on anything else other than the back and the forth of the words and the wood and the floor. If it were about anything at all, the story was about women he's slept with, annotated with anecdotes about how everything is awful these days. The toddy was hot, and the fire was just the right amount of cozy that pairs so well with a shower on a cold night. I was half aware my head was nodding when the codger had concluded.

Things aren't what they were, everyone agreed, and the man in the rocking chair smiled knowingly. It was silent for a moment, or as silent as a room with a rocking chair and fire and the click click of knitting needles can be. Then, the shaggy haired boy coughed.

- COUGH -

SOMEBODY:

We all turned.

DUSTY:

Shall we tell the one about that Rocking Chair?

SOMEBODY:

The man in the chair swiveled to look at it, as if he were unaware that it was a rocking chair in the first place— and there it was. The same skull was winking at me at the top where his head had been leaning, the same design as the guitar.

Our host said,

SOMEBODY & HOST:

It's a very old chair, but I'm not entirely sure how it came here. A lot of stuff is like that,

SOMEBODY:

he reasoned.

SOMEBODY & HOST:

Everyone picks up junk as the years pile on if you stay put long enough.

SOMEBODY:

The young man— the shaggy haired boy— looked around at us all, one by one. When the awful moment came that he looked at me, he smirked. I looked again at the rocking chair, and so did he. And then he stood, and lifted the guitar from the mantle.

Ghost stories now, huh? I was used to other tourists at places like these waxing poetical. I liked the ghost stories as window dressing— not content. It always ended in everyone giving their personal horror sto-

ries to one up each other. Waiting around to be oohed at.

SOMEBODY & HOST:

Alright, son, if you're going to carry this tale, be careful in the telling.

SOMEBODY:

Our host held up a wagging finger beside me.

SOMEBODY & HOST:

Hear this, everyone. I know this story far too well. We are about to be caught in it the whole night through, that's how long it takes. This is a story that takes place right here, right outside, in this wood. It is not very concerned with time, like nature itself. Also like nature, it is easy to get lost. And that's where the terror lives. I warn again, young man: Be careful in the telling.

SOMEBODY:

The shaggy haired boy smiled that awful smile once more, then he strummed and sang.

· SONG ONE ·

Story Scene

DUSTY:

WANDER DOWN WHERE

THE BLACK BROOK RUN,

THEY SAY THERE WAS A HOLLOW.

TREES SO DENSE

YOU FORGET THE SUN

AND YOU CAN'T HEAR A

SWALLOW.

ON YOUR MAMA'S KNEE

DID SHE TELL YOU SO:

“NEVER GO, NO NEVER FOLLOW,”

AND YOU KNEW, NO, NEVER

FOLLOW,

BUT THE BROOK,

SHE CALLS TO FOLLOW...



SOMEBODY:

In a house 200 years ago, somewhere in the woods outside. A woman in that same rocking chair, with a daughter.

CONSTANCE:

Tell it again, Mother, now that Patrick-Barrows is asleep.

MARY:
Your brother is awake.

PATRICK-BARROWS:
(*whispering*)
Constance! Come to bed!

MARY:
Settle down. We won't wake Father if you
listen quietly.

CONSTANCE:
Yeah, so shush!

PATRICK-BARROWS:
You shush!

DUSTY & MARY:

MANY FOOLS THOUGHT
THEY'D HAVE SOME FUN,
OR SOUGHT TO QUENCH A
YEARNING.
WHEN YOU WALK
WHERE THE BLACK BROOK RUN,
THEY SAY THERE'S NO
RETURNING.
SOMEWHERE IN THE TREES,
DID WE LOSE THEM, OH,
ONE BY ONE THE WICKS
A'BURNING,

JOURNEY'S END WITH NO
SOJOURNING,

BUT THE WHEEL OF ROT KEEPS
TURNING.

CONSTANCE: Patrick-Barrows, you're
trembling. How are you such a fraidy cat?

PATRICK-BARROWS:
I'll make you a fraidy cat.

MARY:
Children. Settle.

CONSTANCE:
Fraidy Patrick-Barrows. You shouldn't
mind ghosts. Or do you only feel safe in
your silly poems?

PATRICK-BARROWS:
I'm not scared of ghosts, I just don't like
them trying to scare me. And my poems
aren't silly!

