

SAM: Hello Ghost Family. Welcome to *Family Ghosts*.

[music]

As alert listeners have probably noticed, the ghosts in our show are usually figurative. As I sometimes like to say when people ask about family ghosts at bars or in elevators -- on our show, the families are real, the ghosts are metaphorical, and the truth is always relative. That said, on today's episode, the ghost in question is relatively spooky. So with that in mind, I'm going to take my dad jokes back to the nearest elevator and let you listen to this story from a woman named Natalie.

NATALIE: Growing up in West Michigan, my early childhood was pretty idyllic.

We'd go to carnivals with my family. I'd play Ghostbusters with my mom. She was super duper fun to be around. She would like tell us stories where we were the protagonists, like I remember one where like, oh, the Addams family moved in next door.

She would become Clyde the magical fish when we were taking a bath and she would like grant wishes. I had a little sister. We had a good time, like we would do this thing where I would like play D and D with her, but it would be like out loud D and D outside where I would like give her little quests to go fight and I would make up riddles for her to solve.

Um, most of my memories about my dad were told to me way after the fact. Um, he was so very distant with us as I guess a lot of dads at that time were. That show um, *The Wonder Years* was popular and the kind of the dad energy on that show kind of matches my dad.

*Dad: I get up at five in the morning, I fight traffic, I bust my hump all day. I fight traffic again and I come home. Then I pay my taxes. The end.*

I think the theme of my life is that I wasn't necessarily the boy that I was supposed to be. Uh, which is, you know, caused a lot of trouble in my life.

I remember that. I, um, I'd seen a book in school, in the school library called *Marvin Redpost is a Girl*. And the plot of it was if you kiss your elbow, then your gender changes. And I mean, like I didn't think much of it, but darned if I didn't spend a couple of straight afternoons trying to kiss my elbow alone in my bedroom.

I imagined that it would be lovely to have a magic ring that could change my gender, but that I could take it off, like whenever I needed to. Really quick just in case there was danger or something.

So now that I am grown up and I know that I'm transgender and all that makes sense to me, uh, looking back at my relationship with my father, I don't think that my dad saw a lot in common with me. Um, you know, um, but there was also like, uh, good things too. Like whenever there was a carnival or an outdoor thing, he always wanted to take the family to that.

Every year they had something called The Muskegon Summer Celebration, which would be a big carnival and concerts brought in. And when I was a kid, they used to do a laser light show on the side of an old factory across the water. And that was the first time I ever heard *Achy Breaky Heart* was when the laser light show was making like a giant neon red cowboy dancing to it.

*[music]*

When my dad was sick, it was, it was rough. It was, um, he had the lung cancer for a bit and then they, they thought that they handled it. Uh, and then my dad was in remission. And one Sunday night in the fall we were having a steak and baked potato with fixins dinner. I, uh, gobbled down my food that night so I could go in the living room and watch what at the time was the show I was obsessed with,

which was *Ghostwriter*. Not Ghost-rider, ghost writer. Ghostwriter on PBS. It was about a ghost that could read words and helped children solve mysteries.

And my dad stands up from the table and takes his hat off and like swats at a fly, but there's like, there's no flies or bugs in there at all. And my mom's like, are you okay? Are you okay? And he like backs up from the table, uh, goes down the hallway and by the time I get into the hallway to see what's going on, he's lying down with his head in the hallway and his feet in the bathroom and mom tells me to call 911.

And so I grabbed the phone and go out on the front porch, and I remember it was cool outside and crisp and I was in one way panicked about what was happening, and in another way, kind of thrilled to call 911 for the first time in my life.

I didn't think that it was possible that, I mean like not to me. I was in third grade. When you're young and nothing's happened to you yet, you're like, well no, you're supposed to have a mom and a dad and you know, maybe one gets sick, but you don't like you. I didn't think about that happening to me until it did.

After my dad died, my mom fell into a pretty heavy depression. It lasted for months. I feel like about six or so months of--it was sometimes she, she was, would cry to the point where she'd have difficulty breathing and she would have to put a Bible on her chest to make it so that she could breathe easier. And my sister and I, we just tried to take care of her, make sure that she was okay. Um, we started recording *Full House* off television and we got to watch the Tanner family deal with the death of their mom, Pam.

*Full House Clip: I keep thinking the pain's going to go away, but it doesn't...*

Now the whole premise of the show is that Danny's wife dies and that he has to bring in his wife's brother, Uncle Jesse and his best friend Joey to help take care of the kids. And so they help the girls remember their mom by telling them stories of her.

