

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 440: Listener Tales 71

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Hey, weirdos.

It's me.

It's Elena.

What's going on?

How's your day?

I hope it's awesome.

That's all I wanted to say.

No, I'm just kidding.

This is a message because I think a couple of episodes ago, we talked about how we are going back to the OG way of doing things.

We're doing two episodes a week to big old honkin' delicious juicy episodes with one listener tale a month, just as a little cherry, little glitter on top of a crazy month.

And we're going to keep doing that.

But I think we were also debating what days would be best for this new two-episode-a-week cadence because we figured from Wednesday to Monday is a long wait for us and for you too much.

We'd all be sad.

We don't want that.

So we finally came up with a good cadence.

We're going to drop episodes on Monday and Thursday from here on out.

So Mondays, Thursdays, that's when they'll come out on Wondery Plus.

Then a week later, you will get them Monday and Thursday for everybody else.

So that's what we're going to do.

You deserve consistency.

We want to give it to you.

I know we didn't do that in the first three years.

We were like, willy-nilly, whatever you get episodes, here it is.

But you know, we're in that consistency train and we want to stay on that.

And yeah, I think this is going to work for everybody.

It just feels better.

We don't want that big chunk of time between episodes.

You don't either.

So yeah, that's what we're going to do.

Mondays, Thursdays, new episodes, we're excited about it.

It lets us really put more time and effort into these episodes, which is what they deserve and what you deserve.

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And we fucking love you.

And I can't wait to see you every Monday and Thursday.

I know I won't see you.

I realize that I won't even hear you, but it feels like I will and you will hear me.

So we're all in this together.

We're best friends.

Thanks, guys.

Mondays, Thursdays, whoop, whoop.

Hey, weirdos.

I'm Alina.

I'm Ash.

And this is Morbid.

It's a Listener Till episode and you know what that means.

It is brought to you by you, for you, from you and all about you, baby.

It's also Morbid in the nighttime.

It's Morbid at 12, 23 a.m., Mormon at almost midnight.

It's just a little past.

Well, and you know what, before we jump into this, we have a little bit of, like, news,

I suppose.

Yeah, kind of.

A change in process, I suppose.

Breaking news.

That, exactly that.

So we've been, you know, we've been, like, we changed the way we did things.

We added another episode every week with a Listener Tale on Fridays.

You know, the process has been different for a few months and we've been seeing how it's going.

Yeah.

And it just feels different.

It hasn't, we haven't been able to settle into this enough.

No.

And we've been kind of taking your feedback and, like, mulling over it and we've been comparing that with how we're feeling.

And we're all lining up.

Yeah.

We're all aligned.

The stars and us are all aligned.

We're all lining up together and we decided that we're going to go back to the way things were before, when, when we started, like the way things were when you guys, the way we got you all here, the way you came to us, you know, we started out and, like, after, you know, I don't know, it must have been like a year or two in that we started doing two episodes a week and not many more, but it became a full episode.

And then we were at two episodes a week and we did one episode every, every month that was a listener tale and you guys dug that right.

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Like it felt like that was, and we dug that I was just going to say, and we dug like it felt like doable.

We felt like we were always able to put enough time and effort into the main episodes. And I think we're not feeling that way right now.

No.

And we have Dave, who's a really big help.

He's our like research assistant now and he's a fucking phenomenal, but like it's a lot.

And like, and so when, and when we changed to three episodes a week, it's just like with, you know, the Buffy podcast and with *Scream* and *frozen head*, like we're, we're burning out a little bit and recognizing that we were not, but we are, we are like we lied. But and I think people are noticing.

I've gotten a few messages that are like, are you okay?

Yeah, I've gotten a lot of messages like that, thank you for giving a shit.

Like, thank you for noticing.

I feel like that says so much about our listener base.

It does.

Because like that, and that's when it started to hit us.

We were like, all right, people are seeing that we're getting tired.

So we, we got together, we decided, you know what, we're taking it back old school.

We're going to do two main huge episodes every week because I feel like these episodes are getting meatier and meatier and we want to continue with that because that's the main attraction.

Every time you say meatier, I always think that you're talking about a meatier.

Yeah.

Yeah.

I am.

No.

They're getting more space.

No, no, no.

We're not, we are not talking about.

I wish I was real scared about space right now, but like, you can't control it.

I'm in a phase, I, it's, but yeah, you know, either way, we want to keep these main episodes like really be able to focus all our attention and like, you know, we don't want to burn ourselves out.

We don't want to burn Dave out.

We don't want to burn you out.

We don't want to burn you out.

So we're going to take it back.

We're going to do, still do the two main episodes every week.

Like that's not going to change.

So don't worry.

That'll never change.

We're just keeping it the same.

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It's always been, but instead of doing the listener tales every single Friday, we're going to do it just once a month.
It just feels right.
It feels like it's going to be a treat again.
It used to be a treat, you know, like it was always that thing that we were like, oh, guys, we're doing a listener tale because of like, whoa, that case was starly.
Exactly.
Let's have a pallet cleanser here.
And now you'll have them to look forward to.
I feel like when it's like every Friday, it's like, it's been fun.
Like I don't need it by any means, but I'm like, now it's going to be like exciting to do listener tales.
Like even more so.
Yeah.
It becomes a treat for us and it becomes a treat for you guys again.
And that's all we really want to do.
We just want to make this a fun experience for everybody.
If you eat ice cream every night after dinner, it's not that exciting to go get ice cream anymore.
But if you get it once a month, it's a lot of fun.
Or like once a week.
So just letting you know that that's what's going to happen again, two main episodes sticking around.
Don't worry about that.
And we'll let you know because it's going to be instead of the Friday episode, like we're going to figure out where these two main episodes are going to release now during the week.
This is really just better for everybody.
I think it's, you're still getting the exact same amount, like amount of main episodes.
That's not changing.
But it's just, we don't want to burn out and we don't want to start, you know, like not being able to put as much as we want to put into main episodes, you know, so.
So I think this will be good for everybody.
And again, this is like, we're taking your feedback.
Like this is, this is your show as much as it is ours.
And we just want to make it what you want it to be.
Exactly.
Sorry, somebody sent mail and it made a noise.
How fucking dare they.
So yeah, so thanks for like, you know, sharing that and thanks for giving a shit about us and actually like messaging us, being like, are you okay?
We are okay.
We were just, we really were burning out though, like there was, it was starting to get a little much.
Hundo pee.