MARY:
Ghosts are not trying to scare you.

CONSTANCE:
What are they trying to do?

MARY:
UP IN THE ATTIC

AND UNDER THE STAIRWELL,

INTO THE DARK PLACES HID

EVERYWHERE,

COME AND SEE SOMEONE

WHO CAN'T HELP BUT LOVE YOU,

SOMEWHERE ABOVE YOU

IS SOMEBODY THERE,

SOMEWHERE ABOVE YOU IS SOME

BODY THERE.

HMM...

LU LU LU LU LU LU LU...

DREAM AWAY

WHEN I SEEM AWAY,

LAI LAI LA LU LAI LA LU LAI LA LU...

HIDDEN AWAY IN THAT

SMILE THAT YOU'RE SMILING,

HIDDEN IN SONGS IN YOUR

HEAD FOR A WHILE,

MAYBE THERE'S SOMEONE

WHO CAN'T HELP BUT LOVE YOU.

SOMEWHERE ABOVE YOU

WHO'S SOMEBODY THERE.

SOMEWHERE ABOVE YOU

WHO'S SOMEBODY THERE.

- OLDEST & MIDDLE LAUGH -

- CONSTANCE SCREAMS -

CONSTANCE:

(whisper)

Do you see it, Mother? Under the stair?

MARY:

Of course.

PATRICK-BARROWS:

(whisper)

I can't see his eyes.

PATRICK:

(off)

Constance!

PATRICK-BARROWS:

You've woken father!

- FOOTSTEPS CREAK -

PATRICK:

Patrick-Barrows, we had an agreement.

PATRICK-BARROWS:

I'm sorry.

CONSTANCE:

Father, look!

PATRICK:

Back to bed, both of you. Patrick-Barrows, we are up at the first cock-crow. I'll not have you too tired to carry the stones.

PATRICK-BARROWS:

Yes, sir.

PATRICK:

Screaming, at this hour. Why, Constance?

CONSTANCE:

The ghost, father!

PATRICK:

Bed. The both of you. And Patrick-Barrows— If this happens again, the strap.

- SCURRY OF FEET -

MARY:

He'll be up on time. There's no need to be so strict.

PATRICK:

That's not what I'm worried about.

MARY:

I'd be up anyway. I can't sleep the same anymore.

PATRICK:

But you must try. When the doctor came—

MARY:

I'll heal or I won't. I can't force myself to do anything.

PATRICK:

You will heal.

MARY:

We'll see.

PATRICK:

These stories, Mary. They frighten the children. Can you tell something tamer?

MARY:

They ask for these stories, Patrick.

PATRICK:

Too much fiction. They believe you. They see ghosts everywhere. It's not in their interest to believe in these things.

MARY:

They're here, Patrick. They've always been here. They're here right now.

- OLDEST & MIDDLE LAUGH -

PATRICK:

I'll talk to the General about this. He renovated this house, if anyone knows something, he might. In any case, come to bed.

MARY:

In a moment.

PATRICK:

Fine. What do you do down here all alone so long?

MARY:

I listen. I love you.

PATRICK:
Good night.

MARY:
Good night.

- FOOTSTEPS -

- CHAIR ROCKS -

Nothing else tonight? No wails or songs
left in you? Don't worry. I'm here to pro-
tect you too.

- CHAIR ROCKS -

Hello...?

Hello?

I won't play this game. Stay or don't. I'm
going to—

- SCREAM -

OLDEST & MIDDLE:

(*distorted*)

You're already playing.

DUSTY:

EV'RY TALE CAN BEGIN

WITH ONE,

RIGHT WHERE THE BROOK WENT

WENDING:

SOMEONE BUILT WHERE

THE BLACK BROOK RUN,

THE WHEEL OF ROT

IMPENDING.

SOME MAY LOOK THE SAME,

SOME MAY ACT APART,

BUT AT HEART THEY SHARE AN ENDING,

AND BETWIXT IS JUST

PRETENDING,

ALL THE WORLD IS JUST AN ENDING.

SOMEBODY:

He stopped playing, and I took a sip of
my toddy. It was going to be one of those
nights, wasn't it? The old codger stood up,
as if having sat on a thumbtack.

SOMEBODY & THE OLD CODGER:

This chair?

