

CC07: THE HOUSE COLLECTS

MISS TENOR: They say that Arborwood Grove is haunted. That the house collects souls like some people collect stamps, or coins, or celebrity hair samples. Each one unique, with its own individual markings to set it apart. Each one telling a story that, in its utter uniqueness, is lost among the masses of the collection. They say that after the house was abandoned, it spent every moment attempting to fill itself up again. That over the years, as those original inhabitants lived their lives and subsequently died, the house pulled them back. Everyone who'd ever called Arborwood Grove home, from the family itself to the household staff to the handful of cats they had over the years. They s-

REWIND, CLICK

MISS TENOR: -if you knock on the door-

REWIND, CLICK

MISS TENOR: -fundamentally different in th-

CLICK

MARCEL: Come on, Anthony.

CLICK

ANTHONY: I'm trying, okay? Hang on. I've never used one of these things before.

CLICK

MISS TENOR: -little bit... intense.-

REWINDING, CLICK

MISS TENOR: -and even some dishes-

REWINDING, CLICK

MISS TENOR: They say a lot of things.

THEME MUSIC

CREDITS: File CC, Track Seven. The House Collects.

BELLS CHIME

REWINDING, CLICK

MISS TENOR: Okay everybody, this is Amanda Tenor, beginning her firsthand account of a night at Arborwood Grove. It's... eleven fifty-four pm, September nineteenth. Soon to be September twentieth.

FOOTSTEPS ON GRAVEL

MISS TENOR: I'm just walking up to the house now. It's dark and looming and... You know, just imagine that house from Scooby Doo. Literally any episode of Scooby Doo where they're in a haunted house. Yeah. That's what this place looks like. Full moon tonight and everything.

DOOR HANDLE RATTLES

MISS TENOR: Front door's locked. Front door's always locked, for those of you who might not be familiar with the whole Arborwood Grove deal. Which is all of you. Thanks for reading my blog, fourteen people who don't even live anywhere near Arborwood! Anyway, it's a pretty set-in-stone rule. You do not go in through the front. So, to the cellar we go.

FOOTSTEPS

CELLAR DOOR CREAKS

MISS TENOR: Okay, I'm in. Man, I haven't been here since grade ten, but...

(breathes deeply)

The whole place still smells like burnt compost. Whether that's from a fire a hundred years ago or just some kids doing stupid shit on their Grove Night, I couldn't tell you.

FOOTSTEPS CREAK

MISS TENOR: There's no, like, leftovers of a fire or anything. It's just empty down here. No boxes, no shelves, nothing. The place was probably cleaned out when everybody left. I say that, because it looks like this used to be a storage area. I noticed it last time, too. The walls are all rough, like there were shelves built onto them but they all got torn out, and nobody bothered fixing it.

FOOTSTEPS CREAK

MISS TENOR: Ah, memories, right? I'm not gonna call it nostalgia, because there's a reason I only ever came here once, but... it's like time doesn't move in here. It's been six years since I've been up here and the only thing different is that the dust is a little thicker. Goddamn, this place is creepy as hell. And what makes it so much worse is that it's not empty, like you'd expect a hundred-year-old abandoned house to be. No, it's... it's intact. Like, there's furnitures, and paintings, and even some dishes still in the cupboards. At least, there were last time. Hang on.

CUPBOARD DOORS OPEN

MISS TENOR: Yup. Still there. Six plates, two teacups, and a big old bowl.

CUPBOARD DOORS CLOSE

MISS TENOR: So why was all this stuff left behind? Why were most of the dishes taken, but not all of them? Why are there just one or two empty places on the wall that obviously used to hold a painting? Were those few missing objects taken by the first people to visit the Grove? If that's the case, why leave the rest of it alone for the next century? What made them stop taking things? These, as you know, are just a few of the many questions I'm trying to find answers to. And I know that those of you who actually want to hear those answers don't live in Arborwood, so... I'll give you a quick tour of the place to kick off our all-nighter.

I just came up from the cellar, which is exactly like you'd expect a cellar to be. Bottom floor is the kitchen and laundry, and then there's an entry hall, and a living room, music room. Nothing all too interesting.

FOOTSTEPS

MISS TENOR: So, then there's the second floor. Up here is a dining room, another living room, and a... study? Maybe? I still think it's such a weird layout for a house. Who puts their dining room on the second floor? I feel like Charles Carr only did it because he wanted to have a dumbwaiter to bring up food from the kitchen. Which I honestly can't blame him for. And on that note, let's head up on to the third, final, and most interesting floor of Arborwood Grove.

FOOTSTEPS

MISS TENOR: So, this is a smaller section of the house. I know some people say that the house was originally built for a family of twelve, but there are only two bedrooms, so that's not true. The one on the right is clearly the master, and the one on the left is clearly a child's room. Well, two children. Caroline and Martha.