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And, you know, we love this and we love you and we just want to keep, keep doing that.
So you look so earnest right now.

I am earnest.

I know you are, but you just, I'm excited about like, I love morbid for what it is and
I want it to be what it was, you know, like, I don't want it to change and keep like evolving
is one thing, changing is a different thing.

You just read my fucking mind.

I was saying that we're taking it back old school, kicking it.

We always read each other's minds.

I'm just nostalgic right now.

So you know what, here we are, we're in a listener tale right now.

Here we are.

And here we are.

Six minutes.

So we should shut the fuck up and get on to it.

We should shut the fuck up.

Shut the fuck up.

So you know what, the first tale that I'm going to read is called the time my grandfather
was kidnapped and the time my grandfather arranged an illegal adoption with the help
of the Capone mafia.

I absolutely love a two for one listener tale.

Who doesn't?

Who doesn't?

My friend, show me someone don't please.

So this one says, hi ladies, my name is Valerie and I'm new here.

I just got to find your Buffy rewatcher podcast.

I love that you found us through the Buffy rewatcher podcast.

I know that's the first time that we've heard that.

And I'm having the best time listening to discuss my favorite TV show.

In middle school, my friends and I assigned each other Buffy personas.

I was Buffy and my, and I named my dog Angel anyway, I soon discovered you have been podcasting
about my other favorite subject, true crime and my love for you blossomed.

Our love for you.

I would do the same.

I started listening from the beginning and I'm catching up quickly.

I'm submitting two other two stories about my grandfather as told to me by my father
and still somewhat in his voice, pick your favorite, read both.

They're short.

I've attached a put of a no idea how that's spelled or what it even means.

Again, I'm new here, but rumor has it that you like to read large fonts and I support
that's the truth.

I love you.

Rumors are true.

Yeah.

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I never got to meet my, I'm not all of them.

I never got to meet my God.

No, I was just saying, I never got to meet my grandfather as he passed away the year before I was born.

From the stories I've heard, he was quite a character.

He was movie star handsome, picture attached, he was with a quick and biting wit.

So he was a dream boat.

He found himself in a lot of colorful situations.

Feel free to use our names from what I know about my grandfather.

He'd love to have 15 minutes of fame.

I love that.

My favorite thing is there's a picture of him in an old timey boxer pose.

I know.

And his shirt says, I, I, no, no, it doesn't, it says, I, exactly what it says in that voice.

This guy's shirt wouldn't just be like, I, it's, I, I, I, I, I'm gonna punch in your face.

Oh man.

Oh man.

All right.

This story takes place in the mid-1920s.

Hope it's for Elena.

Oh yeah.

It's my, my time.

The Hillman department store was one of the biggest department stores in Chicago.

Chicago.

Chicago.

Edward Hillman Jr. was the Chicago department store heir who was in the newspapers for his glamorous life.

His marriages and divorces to actresses brought him further local celebrity status.

My grandfather, Edward Hillman, hereby known as Ed, was a handsome and dapper young gentleman

around the same age as Edward Jr.

One evening, Ed, meaning her grandfather, was accosted by three butt heads, forced into their car, and brought to their apartment for ransom.

Despite his protests, he could not convince these assholes that he wasn't the Edward Hillman, son of the Hillman department store owner.

Oh, they had the same name.

They had the same mistaken identity.

Yes.

They told him that he had to come up with \$5,000 in order to be released.

Oh my God.

Ed thought quickly and said that he'd call his kid brother, Herbert, to get the funds and bring it over.

Herbert was a tough 16-year-old.

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He was part of a Jewish gang that was known for getting into fights and minor trouble. Herb was an amateur boxer called the smiling slugger because he loved to fight and fought with a smile on his face.

That's how I love this.

So that was Herbert.

Yeah, it was.

Ed called his brother and said, matter of factly, I'm in a bit of trouble and I need \$5,000.

Please go pick it up and bring it over.

Telling Herb to bring \$5,000 gave Herb a clear understanding of what the situation was because it was a lot of money in those days.

And Ed and Herb's combined bank account was about \$5,000 short of that.

A few hours later, these criminals were looking out the window waiting for their money and they saw a young guy approaching.

Herb knocked on the apartment door and, feeling no threat and happy that their mission was successful, one of the kidnappers opened the door.

Hello.

As he opened the door, Herb greeted him with a hard punch to the face, which broke his nose and splattered a lot of blood.

His mama said, knock you out.

That's righty, she did.

Then Herb rushed at the second man and overpowered him with a series of punches.

Oh my God.

The third man surrendered.

I'm obsessed with that.

I'm obsessed with that, the third guy was like, no, I don't even want to deal with that.

Oh my God, I just had a smoker's cough at that.

He reminds me of Arthur Shelby from Peaky Blinders.

Yeah, me too.

I'm just saying, like he's a boxer and he's like, wily.

Does he say aye?

He does not say aye.

All this happened in a matter of seconds.

Excuse me, Herb, I almost said Tom from Tomis Shelby, Herb proceeded to empty their wallets and take their cash.

Hell yeah, he was like, you want my cash?

I'm going to take yours.

He took note of the addresses on their IDs and prepared a note for them to sign.

Each pledging Herbert \$50 for his troubles, which he later collected.

He made them pay for him kicking the shit out of them.

That's hilarious.

He was like, I had to come out of my house and come beat the shit out of you and save my brother.

I'm going to pay you for that.

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That's iconic.

After thanking the quote unquote gentlemen nicely for being such good sports, Herb and Ed left.

Wow.

My dad asked his father what he was doing during the melee.

He replied, I was filing my nails.

What?

As the fight is happening, he's like, I was filing my nails.

Wow.

I love that a lot.

Ed and Herb are already icons, but let's go to this illegal adoption thing.

Let's fucking do it.

In the early 1940s, my grandfather owned and operated a currency exchange in Cicero, Illinois.