SOMEBODY:

The shaggy haired boy nodded solemnly.
The codger dusted off his buttocks and
stood by the mantle.

SOMEBODY & WOMAN-IN-THE-
EXPENSIVE-SHAWL:

So what happened to the family?

SOMEBODY:

Asked the woman in the expensive shawl.

DUSTY:

I will tell you. But there are other things to tell as well. If we're going to talk about the Rocking Chair. And that's the story—There's no real story otherwise.

SOMEBODY:

The shaggy haired boy continued on.

DUSTY:

One hundred years later...

SOMEBODY:

He spoke of skyscrapers rising, the scent of smoke, and the air tightened into the unmistakable atmosphere of a cold evening in the city. Cars you'd only see in auto shows zoomed and tooted about the streets, metropolitan and art nouveau styles mingled like so many stars and moons. Women wore furs, and men wore hats. Two members of this lost society waded through, an older man with great pomp and an even greater disposition, with his severe and judgmental wife who looked as if she could smell a bad odor before anyone else. They marched from under the marquis of a theatre thusly called "Majestic."

After some deliberation, they settled on a French Bistro a block West. The host at the restaurant panicked at the sight of them and led them to what he thought was a fine table but shouldn't he have known better?

HARRIET:

Thank goodness it's not crowded, I'm famished.

HENRY:

Me too.

HARRIET:

I know you said we oughtn't eat before, your digestion notwithstanding, but I nearly ate my glove at intermission. I really did.

HENRY:

I'm sorry, honey.

HARRIET:

I'm sorry, too. That thing was three hours. Three hours, Henry! I didn't like it.

HENRY:

That is evident.

HARRIET:

It was just a little much. Twee.

HENRY:

I thought it was pretty imaginative.

HARRIET:

Hokey, then. Guitars and sickly mothers and ghost stories. I never liked any of the three. Like one of these folk singers all the kids think they are.

HENRY:

The younger generation has a lot they'd like to say.

HARRIET:

Well, let them say it, not yodel it. Or write some decent music.

HENRY:

I thought you liked that kind of culture.

HARRIET:

But not in the theatre. American Musical Theatre is one thing, the beatniks another. We have a tradition here on Broadway, a *raison d'être*. Think of the lyrics of Irving Berlin, Yip Harburg. Love songs. Not these conceptual meanderings.

HENRY:

Is the op-ed concluded?

HARRIET:

Food's here. You had better not have gas.

HENRY:

I actually liked the performance a lot. I see potential in it.

HARRIET:

Potential, maybe.

HENRY:

Ghost stories are everywhere, Harry. I can see why they made this musical. It speaks to our time.

HARRIET:

How so, Mr. Editor?

HENRY:

What with urbanization, and economic boom after the war, we've forgotten Nature. We've pushed it all aside for Levittown and the like.



HARRIET:

And the ghosts are reaping a terrible vengeance on we socialite heathens. Well-away!

HENRY:

Ghosts can't act that way. They have to work in other ways. They work like longings, like nostalgia.

HARRIET:

And what makes you such an expert?

HENRY:

I grew up around a place that was supposedly haunted. Hundreds of stories, I assure you, I can't remember them. But you know, I would always go to those woods, breathe below the treetops. Never saw a ghost. But I understand what people think they are.

HARRIET:

I never pegged you for a crank.

HENRY:

Not that they exist like Washington Irving or anything! But haunted places live with you like no place else. The details keep coming back.

So I've been thinking. And I've thought this before tonight, but... but tonight made me sure. We ought to move out of the city.

HARRIET:

You aren't ready to retire yet, are you?

HENRY:

Not yet, but I'm ready to start easing my way out. We'll move, and we'll stay out on weekends, maybe you can even stay during the weeks and set up our little old-timer's nest, and you can even pick up your artwork again. If you'd like, of course.

HARRIET:

I don't know. I don't like this. Where would we go? The Catskills?

HENRY:

I was thinking of going home.

HARRIET:

Nova Scotia, how convenient!

HENRY:

Oh, it's not that far anymore. Only a few hours by train. And I miss the natural world, Harriet. I miss the air in my lungs. This city is no place to be old.

HARRIET:

Even with elevators?

HENRY:

Well, let's think about it.