CAROLINE: *(over recording)*
That's not my room.

ANTHONY: What the hell was that?

MARCEL: Shush.

MISS TENOR: They've both got this musty, flower wallpaper, and the bathroom in the kids' room is filled with rotting leaves. It's really gross.

You know, with all the effort he put into building this house, you'd think ol' Charlie boy would've built more than two bedrooms. Or renovated or something when he found out he was gonna have a second kid. But nope, those girls had to share.

CAROLINE: *(over recording)*
That's not my room.

CLICK

MARCEL: Okay, that's it. I can't do this. We're done.

ANTHONY: Did you hear that voice?

CAROLINE: Oh, Lord.

MARCEL: Yeah, that's why I can't do this!

CAROLINE: Oh, Lord, they heard me.

ANTHONY: She sounds like a kid. She sounds... normal.

MUSIC BEGINS

MARCEL: Oh yeah, real normal. You know, just your average, everyday...

CAROLINE: Ghost?

ANTHONY: Ghost?

MARCEL: Ghost.

CLICK

MISS TENOR: On the other hand, maybe the second bed was the only piece of furniture that got taken out of the house when it was abandoned. That would be kind of weird, though. This is all kind of weird. I mean, the Carr family still owns the house, but none of them have been here since the original family left a century ago. They're not even called the "Carrs" any more, if the girls followed standard naming conventions when they got married.

CREAKY FOOTSTEPS

MISS TENOR: Maybe they thought they were only leaving temporarily, and left the furniture here so it would be ready for them when they came back. Still, though. Why hasn't anybody stolen anything? In my experience, greed is usually much more powerful than fear. We can't all be so scared of the ghost that we're unwilling to steal from it. Not that I'm planning on stealing anything, mind you. I'm not really planning any- Agh!

Holy-

Sorry about that. It's just... There's a stuffed giraffe under the bed. I looked under there, and it was right in my face. Just a big pair of fake glass eyes, stuck in what is... probably supposed to be a head?

Fake glass eyes. Why does that have a familiar ring to it...?

Oh, you know what? It's like... it's like that ghost story people tell about the Zealots and walking ninth and all that.

And there, for the folks listening back home, is how I'm going to spend the rest of this lovely evening at Arborwood Grove.

I'm gonna put this giraffe back where he belongs, and go sit in the living room downstairs, and tell ghost stories. Maybe if I tell one that's close enough to the truth, the ghost will realize that I'm talking about it and show itself to me.

CREAKY FOOTSTEPS

MISS TENOR: And, then again, maybe it won't. Maybe nothing will happen, the same way that nothing's ever happened for the last hundred years.

But there's got to be some reason that everyone tells ghost stories, right? That didn't just start up out of nowhere. There has to be some basis in fact, or history, or something like that.

(Sighs)

And there I go again, around in the same circles I've been running for the past four months. It's not going anywhere. Everyone says they heard their version of the story from their parents, or their grandparents, or their siblings, or their friends, or that guy who used to work at the 7-11 down on fifth. But I can never trace it all the way back to the original source. I mean, sure, some of the stories have a pretty clear basis. That one about the fourth tower on the house, for example. There's a pretty concrete record that there really were supposed to be four towers in the original design, and everything was halted a little ways into its construction. But anything else? About the souls, and the wind, and the spirit of the town or whatever? Where'd all that come from? Nobody really knows, and so far, I haven't even come close to finding out.

But that's why I'm here, right? You know that. I've got to know what's up with the Ghost of Arborwood Grove, whether it actually exists or not. So here goes.

They say that Arborwood Grove is haunted.

MUSIC SWELLS

MISS TENOR: And, uh, speaking of the end of all things. That's it for my stories, and the ghost count over here is still stuck at a whopping... zero.

CAROLINE: *(over recording)*
Not quite. I can't believe you found Martha's giraffe. I... I need to go upstairs now.

MISS TENOR: *(sighs)*

You know, I'm not the most in touch with my spiritual side, but I was thinking that I might get at least a sense that there was something here in this house with me. But there's nothing. Nothing at all.

ANTHONY: Oh God, she didn't even know.

MARCEL: Shh.

MISS TENOR: The last time I was here - the only other time I've been here - I was fifteen years old. First week of grade ten. Now, I have this cousin. I'm not gonna name him, but you know who you are if you ever listen to this. Which you won't, because when have you ever cared about my journalism?

He'd been building it up for months. Me going into high school, having to do a Grove Night. I think this was... it was just a little bit before he went through his Zealot phase, so his interest in my Grove Night was a little bit... intense. He brought me and a couple friends up here on some night in the middle of the week, and we just... sat here. Told a couple ghost stories. My cousin was an asshole and tried to jump-scare us a couple times, but that got old pretty quick.