Around the corner was a business owned and operated by Ralph Capone, Al Capone's brother.

Why?

Because the office was used to collect money from bookies, the numbers game, lottery and other amusements.

Since Ralph Capone collected money in smaller dominations, \$1, \$5, \$10 bills, he approached my grandfather about exchanging these small bills for larger ones, including \$1,000 bills that the government was taking out of circulation.

My grandfather obliged and got as many \$1,000 bills as he could, and Ralph was very appreciated.

I did not know that there was ever \$1,000 bills.

An attractive 18 year old girl came to the currency exchange regularly to cash her check.

My grandfather enjoyed talking with her because she was so pretty and kind.

One day she came in looking very upset.

My grandfather asked her what was wrong.

Was she ill?

She confessed that she was pregnant and her boyfriend had no intention of marrying her.

My grandfather remembered that his brother-in-law knew a couple interested in adopting a baby and was growing impatient with the red tape.

My grandfather put two and two together and said to the girl, I think I might be able to help you out.

When you come back next week, I might have some good news for you.

He contacted the childless couple and told them the situation.

They agreed on an arrangement.

Look at this guy just fucking making things happen.

Making dreams come true.

When the girl came in, he told her his idea about placing the child with the couple and told her the financial compensation.

The couple was willing to pay all expenses, including her hospital bills, subsidized her wages while she was unable to work, plus give her several thousand dollars as a gift.

After a brief meeting with her and her boyfriend, everything was finalized.

She had a baby girl and the transfer was made very smoothly.

Everyone seemed very happy with the arrangement.

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Once later, the baby daddy thought it over and felt that he could have and should have gotten more money.

Get the fuck out of here.

I love that he did not want to be there.

You were going to say, oh, he thought it over and he was like, no, no, I want my baby back.

No, he just thought he should get more money for his child.

Oh, okay.

He went to my-

He did so much work.

Yeah, exactly.

He went to my grandfather and demanded that he receive more money, or my grandfather was going to have, quote unquote, a big problem with him.

He's like, you don't know who I work with.

After thinking it over, my grandfather decided to go visit Ralph Capone to seek his advice.

There we go.

Being an amateur actor, my grandfather laid the story on so thick that it brought tears to the gangster's eyes.

Oh my God.

Capone told my grandfather to tell the boyfriend to meet him at a certain location and he'll give him the additional money.

I am alive.

My grandfather did just as he was told and got to the meeting place a little early to wait.

The baby daddy showed up wearing a big smile, walking towards my grandfather, greedily looking forward to the money transaction.

At the same time, two rough-looking guys got out of their car.

They took the man by each of his arms, dragged him into the car, and sped away.

Shit.

Months later, my grandfather was walking near his business and spotted the boyfriend walking towards him.

Upon seeing my grandfather, the boyfriend turned and ran in the opposite direction as fast as he could.

The 40s were fucking wild.

I love it.

There were days where you could just fuck somebody up for being a dick and everybody was just like, okay.

And everybody was just like, yeah, I probably deserved it.

Gonna look the other way.

Yeah, I'm gonna look the other way, man.

It's fucking wild.

Wow.

That was a Valerie.

That was a good one.

That was a good old's tale.

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Yeah.

I loved it so much.

What if you were stranded on a mountaintop or survived a plane crash?

This might sound like action movie plots, but for an unlucky few, these stories were all too real.

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Hello, I've attached a listener tale about a close call on vacation.

I call it, We Could've Been on Dateline.

Thank you for reading.

I don't know if I can say, I can, awesome.

It says, Hi ladies, my name is Kristen.

You can use my name and all the names in the story.

And this listener tale is a collaboration of some of your most loyal listeners.

Oh, I love that.

Well, almost all of us.

One of us doesn't like spooky things.

It's probably my fault for making her watch the Exorcist when she was 12.

Sorry Jody.

Sorry Jody.

Sorry Jody.

Just joking.

We will all be so excited if you choose our story for an episode.

Oh shit.

We'll be famous amongst our nearing middle-aged mom friends.

Hell yeah.

We'll call them up and pour glass of wine because you're famous, baby.

You're about to make a big kid.

Your name's gonna be in lights.

You're gonna be in pictures.

You too, Jody.

Just kidding.

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It's only a podcast.

Yay.

This story is about a time when the four of us came close to being featured on an episode of Dateline in the early 2000s.

Let's go back to the summer of 2000.

Let's go back to that.

You know it's wild.

It's already trailing off.

I have had that Jonas Brothers song stuck in my head.

I said I've been to the year 3000 and I'm getting homicidal over it and 2000 just reminded me of that.

But anyways, we're not going forward, we're going backwards to the summer of 2000.

When four friends from Seattle named Emily, Erin, Jody and Kristen.

That's you.

I think it is.

Who just graduated from high school, took their first trip together.

That is the most exciting trip.

My grandfather owned a townhouse in Lake Tahoe and offered it to me and some friends for a week as a graduation gift.

What a fun way to celebrate our newly found, quote unquote, adulthood.

Of course, we had parents who weren't going to let us go on shopper-owned.

So Emily's mom drove us down in Jody's mom's minivan.

Once we got to Tahoe, Emily's mom set up her own vacation elsewhere so the four of us had the townhouse to ourselves.

Let me just say that we were good girls, like really good girls.

We created a pyramid of soda cans that we had consumed above the fireplace, not beer cans.

Oh my God, you're me.

We went to a museum.

We swam in the lake.

We took one of those old tiny photos where we were dressed up like cowboy sex worker bank robbers.

The riskiest thing we did on this trip was go see a fortune teller in downtown Tahoe, which made us feel like super cool risk takers.

It's so funny.

We were just talking about it.

We weren't.

That that was you.

The townhouse was a part of a large complex near Marina.

I was about to say marinara.

Wow.

There's some marinara.

There's some marinara.

There's some marinara.

Near a fine chicken parmesan.