HARRIET:

Listen here. We have to agree on this. Do you remember what you promised me? How you said we'll do everything together when you decided we wouldn't have any children—

HENRY:

I said let's think about it.

- FIRE CRACKLE -

SOMEBODY:

The boy had stopped speaking. I looked at

him to see why he stopped— it looked like he was about to cry.

“Are you alright?” I asked aloud. My companions shivered at the shattered silence.

The boy spoke.

DUSTY:

This last strand of the story is always hard to tell. Sorry.

SOMEBODY & KNITTING WOMAN:

Take this.

SOMEBODY:

The woman who was knitting offered him an old hanky. He dabbed his eyes. Our host looked at him.

SOMEBODY & HOST:

You’ve started it, and now you have to see it through. Carefully—

SOMEBODY:

He added.

The boy began again.

DUSTY:

Today.

SOMEBODY:

And in it, he described the very same roads I had taken that evening by bus and by driver. It was a naked, alien feeling

to know so well the world of this story. I knew the young woman driving the gray, used, passenger car alone. She was barely a young woman.

· SONG TWO ·

The Gaslight Is On

JOAN:

I DIDN’T TURN RIGHT.

WHEN I DROVE TOWARDS THE CAMPUS

I DIDN’T TURN RIGHT.

AT THE TURN

WHERE I TURN,

WHERE THE ROAD HAS BEEN CLEFT.

I DIDN’T TURN RIGHT,

AND SO I TURNED LEFT.

AND THE GASLIGHT IS ON.

WHY, WHY, WHY, WHY

WHY DID I DO THAT?

YES IT IS TRUE THAT I WOULD RATHER

BE ANYWHERE ELSE,

ANYWHERE ELSE.

WHEN I WOKE UP THIS MORNING

HELL— I WAS PREPARED.

NOT A BIT WORRIED,
NOT AT ALL SCARED.
HIGHLIGHTED QUOTES, RE-READ MY
NOTES.

THIS LITTLE ONE-ON-ONE WOULD HAVE
BEEN DONE-ON-DONE,
DRIVING ON HOME AND NOT STRESSED
AND BEREFT.
AND STILL I TURNED LEFT.

IT'S BEEN AN HOUR SINCE THE FORK
IN THE ROAD,
AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
I WISH THAT THE WORLD WOULD
JUST QUIVER
AND BREAK IN A MILLION PIECES
AND THEN I COULD BE SOMEONE
DIFFERENT AND NEW.

SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T BLOW OFF
HER ADVISOR.
NO ONE THE WISER. NOT IN A JAM.

(JUST CLARIFYING,

THAT'S NOT WHO I AM).
SO MAYBE SHE MIGHT NOT
HAVE LIKED HER ADVISOR!
WHO THEN DENIES HER
MAKE-UP EXAM?

BUT THAT'S NOT WHO I AM.
I AM NOW LOST.
AND THE GASLIGHT IS ON.

I AM NOW LOST,
BUT A GOOD KIND OF LOST—
IT'S NOT IN THE COST,
IT'S ALL HOW YOU SPENT YOUR
GOOD KIND OF LOST
THAT'S LIKE AN ADVENTURE!

I STUDY PSYCHOLOGY!
I HAVE TO LEARN
WHAT IN MY PSYCHE DECIDED TO TURN
AT THE BASKETBALL COURT
WHERE I MEANT TO TURN STARBOARD
AND WHERE I TURNED PORT.

ON A ROAD I'VE NEVER MET,

WATCH THE PLAZAS FADE

AND THE WEEDS INVADE.

OH THIS ROAD I'VE NEVER MET

IS A ROAD I'D SOON FORGET.

WATCH THE HOUSES HIDE FROM VIEW

WITHIN MAPLE, PINE, AND YEW,

WITHIN YELLOW, RED, AND BROWN,

WHERE YOU'D NEVER NAME A TOWN.

ON A ROAD I'VE NEVER MET,

WHERE THE FIELDS ARE JADE,

AND THE LEAVES ARE LAID

ON THIS ROAD I WON'T FORGET,

I'M A GIRL I'VE NEVER MET.

I'M A GIRL FROM JUST RIGHT HERE

BORN UPON A MIDNIGHT CLEAR,

WITH A GARDEN RICH AND RIPE,

LIKE A COUNTRY-WITCH-Y TYPE.

