

## [Transcript] Stolen Hearts / Listen Now: Ghost Story

I'm Tristan Redman, a journalist and host of the new podcast, Ghost Story.

Ghosts aren't real, at least that's what I've always believed.

Sure, odd things happened in my childhood bedroom in London, objects that moved around inexplicably, lights that switched themselves on and off.

But ultimately, I shrugged it all off.

That is, until a couple of years ago, when I discovered that every subsequent occupant of the top floor of that house is convinced they've experienced something inexplicable too.

The wonder in Pineapple Street Studios comes Ghost Story, a podcast about family secrets, overwhelming coincidence and the things that come back to haunt us.

Here's a clip from the show.

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I want to tell you a story.

Well, it's really three stories all wrapped around each other.

It's a ghost story, it's a murder mystery, and it's a family drama.

By which I mean, it's about my wife's family, her family's history.

And there's a chance they'll disown me for doing this.

If you come out with a piece that says he was a murderer, then I will be sorry that we ever said we would contribute to it.

But before we get into any of that, let's start at the beginning with the thing that set all of this in motion.

When I was 16 back in the 90s, my family moved to an old Victorian house in London on a street called Queens Road.

I slept in a bedroom tucked into the creaky top floor and weird things would happen up there.

I'd wake up and objects would have moved across the room, specifically this one vase. When I go to bed, it'd be on the mantelpiece, and then in the morning I'd find it on the desk.

I'd put it back, and the next morning I'd find it somewhere else.

Lights would flash on and off on their own, and I'd get this uncomfortable cold feeling whenever I was alone in the house.

It freaked me out at the time, but the truth is, I didn't really think much of it.

I was a teenager.

I had other things on my mind.

Every now and then, I'd ask my sister if she was messing with me, but she always swore she wasn't.

I grew up, left home, and became a journalist for Al Jazeera.

I cover things like French labour strikes in the war in Ukraine.

I don't believe in ghosts.

So when my family moved out of the house on Queens Road, I completely forgot about the weird stuff that happened in there.

Until that is, a few years ago, a man reached out, an old neighbour of ours, with a story about that very room.

I mean, it's quite a story.

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His name is Charles Pinellis, and he knows everything about this neighbourhood. You could say he's a bit of a gossip, but you probably shouldn't. Slanderous. Gives completely the wrong impression. Anyway, this is what he told me. Charles was walking around my old neighbourhood one day, going door to door, collecting donations for the local museum. I was there rattling a tin. And definitely not gossiping. Well, I mean, it was just Cersei's still there, and Cersei's moved out, and they've had a divorce, and all that sort of business. Eventually, he gets to my old house and knocks on the door. A woman answers, she's the mother of their house. After chatting for a bit, she invites him inside, and she tells him a story unlike anything he's ever heard before. The story goes, the American swans up with a hello. Here's what she tells him. One day, the woman is at home at my old house. She looks out of the window, and she sees a man standing on the driveway. So the mother of the house opens the door. It's someone who used to live in the house, an American man who'd lived there with his wife and two children. The American says to her, I'm so sorry to bother you, but I just have to know. Do you still have that ghost in the top bedroom, straight, like that? What the American man proceeds to tell her. The things his family experienced on the top floor, it makes her go completely white. Because this isn't the first time she's heard of something going on up there. She just never believed it before. This struck a chord since the daughter had always insisted that there was a ghost in her bedroom, which would manifest itself on occasions and sit on her bed. The woman's daughter, starting when she was around 10, began complaining about a ghost visiting her room at night. Specifically the ghost of a faceless woman. She said to me, oh yes, my daughter told me about some goings-on, some sort of faceless woman who comes and sits on my bed. And she said, I always batted them away on the basis that we don't believe in that sort of thing. So I rang your father and he said, that was Tristan's room. So I imagine he phoned you and the cat was out of the bag. I promise you, and I hope you believe me, that I don't normally find myself having conversations like this, or even entertaining these sorts of ideas, but it's kind of weird, right? You now have three completely unconnected families who have had some sort of strange inexplicable experience on the top floor of that house. I think it's wonderful.

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It was definitely intriguing, but it probably wouldn't have been anything more than a story I'd tell my friends in the pub.

Except I couldn't stop thinking about this faceless woman.

And that's because there's another coincidence, something I hadn't thought about in years.

So I guess Tristan and I had just started going out and they invited my parents around to his house to come and say hi.

I first learned about it when my wife Kate and I had just started dating about 20 years ago.

My family still lived in the house on Queens Road, the one with the supposed ghost.

And Kate was staying with us.

And my granddad was in London, so they invited him over too.

She was very close to her grandfather, so my folks asked if he'd join us.

So granddad arrived.

He's got nice rosy cheeks, granddad, like all the men in my family.

He wore a berry every day to keep his bald head warm.

And then my granddad walked into the house and before he said anything else, he said my mother was murdered in the house next door.

And I don't think we had ever put two and two together between where Tris lived and this big murder that happened in the family.

To be clear, I'd never heard about this murder before.

In fact, Kate didn't know a lot about it either.

Just that her great-grandmother had been killed decades before, she had no idea that it happened here.

Neither of us had any clue at the time that my new girlfriend's family had any connection to this neighborhood, let alone the house next door.

But the details of the murder make the coincidence even stranger.

Because just next door to my house, the house supposedly haunted by a faceless woman.

Kate's great-grandmother was killed by two gunshots to the face.