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The townhouse was a mozzarella stick.
Oh man.
Late night morning.
All the townhouses leave me alone.
All of the townhouses looked exactly the same from the outside.
Our particular townhouse was three stories tall.
We walked in a front door from the driveway and up a set of stairs to the main living space with the kitchen and the living room.
Then walked up another set of stairs to reach the top floor where the bedrooms were.
Lots of walking.
There were two bedrooms.
One had double twin beds just off the hallway.
That's where Emily and Erin slept.
At the end of the hallway was a master bedroom where Jodi and I slept.
The bathroom had two doors.
One that led into the master bedroom and another into the hallway.
So you could walk from the master bedroom through the bathroom to get into the hallway.
There was a queen-sized bed against the back wall and a little love seat next to the door that led to the hallway.
The master bedroom had a huge skylight.
It also had a door that led to the outside.
We never used this door as it went down a long flight of steep stairs to the grassy common spaces between the townhouses.
Well, one night after drinking more soda and watching the cutting edge or some other night at least rom-com, we fell asleep.
It's important to note that at this time Jodi had forgotten to pack pajamas.
Oh.
Ah, that sucks.
And had just purchased some that day on a trip to Target, my favorite place.
And I had been friends since we were two.
So we didn't super care about sharing a bed in undies.
At some point during the night I woke up from a deep sleep and noticed a large full moon illuminating the bedroom.
At first I wasn't sure what had me wake up and I lay there taking stock of the room.
It was then that I heard loud snoring.
My sleepy brain trying to make sense of the situation assumed it was Emily snoring.
Sorry, I'm not sure why I attributed loud snoring to you.
Around the same moment I also realized that Jodi was saying something to me in a whisper voice.
Obviously the snoring had woken up Jodi too.
I responded, probably in a louder voice, that I thought, why is Emily snoring so loud?
Jodi whispered back, it's not Emily, it's the man.
What?
My sleepy brain couldn't keep up with this new information.

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What man?

What the fuck?

Again, probably in a voice that was louder than it should have been given the situation.

Jodi shushed me and pointed.

It was then that I realized there was a very large man.

What the fuck?

Sound asleep on the love seat on the other side of the room next to the bedroom door.

Perhaps three feet from our bed.

Are you kidding me?

Thank God Jodi had woken up and made a plan because I was still processing the situation.

She whispered to me to get out of the bed on my side, the furthest away from the man, and quietly go through the bathroom door so we wouldn't have to walk right next to him to get out of the room.

Remember, this is 2000.

We don't have cell phones.

So in order to get help, we have to call from inside the house.

We go downstairs to the kitchen.

Jodi picks up the largest knife in the kitchen, just in case, again, she's thinking much more quickly than I am.

That's why Jodi doesn't like spooky things.

She's lived spooky things.

Yeah.

Jodi knows what the fuck is up.

She's good.

She's preparing for the next spooky thing, you know?

And she calls 911 from the kitchen phone.

I can hear the operator ask, what's your emergency?

Jodi, we're staying in a condo on vacation and we just woke up to a man asleep at our bedroom.

Fuck.

Operator, do you know the man?

Bitch, why would I be calling 911?

Come on, man.

Yeah.

Bye.

See you later.

No.

Jodi.

No.

When we woke up, he was just there asleep on our couch.

Operator, you're sure you don't know this person?

You know what?

Let me go check.

Oh, it's just Glenn.

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Oh, yeah.

I forgot.

Glenn comes over and falls asleep sometimes.

Jodi.

No.

Operator, what's your address?

Pause for us to frantically find the address of the townhouse on a brochure or something on the kitchen counter.

Operator, you need to get out of the house immediately.

The police are on their way.

Fuck, I almost did it again.

Marinette or sauce?

Marina security has been alerted.

Get out of the house.

Oh, shit.

Jodi, but our friends are still asleep upstairs.

Operator, the police will be there soon.

Get out of the house.

Oh, my God.

Oh, my God.

As fully grown adults, we wondered why we didn't go wake up Emily and earn to get them out of the house.

But at the time, it just made sense to just get out.

Okay.

Well, you were teenagers at the time, and somebody's telling you, get out of the house.

You get out of the house.

You did the right thing.

It's like the end of Black Christmas.

She wants to go save everybody, but they're already dead.

But it's just, what are you going to do?

Get out of the fucking house.

We hang up, and I'm fairly certain Jodi put the knife back so we didn't meet the cops with a large knife in our hands and head to the last set of stairs in our bare feet.

Remember how Jodi had just purchased pajamas?

As we stand outside in the driveway waiting for the police, we are somehow calm enough to joke that it feels like we're in an episode of cops.

And if Jodi hadn't gotten pajamas that day, she'd be the crazy lady standing and waiting for the police outside in her underwear.

Oh, my God.

It felt like the police and the Marina security were there within seconds.

We waited outside for a minute while the police officers asked us about the situation.

Again, yes, there's a man on the couch in the master bedroom.

No, we don't know him.

No, we don't know how they got in.

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Our friends are still asleep upstairs in the room next to him because we're barefooting on our PJs after assessing the situation.

They have us come in and sit on the couch while they talk to the man.

Eventually we see what seems like an eight foot guy walk down the stairs escorted by two different police officers.

Find him in PJs and with their eyes as wide as I have ever seen them walk Emily and Erin.

After he was gone, the officers took us into the master bedroom.

Did you know that the outside door to the bedroom isn't locked?

What the fuck?

What?

We had locked the door, or at least we thought we had.

Even though it was a few decades before your podcast, we already knew that fresh air was for dead people.

Hell yeah.

And we for sure had locked that door.

What we didn't know was that the lock was broken.

We hadn't ever checked it from the outside.

We had no idea that the door, which led directly into our bedroom, had been open the entire time we'd been staying there.

It turned out that this guy was staying at another townhouse at the marina.

He came back to what he thought was his place completely wasted and walked up the long steep staircase to our bedroom, which just happened to have a broken lock.

Holy shit.

We spent the rest of the night playing Monopoly or some other game that we found in the condo because we certainly weren't going back to sleep.

We definitely made some comments about how we could have been on cops, or worse, dateline if we'd actually gotten murdered.

The next morning we all called our parents and told them that we had to call the police, but it wasn't because of anything we had done.

Trust me.

Remember, we were good girls.