There was just this moment. A second. Maybe less. I felt like something was watching me. And that might have been me, as a kid, in a haunted house, trying to be a part of something

I didn't really understand. Or it might have been something else. Something real.

Never really knew which one I would've preferred, which I guess is why I didn't come back for so long. Now I know.

I mean, I don't want to be that person who definitively says that there's no ghost here, but... there's no ghost here.

ANTHONY: *(groans)*

MARCEL: Shush!

MISS TENOR: If there was a ghost here, it would have shown itself by now, right? We'd have more than just vague, clearly made-up stories to tell us that this place was haunted. We'd have proof, and evidence, and- whatever. I guess I'm now just another one of the many, many people who've come to Arborwood Grove and utterly failed to have any kind of paranormal experience whatsoever.

If I'm wrong, and you actually are here... give me a sign? I promise, I don't want to hurt you or exorcise you or anything. I just want to know if you're here! Hello? Hellooo?

SHE KNOCKS ON THE WALL

MISS TENOR: Are you here?

Hello, this is Amanda Tenor, calling on all channels to the spiritual resident of Arborwood Grove. Can you hear me? Please respond in literally any way.

Yeah, didn't think so. Okay, buddy, I'll give you one last story. One last chance, and then that's it. Show's over.

KNOCKING ON WALL

KNOCKING ON HOLLOW WALL

MISS TENOR: Wait.

KNOCKING ON WALL

KNOCKING ON HOLLOW WALL

KNOCKING ON WALL

KNOCKING ON HOLLOW WALL

KNOCKING ON WALL

MISS TENOR: Holy crap. How do I—

SLIDING PANELS MOVE

MISS TENOR: Holy crap. Uh, there's- There's a secret door in the wall here.
It's like- There's a secret passage in the walls! Hah! Jesus Christ, I really am in Scooby Doo, aren't I?

CREAKING

MISS TENOR: It looks like it goes on for a while. I bet they go through the entire house. Upstairs and downstairs, too. Maybe there are entire secret rooms in this place! I Wouldn't be surprised at this point.

Well, even if I didn't discover the ghost of Arborwood Grove, at least I'm getting something out of this whole ordeal.

Holy shit, am I really the first person to find this? Sorry, voice recorder, but this is something that needs a visual.

CREAKING GETS LOUDER

MISS TENOR: Seriously? How is my phone dead, I've barely used it all ni-

LOUD CRACK

MISS TENOR SCREAMS

THUD

RECORDER SPINS

CLICK

CAROLINE: What? What happened?

ANTHONY: Marcel-

MARCEL: Oh my God.

MUSIC BEGINS

ANTHONY: She said sitting room, right?

MARCEL: Anthony!

RUNNING FOOTSTEPS

CAROLINE: You didn't listen to the rest of it!

FOOTSTEPS STOP

ANTHONY: Okay. That hidden passage is in here somewhere. Start knockin'.

KNOCKING ON THE WALLS

MARCEL: What about the... You know. The ghost?

ANTHONY: What about her?

MARCEL: What if she... did something? What if this is dangerous?
What if we're not supposed to know she exists?

CAROLINE: Yes, you were supposed to! You were supposed to listen to the rest of it!

ANTHONY: It doesn't matter if we were supposed to know or not. We know now, and nothing's gonna change that. Besides, if the ghost wanted to hurt us, don't you think she would've done something already?

MARCEL: Maybe she's waiting.

ANTHONY: For what?

MARCEL: I don't know. An opportunity to cover it up?

ANTHONY: She's dead, Marcel. I don't think being arrested is much of a concern. Now come on. Help me look.

KNOCKING ON THE WALLS

CAROLINE: A hidden passage. What???. How is this possible? I lived in this house. I died in this house. I have been in this house for a hundred and twenty-eight Halloweens, and I will be here for God knows how much longer. This is my house. I know everything about it! I know exactly how many rooms there are. How many windows and doors. I know which stairs creak and which dishes are cracked. I know how it sounds when the wind blows across the roof, what it smells like after rain, which wallpapers have lost their colouring from being placed directly opposite an east or west window. This house has no right to hold secrets in its walls. Not from me.

MARCEL: Anthony?

ANTHONY: You found it?

MARCEL: No, I just... I had a thought. You know, I said we weren't supposed to hear that recording, but... What if we were? What if the ghost made that noise and showed us where the recorder was?

CAROLINE: I did!

ANTHONY: Hey, I think this is it.

HOLLOW KNOCKING

SLIDING PANELS MOVE

ANTHONY: How has nobody found this before?

CAROLINE: Someone did, and now she's... Wait. What happened to you in there, Miss Tenor?

MARCEL: Anthony, wait a second.

CAROLINE: Don't go in there.

MARCEL: *(simultaneously)*
Don't go in there.