I WOULD USE MY SAME NAME

AS I LIKE IT,

BUT I'D BE THE KIND OF

JOAN WHO LIKES

NATURE AND HIKES.

I WOULD FEED A CAT

WHO BELONGS TO MY NEIGHBOR

AND IT WOULD SLEEP WITH ME

SECRETLY.

I WOULD HAVE TWO LOVERS,

ONE FOR NIGHTS,

AND ONE FOR DAYS.

THE NIGHT LOVER WOULD

HAVE DARK EYES

AND LONG HANDS

AND SPEAK IN A WHISPER.

THE DAY LOVER WOULD KISS ME

AND TAKE ME TO PLACES WHERE

AUTUMN IS BRIGHTER AND CRISPER.

THE GREAT AND WONDERFUL I—

THIS WHOLE AND WONDERFUL LIE—

I'M THE GIRL I'VE NEVER MET

WITH A BED THAT'S MADE

ON A GLASSY GLADE,

JUST THE JOAN I'VE NEVER MET.

- FIRE CRACKLING -

OTHER JOANS WE'LL JUST FORGET!

OTHER JOANS WHO FAIL DEGREES,

OTHER JOANS— NOT OTHER MES,

BUT THE ME I AM WHO CAME

FROM A TOWN YOU'D NEVER NAME,

FROM A TOWN YOU'D

ALWAYS PASS—

Shit. I'm out of gas.

- HEAVY BREATHING -

Fuck, fuck, fuck!

- HORN HONKS IN ANGER -

- SETTLES BREATHING -

Where am I?

- CAR DOOR OPENS -

It's... beautiful here.

Is that a hiking trail?

SOMEBODY:

She hid the car key in her tire well,
grabbed a sweatshirt from the trunk, and
set off into the gaping, hungry entrance of
the nature trail.

My eyes fell on the chair. I blinked. It
might have been a trick of the perspective,
but— Was that a face? Young, with a
tightly collared neck, a jacket, britches?
Like he was being constructed before
my eyes like the Cheshire Cat, but with
this strange fading sensation, like an old
silent film. Uncanny.

I looked around to see if the others were
experiencing this same sensation, and my
stomach dropped to see that they had.
They were all stock still, flushed, and
eyeing the chair.

In his thin, small hands he held a little
notebook. I caught his name, I knew it—
The son from the family, Patrick-Bar-
rows. It had to be. The shaggy haired sto-
ryteller nodded at him, encouraging him.
Patrick-Barrows looked around sadly and
opened the journal.



PATRICK-BARROWS:

*My eyes cannot help but trace
From gnarly root to noble bough
Which reaches far in wide embrace
Of all the earth it can allow.
At once I turn my head and see*

*More mighty pillars firmly clove,
So if such wonder is a tree,
What word have I to call a grove?
I help my Father plow the field,
And sing the hymns with folks I know,
Yet all along a second yield
Is reaped away from human's hoe.
How warped we are to quick dismiss
The second world found within this.*

- LIGHT SWITCH -

SOMEBODY:

As soon as the little boy had finished, the lights shot up in the parlor at the Red Lion Inn, and he vanished like all the other shadows. I looked behind me, and the woman in the expensive shawl was standing at the light switch, her hand clutching her heart.

SOMEBODY & WOMAN-IN-THE-EXPENSIVE-SHAWL:

Enough is enough.

SOMEBODY:

She said.

- CLAPPING -

I started clapping.

"It's amazing what you're doing," I said to the storyteller, and looked to our host.

"Is this an installation? I've been to some of these before, the Winchester Mystery House has this show, and..."

I looked around and was met by more than a few glares.

"She was scared," I offered. "I just wanted to make her feel better."

Still the silence. I got up and helped the woman in the expensive shawl sit down again, dimming the lights as I went.

"I'm not trying to spoil anyone's fun. Go on," I said to the shaggy haired boy. The rest of them were dumbfounded, but seemed to nestle in. I felt robbed.

"Go on," I said again.

Our host then looked at me.

SOMEBODY & HOST:

Careful,

SOMEBODY:

he warned.

Careful.

· SONG THREE ·

Rocking Chair

END OF EPISODE