They were all thankful we were okay and the lock got fixed within an hour.

Reflecting on this now as a parent, I cannot imagine how they must have felt getting that call.

Seriously.

We calmed our nerves by watching more 90s romcoms adding to the soda can pyramid and playing more games.

Hell yeah.

We ended up having a really great trip.

When I texted Emily asking if I should write this story up as a listener tale, she said,

Ooh, yes, man.

We got so lucky.

Yeah, you did.

We did get so lucky.

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We very easily could have become a full-fledged episode of Morbid.

Four murdered girls on a vacation in Lake Tahoe.

Even though we never saw the man again and his entering our bedroom was apparently an innocent drunken mistake, Jody still swears that she saw him giving her a creepy smirk when he walked on the stairs with the officers.

She still remembers how gross it was.

He didn't even have the nerve to look apologetic.

Oh my God.

At the time, we didn't let ourselves think too much about what could have happened.

What if he'd stumbled and drunk and climbed into bed with us?

What if he'd discovered he'd hit the jackpot and found four innocent teenage girls to terrorize?

What if?

Wow.

Thank God the what ifs didn't happen, but you can bet that every time I stay somewhere on vacation, I check that the lock works.

Hell yeah, you do.

Yeah, we will too.

Keep it weird ladies, but not so weird that you get intoxicated, so intoxicated that you accidentally fall asleep on somebody else's vacation rental and scare the living crap out of teenage girls.

Holy shit.

That is Kristen.

That's bananas.

I am so glad that you survived and that you're here.

You're here.

You're here.

I'm just, I'm amazed right now that you've just woke up to snoring.

Yeah.

Like woke up to snoring and there was a giant man in your room asleep.

Like no thank you.

And the fact that you said you looked like he was like eight feet tall when you woke up.

Holy shit.

So scary.

I'm amazed right now.

Seriously, I'm so freaked out.

Well, my next one is going to be the story of a creepy lab partner in missing chloroform because it speaks to me.

I love that.

It's as high weirdos.

My name is Taylor and yes, you can use my name if you read this on the podcast.

Even if you just read it to yourselves, oh my God, back in August, I was looking for a new podcast to listen to and found morbid.

I love all these new listeners.

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I know.

By the second episode, I was hooked and found my new favorite podcast.

Thank you.

I love how much research and time you guys put into the stories and now you focus on the victims and their families in these terrible crimes, but you still spit the facts about the case.

Thank you.

Thanks.

I sadly have already caught up with all the old episodes.

Yes, I work a very boring job at the moment, but at least I get a bit binge listen to your podcasts all day long.

I love hearing your lives change and everything exciting going on.

Ash, congrats on your engagement and good luck with the wedding planning.

I hope it is the happiest day of your life.

Thank you so much.

Wow.

That was so kind.

Alina, congrats on the book.

I can't imagine writing a book.

I will read it one day, I promise, but I'm not a big book reader at the moment since

I just spent four years reading chemistry textbooks.

That's fair.

You know what?

I forgive you.

That's fine.

And thank you.

Free pass.

I recently graduated with a degree in forensic chemistry.

Holy shit.

Holy shit.

With minors in biology, criminal justice, and forensic science.

You're a badass.

I'm about to join the police academy and hopefully work my way to become a crime scene investigator,

my dream job.

You're the best.

You also kind of sound like you went down a similar path.

I know.

I'm like, damn, you're awesome.

I'm like, yeah, you're awesome.

So if you can't even touch that, I got it.

I got it as it came out of my own mouth.

So if you can't tell, I really like true crime.

I have always thought of sending in a listener tale, but thought nothing in my life is as

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interesting as the other tales you have read.

And I thought, why the hell not?

YOLO, am I right?

I have attached my listener tale in a double-spaced pot of pho, and it takes about six minutes to read.

Oh, look at you.

I am sorry for all the typos and grammatical errors.

Please don't get mad at me.

I have never been good at writing.

I'm going to get pissed at you.

I'm already pissed off.

But enjoy.

Am I right?

Imagine if we were serious.

Imagine if we were like, fuck you, too.

You know what?

On to the next one.

Yeah, that.

This story starts four years ago when I was a very anxious sophomore in college, sitting in one of my chemistry labs when some guy ends up sitting next to me and asking to be my lab partner.

Nope.

A tale as old as time.

We exchanged numbers, asked questions about lab and class, and I did not think anything of it.

Further into the semester, he ended up sitting next to me in our lecture portion of the class and would start to say things very casually that would make me feel uncomfortable.

Uh-oh.

Mm-hmm.

One day, we were talking about organic chemistry and realized we had the same female professor, but our classes were at the different times.

A few weeks later, we were talking about a test that I did not do so hot on, and he said, don't worry.

I will just force our professor to sleep with me in black male hair, so she'll give you an A.

What?

Uh-uh.

Immediately after lab was over, I texted my then-boyfriend about what happened during lab, and he felt that I should be nice to this guy because he seemed like he could be potentially dangerous based on the things he would say, and was worried about my safety since we were a long distance, and I would walk to and from campus by myself because I was not paying \$130 to park on campus.

Um, you're not with that boyfriend, right?

I hope not.

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Because if my boyfriend says then-boyfriend, I'm assuming, because like, be nice to this guy who makes you uncomfortable, fuck that.

What?

That's dumb advice.

Yeah, no.

That's really bad advice.

Yeah, I don't know about that.

After this comment, I was nice to him during lab and avoided him at everywhere else, but I would eventually end up getting multiple texts a day from him.

Because you were nice to him.

Because you were nice.

That's the thing.

You don't have to be nice.

From a nice girl-y.

Don't be nice to everybody.

Don't be nice.

You know what?

You don't need to do it.

It's just not necessary.

Be nice to people who are nice to you and make you feel good.

I hardly even answered any texts, but he was not seeming to get the hint and was trying to get me to invite him over to my apartment to study.

Obviously, I never told him where I lived and always made up excuses since I didn't want to reject him and make him mad.

I feel so bad that you were in this situation.

I know.

During this semester, he would find me when I was doing homework no matter where I was on campus and would come sit next to me in silence because no way am I trying to have a conversation with this guy.