*Full House Clip: Talking about it, that's what helps me. Talking about the memories. That's what keeps her in your heart...*

And they did fun things together so that they could build new memories.

*Full House Clip: You know, everybody knows the story about how I got my hair all chopped up and everything, but I bet you don't know how I retaliated. Look at this. Do you ever see your wife with red, white, and blue hair? I think she looked cute. How did you do this picture of this man. It was in the middle of the night. Two things of finger paints and vanilla pudding. I was a wicked little five-year-old, wasn't it? I'm glad you're here. Jesse.*

*Full House* was the only thing we could have on that made my mom feel okay.

The first experience from the haunting that I remember was happening while we were in the living room watching *Full House*. My mom was crying on a chair and behind us was my dad's old chair that had been empty since he died. Uh, there was a, I think a work shirt hung over the side of it and work boots sitting right in the front.

And just out of nowhere, all of a sudden, the foot rest kicked out on its own. And the two boots flipped together. Like they were doing like a synchronized dance and landed perfectly together. And my sister and I were just like, that's weird. And my mom started sobbing.

We tried to calm her down and said, it's just, just a broken old chair, don't even worry. And she's like, but that's your dad's chair. And we looked at it now with sort of a suspicious eye and then she said, kids, I, I gotta tell you something. I know I probably shouldn't tell you this, but I don't have anyone to talk to anymore.

And we're like, what? Of course, please tell us. Um, and she says, well, since your dad died, some stuff has started to happen around the house. Um, we said, what, what stuff? And she said ghost stuff.

SAM: From Spoke Media and WALT, you're listening to *Family Ghosts*. I'm Sam Dingman, and this is episode 24: Little Stonehenges. Our story continues after the break.

**[AD BREAK 1]**

NATALIE: And then she went into her room and got out this yellow notebook where she'd been writing down the stuff that had been happening.

She was in her bedroom in the middle of the night, couldn't sleep, was staring at the wall. She has these blue wooden hearts that were hanging from ribbons from a nail on her wall.

Out of nowhere. they flipped over and slammed against the wall really loud and she told us that it really freaked her out because there weren't any windows open, so there was no breeze. There was no real reason that that should have happened.

She has multiple instances of the TV channel changing on its own, always from channel three to the religious channel. Then one day when she was alone in the house, again she said all the doors and windows were closed, but she was hit with a breeze in the kitchen. Really strong. It was smelled like my dad's cologne, which was brute, brute cologne. We didn't have any in the house, but it came over her so strong that she crying.

And now she was at this point where she was telling us, her kids, this story. And I don't remember much more of that evening, uh, except that I'm pretty sure that both of us slept in my mom's bed with her. It almost, it was terrifying and I was scared and I, and I didn't want to sleep by myself. But in another way I felt special. I felt chosen. I mean, I was already not like anybody else at school. And now the undead is in my house messing with me and my family. So there's something that makes me feel very like my life is predestined. I am supposed to be here fighting these ghosts

And it also, um growing up, going to a Christian church completely took away my need for faith. I didn't need to believe in something I couldn't prove. I lived among proof. God was not a concept for me. God was a real thing. And so was the devil.

At first we thought it was my dad's ghost. And that made me feel like he did care about me, maybe. Like he didn't say the things that he needed to say, uh, when he was alive. And that hurt him so much that now he had to, uh, find a way to communicate to us after he died. And part of that felt healing.

At that time, we communicated with him by praying every night. We would get to the end and we'd be like, amen. PS please say hi to dad for us and tell him that we saw when he kicked out the boots and we wanted to say hi back and thanks for telling us.

After about six months of her depression, my aunt, uh, kind of came over and saw the dark and gloomy sort of energy in our household and was like, that's it. We're going to go out. We're going to have a good time. And she took us all out to go see, uh, what was the new hot movie at that time, which was *Mrs. Doubtfire*. And there's a moment in *Mrs. Doubtfire* where Sally field's says, "Mrs. Doubtfire, how long after Mr. Doubtfire died did you start to, you know, date again?" And, uh, Mrs. Doubtfire, because it's her ex husband disguised as Mrs. Doubtfire, she goes, "Never, never, never again. Once the father of your children is out of the picture, the only solution is total in lifelong celibacy. And if you violate that, then heaven forgive ya." And we all looked over at mom cause we're like, oh, uh-oh. And she looked over at us and then she just started laughing.