ANTHONY: It's a secret passage. We have to check it out!

MARCEL: Yeah, that's what Amanda said, too.

ANTHONY: And then she went missing, I know. But if the ghost gave us that recorder, maybe she was trying to help us find Amanda.

MARCEL: Or maybe she was trying to warn us that we should stay away.

ANTHONY: Hey! Ghost! Uh, you mentioned Martha so I'm thinking you're Caroline...? You probably don't have a whole lot of physical presence, but if you want us to stay out of this secret passage, tell us right now!

CAROLINE: I don't know. I-

WHOOSH

CLATTER

MARCEL: Woah!

ANTHONY: Well, that's a sign if I've ever seen one.

CAROLINE: I didn't do that.

MARCEL: I don't know...

ANTHONY: The recorder just flew out of your hand, and into the secret passage! There is literally one way to interpret that!

CAROLINE: I didn't do that! ... Did I?

ANTHONY: Come on.

FLOORBOARDS CREAK

MARCEL: I'm not going in there!

CAROLINE: Good!

ANTHONY: You don't have to!

MARCEL: Anthony!

LOUDER CREAKING

MARCEL: I don't like the sound of those floorboards.

ANTHONY: It's fine! I'm sticking to the edges, and- Woah.

MARCEL: What?

ANTHONY: There's a hole here. I think it's where the dumbwaiter used

to go. Huh. That's weird. It goes all the way up to the third floor. But when I was up there earlier, I didn't see a dumbwaiter. And it goes really far down, t- Oh my God.

MARCEL: Be careful!

ANTHONY: I am! Holy shit. Marcel, there's- there's something down there. Oh my God. It's- It's a body. I think- I think it's Amanda.

CAROLINE: What? Let me see.

ANTHONY: And the recorder's down there, too. Looks like I was right about what the ghost wanted.

CAROLINE: I didn't- Agh!

ANTHONY: She must have fallen, and... Look at her, she's all...

MARCEL: Get back here. We have to tell someone about this.

ANTHONY: Yeah. Yeah, I- A fall from this height shouldn't have killed her, should it?

MARCEL: Maybe she... got stuck? Or broke a leg and couldn't get out?

ANTHONY: She would've tried to drag herself away, though, right? It doesn't look like she moved at all after falling. And she's so... twisted up.

CAROLINE: Agh!

MARCEL: You can stop with the corpse descriptions there, buddy.

ANTHONY: No, it- It almost looks like there's two-

CAROLINE: *(simultaneously)*
What is happening?

FLASHLIGHT SPARKS

ANTHONY: Aah!

MARCEL: What just happened?

ANTHONY: The flashlight, it just blew up in my hand!

MARCEL: Are you okay?

ANTHONY: A little singed, but-

CRACKLING, SPARK

CAROLINE: Ugh!

ANTHONY AND MARCEL GASP

MARCEL: Was that my phone?

ANTHONY: Yeah, me too.

MARCEL: Amanda said her phone was acting weird.

CAROLINE: I don't-

LOUD CREAKING

ANTHONY: We gotta get out of here. Help me back, I can't see anything.

MARCEL: Anthony, watch out!

ANTHONY: Shit.

MARCEL: Anthony!

LOUD CRACK

FAINT SCREAM

THUD

MUSIC ENDS

MARCEL: Anthony?

Oh my God. Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God. I gotta call- Shit, right!

Is this just a thing you do? Cut off our phones, and drop us two stories?

Oh my God. Oh, my God, I gotta go get someone.

Hold on tight, Anthony! I'm gonna get help, okay? Can you hear me?

PAUSE, NO RESPONSE FROM ANTHONY

MARCEL: Shit, shit, shit, shit. Okay. I promise I'll be back!

RUNNING FOOTSTEPS

MARCEL: Screw superstition!

FRONT DOOR SLAMS

CAROLINE: I- I- I remember.

I don't want- Actually, no, I did want the recorder back. Thank you. But I don't want anything else. The memories, the-

I don't want to remember this. I don't want to remember you. But I do.

WIND WHISTLES

CAROLINE: I remember.

MUSIC ENDS

END MUSIC

CREDITS: *They Say a Lot of Things* is written by Shannon Smyth and produced by Vienna Munck. Original music by Nathanael Kumar. This episode featured Max Kittleson as Caroline, and Meaghan Cassidy as Miss Tenor, as well as Toby Duska as Anthony and Pup as Marcel. For more information on the show, as well as transcripts and full credits, visit our website, Twitter, or Tumblr. Links are in the description. If you're enjoying the show, please rate and review us on your favourite podcast provider, and tell your friends about us so they can enjoy the show, too. But first, what do you think of owls? Or, no, scratch that, much more important: What do you think of porcupines? Thanks for listening, and until next time, happy haunting.

MUSIC FADES OUT