The semester eventually came to an end, and I thought I would never have to see or hear from him again.

Boy, was I wrong.

Oh, no.

The next year was my junior year, and I decided to become a chemistry laboratory teaching assistant.

Look at you.

Damn.

Before school started, me and my then boyfriend decided to break up.

This is important later, I promise.

I'm actually pretty happy about that, so glad.

The week before school started, they had all the chemistry student workers come to a safety meeting because chemistry labs equal dangerous chemicals.

I've heard that.

While I was sitting on a lab bench waiting for the meeting to get started, guess who

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walked in through the door?

No.

Creepy ass lab partner.

No.

He had a job working in the stock room where he would be with all the lab equipment and lab chemicals.

We made eye contact, and he immediately came and sat next to me.

Please move.

He was trying to make conversation with me and asked about my boyfriend, and my dumb ass told him that we broke up a couple of weeks prior.

Mama.

But you're like, I shouldn't have to lie.

No.

This then started, but like lie.

But lie.

This then started the spam of text messages every day, telling me my ex-boyfriend was stupid for breaking up with me and blah, blah, blah.

Once again, I never answered any of the messages.

Eventually, he would start showing up to the labs that I was teaching and would just sit there by my desk to try to start conversation with while I was helping a student understand the lab.

He finally stopped showing up to my labs, but quickly started showing up to my mandatory tutoring hours.

Luckily, a lot of my students would also show up to my tutoring hours so I could help them with the pre-lab for the next week, so I would never have to talk to him.

So hearing all of these things is giving me like just blah, like back to chemistry class.

Me too.

Like doing the like pre-lab, fucking pre-labs, man.

I hate a pre-labs.

It's just making me think of your book.

Yeah.

There you go.

This year on my birthday, when I got out of class, he was standing outside the door with a birthday present.

What?

That I did not ask for.

No, that's so awkward.

I didn't know what to do, so I said thank you and quickly walked to my next class.

My senior year, he ended up being in one of my classes and sat in front of me and would still text me every single day.

Like, Bro-E, I'm not answering you.

No.

This semester, he kept texting me asking to meet him after class, which I would not do, and would awkwardly sprint out of the class.

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After a few weeks of this happening, he sent me a very long text professing his love for me.

I am very quickly texted back saying, I'm sorry, but I am not interested and don't see you that way.

Good for you.

This started the spamming of my phone where he would be apologizing and that he still wanted to be friends.

At this point, I was fed up with this, so I responded telling him that he was making me feel very uncomfortable and to stop texting me, which of course, he did not do.

And I ended up blocking his number.

He would then follow me from our class to my next class apologizing, but I did not care anymore, so I would walk with headphones in and ignore every word he said.

He then brought my birthday present to class to give to me since I was no longer talking to him.

This was in November and my birthday is in February.

Talk about planning ahead.

Since I blocked his number, he had started messaging me on Instagram, Facebook, and found my Snapchat.

After a while, he eventually stopped messaging me and I thought this whole thing was behind me.

I ended up meeting my now boyfriend, yay.

One day, we were walking to his car because he paid for a parking pass and I was still too stubborn to pay for one, and he ran straight into Creepy Lab Partner.

I quickly put my head down and played on my phone until we passed each other and did not think anything of it.

That night, I got a very angry email from him through our student email saying that I liked him and to go fuck myself and many other mean comments about how terrible I was for telling him I did not want to date him.

In cell behavior.

Yup.

His tone went from being sorry to being pissed.

At this point, I had no idea what to do, so I did the only thing I could think of.

I called my parents and told them about the email since they knew everything else was going on.

They both got very worried and told me I needed to go tell someone on campus that I trusted and explain the whole situation in case something did happen.

The next day, I went and talked to my amazing boss who encouraged me to go straight to the head of security of the chemistry department, after hearing the whole story and sat with me while I talked to the head of the chem department.

They then told me that I should go to campus police and make a formal report.

The next day, my loving boyfriend drove me to the police station.

I then gave my statement to some police officer that made me feel like I was overreacting and making this a bigger deal than it really was.

A douche bag is what you mean.

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I ended up feeling like I made a mistake and felt stupid for this whole situation. The officer told me since he never threatened me, they really couldn't do anything. It's wild. You have to get hurt for them to do something. Yeah, literally. Has he tried to stab you though yet? No. If he does that, let us know for sure. Seriously. I decided to move on with my life and thought that everything was behind me, but nope, I was wrong again. Oh, no. The next week, one of my TA friends told me that Creepy Lab partner was in the library with her and a friend and he made a comment about how easy it would be to steal chloroform from the stock rooms. He did not think anything of it until the next day when she remembered everything that I had told her. She quickly went to report to the department head and I went to class. That night, me and my roommates were playing board games when I got a call from a random number on my phone. Turns out it was the department head and he wanted to let me know that he heard about the comment and went to check the chloroform and some of it was missing. Oh my God. I immediately broke down in tears on our porch because holy shit. He then went on to tell me that he already contacted campus police and made them aware of this. The part that really sucked was I had a chemistry test the next day that I did not get out, that I did not get out of. Obviously, I failed the shit out of that test. The next day, the department head walked into my lab and told me that the stock room assistant counted wrong and there was no missing chloroform. Are you fucking kidding me? I would have been like, so I'm retaking the test asshole. I'd be pissed. Oh my God. I have a friend that reported the comment and turns out she was good friends with the stock room assistant who checked and there were still some missing, but no one knew where it was. Wow. So the stock room assistant is trying to like save his butt by being like, I didn't lose any chloroform. Yeah, exactly. After talking to some of the other chemistry student workers, creepy lab partner was making multiple other girls very uncomfortable.

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That is not shocking.

So after all of that, we have no idea if he took the missing chloroform and I finally graduated and got to move out of that small town and away from creepy lab partner.

So that is the story of creepy lab partner.

I still feel like I overreacted.

You did not.

But it happened and I can't change it.

So oh well, I guess.

Keep it weird weirdos, but not so weird.

Ash, take it away.

I'm not good with words.

It's really neat either, but don't keep it so weird that you fucking steal some chloroform out of a fucking place where they keep chloroform.

Don't keep it that weird.

That chloroform place.

I just feel like students should not be in charge of chloroform and that's my takeaway from this.

That is my hot take with Ash.

Hot take with Ash.

Maybe we put like the teachers in charge of the chloroform.

I just, I don't, I don't know about this guys.

I feel like we should have some more protocol in place.

Ash is like, Kim's students are wilding.

I mean, sounds like it.

It's a wild wild thing.

Some students are wilding.

Um, yeah.

Oh man.

You did, but can we just point out you did not overreact.

Yeah.

No, you did not overreact at all and I hate that somebody made you feel that way.

And there is no such thing.

I personally believe there's no such thing as overreacting when it comes to your feelings about your personal safety.

Yeah, absolutely.

I don't give a fuck if somebody makes you think that you're overreacting because fuck that person.

Exactly.

Oh, I'm sorry, am I stressing you out with my feelings about somebody being a dick to me?

Fuck off.

That's your job.

Campus police officer.

Seriously.

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Oy vey.

Well, I think we've got time to read one more, listen to what we're gonna do.

I picked my roommate was slowly being replaced by her doppelganger in our haunted chair factory.

Yeah, you did pick that because I wanted to know a lot about the haunted chair factory and I wanted to know if the doppelganger was a live person or if they had once been a live person and they are now a ghost.

I also want to know that.

Well, let's find out mother fucker.

Hello, Deb Deb and maybe Ash and Elena if I charm and dazzle Deb Deb enough.

You did.

You did it.

You did a couple pieces of business before we get into the fun.

You can call me Nick.

Nick.

Nick.

All names have been changed attached as a double-spaced patefa.

It's short, but it hopefully packs a motherfucking punch.

Punch punch.

And the motherfucking.

And now for the affection.

You ladies have saved my life in more ways than you know.

Thank you.

Keep doing what you're doing.

Your work may maintain some karmic order in the universe.

Oh my God.

I love you, Nick.

That was so sweet.

Damn.

All right.

So until now, I didn't think I had any tails to send in, but alas, there was the doppelganger affair.

The doppelganger affair.

Oh, just that.

I'm a medical student, another thing, who was getting ready to match in my reggae, oh fuck.

You got this.

I am a medical student who was getting ready to match into my residency program.

There you go.

Thanks.

I'm trying to match into plastic and reconstructive surgery, which is hard to do because it's very competitive.

You're about to be on that show, Nip Tuck.

There you go.

I would love to just nail people back together after.

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Yeah, just nail people back together.
Just nip and tuck them back together.
Returning someone to some idea of normalcy after disfiguring tragedy would be the greatest honor of my life.
Wow.
I really like you.
You are so kind.
You're a really cool person, Nick.
I know.
But anyway, I currently live with my lovely black kitty, who I adore, who I love, more than my own life.
I just really threw a door in.
I was like, you love them?
No, you adore them.
We are bound to each other and we'll continue to meet lifetime after lifetime into eternity.
That's how I feel about Bobo.
That's how I feel about Drew and my partner.
He's here like animals.
Well, and my cats, obviously, and my partner.
He's here too.
Before living with them, I lived with two other students in a converted chair factory in the industrial area of our city.
Both women were working on their doctorates in physiology.
Holy shit.
We all met while working in the research lab.
I got into when I was finishing my master's in physiology.
I'm a professional student, as you can see.
Hell yeah.
The ladies, we'll call them Amy and Sarah, spent a lot of time in class in the lab working on research or in the library writing up their findings.
Sarah was a little hummingbird of a person, always talking to whoever and having a whole last conversation, extroverted freak, what's that like, I didn't say that they did.
Amy was me, ultra introverted, but able to mingle and drain the social battery when absolutely necessary.
That tidbit of information will be important later.
The chair factory turned department building was an impending six story structure that stood gazing south to the heart of downtown Detroit.
Ooh, I see that.
What a beautiful sentence.
I see that.
If I was an English teacher, A plus.
A plus.
A plus, plus, plus.
The apartment was aloft with high ceilings and massive picture windows.

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I fucking love a picture window.

That brought me to my knees when the heating bill came every month, yeah, except for that. From some quick research, the factory opened around 1910 on the outskirts of an area known as the Black Bottom, which is northeast of downtown Detroit.

It was named for the rich dark soil in the area that was framed, or nope, that was farmed by French settlers.

That soil didn't do it.

It was framed by those French settlers.

It was farmed by the French settlers in the prior centuries.

The area then became a prominent place for black Detroiters around the turn of the 20th century.

They built up the area into a rich, successful neighborhood by the 1960s and it appeared with urban.

No, it had disappeared.

Fuck.

They were getting so dry, and then I get blind.

By the 1960s, and then I get blind, so I wish you could see my hand motion in the hand.

I just threw my hands out.

By the 1960s, it had disappeared with the urban renewal that was happening in Detroit.

Like a lot of buildings in Detroit leading up to the city filing bankruptcy in 2015, the factories had abandoned until good old gentrification swooped in and the factory was converted into needlessly expensive apartments that people living in the area for generations could never afford.

That does suck.

All of that to say, this building was old and creepy as fuck.

Oh yeah, thanks for that little history lesson.

I like it.

I was mostly alone for the duration of the day while Amy and Sarah were at school curing cancer or whatever it is they were curing cancer, you know.

I would stream my lectures online because your girl has raging ADHD and bipolar disorder, so I have a hard time sitting still and patiently waiting for class to be over, respectively.

Yes, but people with mental health issues can be doctors as well.

Hell yeah.

Hell yeah.

Let this be a lesson to the doubters.

A mentally ill black girl who was covered in tattoos who grew up well below the poverty line her entire life is going to be a doctor.

Fuck yeah.

Where there's a will, there's a motherfucking way, and I added the motherfucking.

Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick.

It's you.

But like I was saying, I spent my days alone until my roommate, Sarah, started coming home.

Oh, I know where we're headed.

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Uh-oh.

It's not Sarah.

She started coming home mid-afternoon a few days a week.

I didn't think much of this because she was in her fifth year working on her dissertation, so I figured writing at home was better for her zen or for her writing zen or whatever.

I would say hi in other pleasantries.

She would always simply nod and disappear into her room.

There were instances a few days later when Sarah came home early while I studied at the dining room table.

I smiled slightly and asked her a question about a professor whose lab she worked in.

Hey, how's Mr. Miller doing?

Nothing.

She just stared at me with a small, pleasant smile on her face.

Thinking she just didn't hear me, I repeated the question.

How's Dr. Miller?

Again, nothing, just that stare.

After what felt like six hours, she broke our mutual stare and casually walked into her room.

A tall gray.

Yeah.

She's a tall gray.

That's what she is.

Not a tall drink of water, tall gray.

A tall gray.

Much different.

Thoroughly freaked out, I tried to shake it off and focus on my little doctor notes.

About two hours later, I heard a set of keys jingle outside the front door.

I looked up to greet Amy coming through the door, but some of my internal organs fell through the floor when I saw Sarah walk through the door again.

What the fuck?

I wish I could say I did something smart, like tell Sarah what happened or launch an investigation like the true scientists we are, but I'm a freeze kind of girl.

I stared a hole through my laptop while Sarah chatted eagerly about her day and flitted around the apartment, never breaking the stream of consciousness flowing from her lips to take a breath.

Shortly, Amy was also doing the jingle at the door and stepping over the threshold.

Now that there was power in numbers, I worked up the courage to ask Sarah another question.

Hey, Sarah, did you come home for lunch today?

Oh my God, you said, hey, Siri.

Oh my God.

Oh, was that your computer?

That was my computer being like, yeah.

Oh my gosh.

I heard that weird noise and then there was like a drop in the room next to me like slightly

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because it's like creaking or something and I just shit myself.
They're cool.
Not actively.
I'm sorry.
I'm sorry.
I'm sorry.
I just scared the shit out of me.
Okay.
So, Sarah, did you come home for lunch today?
That was an invitation to detail her entire afternoon.
Oh no, I went to blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.
No, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, did not include our apartment to stare at me like a tiny smiley psycho.
Oh shit.
I tried to downplay the question because I was questioning my sanity at this point.
I said, oh, I thought I came home a couple hours ago.
Must have been another day I was thinking of.
She continued, I haven't come home for lunch in a while.
Weird.
What the fuck?
Nope, nope.
I hate that.
I hate that.
All those times I saw her come home early wasn't her.
What?
This piqued Amy's attention.
Like at all?
I've seen you here recently.
I've seen you here early too recently.
What?
I loved and hated that validation.
I wasn't on the verge of psychosis, but I was still seeing something that I should not be seeing.
But what do you do about that?
We basically went on living our lives knowing that there was a creepy, silent version of Sarah wandering around our apartment.
Double Gangers are a sign that bad things are coming.
Oh no.
Are they not?
That's what I've heard.
And I wasn't particularly interesting in finding out what final destination shit was afoot.
Yeah, me either.
But I want to know.

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I want to know now because I'm not in there.

If I was in that fucking apartment, I'd be like, well, you know, we don't know things.

If I was in that apartment, I would literally break the fuck out of my lease and live anywhere else.

If I was in that apartment, I would not be in that apartment.

That's exactly where I would be.

Not there.

Another few weeks passed without a sight of silence, Sarah, until one night.

To preface, I have the bladder of a small puparini.

A small puparini.

A small puparoni, I said, I said, puparini, puparoni.

I get up two or three times every night to go potty.

So per my usual schedule, I awoke with my bladder screaming for relief.

I crawled out of bed and I stepped toward the door of my bedroom.

Oh, no.

Oh, fucking no.

No.

No, bitch.

Nope.

Oh, my God.

Upon opening my bedroom door, the form of Sarah stood outside my door, softly lit by Christmas lights strung around my room.

No.

Fuck that.

Smiling softly, she turned and nearly drifted to the bathroom, leaving me stunned.

So I thought, shit.

I need to go in there.

In that moment, my bladder needed me to assert my dominance.

It needed me to be the head bitch in charge in that moment and kick Silent Sarah out of the potty, fully expecting to be dragged to hell through the drain of the shower.

I approached the bathroom and flicked on the light.

Nothing.

Just an empty bathroom.

Fully expecting to be dragged to hell through the drain.

And that's everything.

We didn't see Silent Sarah after that.

We all moved out and went on with our respective careers.

Hate to end it like that.

Holy shit.

But life doesn't always deliver a perfect true.

Let's do it.

We start to finish.

Regardless, I wish you ladies the best of luck with life, family, and business and any endeavors you have before you.

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And also to you.

You too, Nick.

Dr. Nick.

All my love, Dr. Nick.

Hell yeah, Nick.

Hell, motherfucking yeah.

That one was damn.

The scariest thing I've ever heard in my fucking life.

That was so creepy.

I just don't even know what to say.

I think I genuinely, this is so foul, but I think I genuinely would have found a bottle to pee in that night.

Yeah.

I'm not jokes.

Potentially.

Yes.

One hundo pee.

Yes.

Yeah.

I don't think I'd be going in that.

I got that from somebody and I can't think of who I got that from.

What?

Hundo pee.

Hundo pee.

I've been saying it a lot lately.

Like, you know, 100% felt like hundo pee.

I must have got it from somebody on Bravo.

Probably.

Just got to give credit where credit's due.

That gives lots of Bravo vibes.

Yeah.

Well, anyways, this has been Listener Tales.

Wow.

I'm really happy to be back.

I don't remember if I was on the last one or not.

I don't think I was.

Oh, you think I was.

Okay.

Maybe.

I'm not really sure where we are in the rotation anymore.

We had special guest Sheena Melwani and Triton at one point.

We did.

They're beautiful souls.

I fucking love them with my whole entire being.

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She's my beautiful Luna Moth.

Yeah.

She's my Shishi.

Yeah.

And if anybody else calls her that, I'll kill you.

I'll kill you.

So, love you guys.

And we hope you keep listening.

And we hope you keep it weird.

But also weird that you call my best friend Shishi because I'll kill you.

Not as weird as we've been keeping it tonight.

It's late.

It's late.

I love you.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.