Like the biggest loudest, most cathartic laugh. Like by far the largest laugh I'd heard from her in months. It was like she was normal again after so long of being under gray dark clouds. And we all laughed with her this loud, just four people laughing their heads off at a line that is not a laugh line in the middle of this movie. Her laughter is like, uh, energy to me. Like it's like, yes, that is exactly how I like you. That is what you're supposed to be doing and you cheering me up is what I

need. And it, after that I was like, Robin Williams learned how to snap my mom out of a depression. I need to learn how to do that.

From the death of my dad to the next marriage, it was about a year. She filled out a personal ad, but at that time, in the early nineties, personal ads were on local television. It was on the same channel as the real estate listings and they always backed it with like weird, smooth jazz. And this guy responded. And I remember liking him at first.

He had told big stories. He told us that he had been in prison like, you know, at that time no one had ever told me a story about what it was like in prison. So I was like, Oh, Whoa. Uh, when he was talking, he, he, he made me feel special by treating me like I wasn't a lost cause, I think. He made me feel like there was hope for me to become that popular, uh, boyish correct version of me that I had been aiming at and failing for a really long time. Like, Oh man, all you need is just a dad in your life and a little direction and you'd be all set.

He was bringing this new excited, Oh my gosh, we're going to do something energy and we're going to go back out to those carnivals that we used to go out to. It felt like getting back on track, I think for everybody.

Well, you know, all of the haunting the, they would happen, um, sometimes four months apart, sometimes two months apart, sometimes a couple of weeks apart. It was like, there were times when it felt like something was happening all the time. And then there were times when something had not happened for so long, we'd thought it was done.

The first conversations we had with our stepdad about the ghost, he met with skepticism. He was not a big believer in things like that. The haunting never happened with him until after he'd married in. One day, my sister and I came home from school and my parents were sitting behind the kitchen table and they asked us to take a seat.

They said, Hey kids, um, we just wondered if you'd maybe moved some furniture or something around downstairs. Did you do that? And my sister and I were like, Oh no, I'm so sorry. Um, I mean, is it messy? Like we'll clean it. And they're like, no, no, no, that's not it. Um, just some stuff got moved down there and if you didn't move it then, then we just don't know what.

We pestered them a bit and we're like, well, what? Tell us. And um, they think that the ghost had done something down there, but they were real vague about it. So overwhelmed with curiosity. I sort of begged to go downstairs. And my sister and I held hands on the steps on the way down. And downstairs the furniture was weirdly arranged. Like our couch had been pulled away from the wall at like a weird angle. There were VHS tapes making little Stonehenges. The coffee table was on its side. It was tall as it could possibly be. And then on top of that, a smaller end table was somehow impossibly balanced and it looked jagged and dangerous. And we just stood there staring at this unnatural occurrence in our basement.

And my mom said, no human mind could think of this. And then we were ushered out of there so that they could clean it up. So the stuff starts happening slow, but it all starts happening to my stepdad, like all aimed at him directly.

One night he was sitting on our couch that was against the wall. He said that he felt a hand on his temple and his head slammed back against the wall. So he got paranoid about sitting in that seat. So he and mom moved to the love seat on the other side of the room. And that worked for a couple of weeks, until one night. And again, this was late night, my sister and I were already in bed when I think a lot of these instances happened.

His hand got pulled behind the love seat hard, and he couldn't pull it up. And mom started to freak out a little bit, thought he was joking, but he wasn't joking. And then they said one, two, three together, pulled his arm out, and there was fresh human teeth marks on his arm right by his elbow.

They took a picture of it as proof. And uh, it's, I mean, is that part of your elbow where you can't reach. It's like the same part I was trying to kiss.

So after he started to be messed with personally, he had to sort of swallow his ego and be like, okay, I guess, I don't know everything. Maybe ghosts do exist.

SAM: *Family Ghosts* will continue in a moment.

## [AD BREAK 2]

NATALIE: My relationship with my stepdad slowly started to sour as we got a sense of who he really was. My mom and my stepdad ended up fighting a lot after a while, but they had a united front.

He, this was his third marriage. He had three kids and then me and my sister as step-kids. But as far as parenting, here's a, here's a proud story that my stepdad told us about his other son. He said that he said his other son used to slouch at the dinner table. He told us what he did was take a belt and tie his kid's shoulders to the back of his chair and make him eat meals like that until he stopped slouching. And he's like, that's good parenting.

Maybe my mom changed when she got remarried to my stepdad, or maybe she was just always that type of person and I didn't know it. But after her marriage, it felt like the choices of raising us and how to punish us had been put completely on his shoulders. And she didn't participate in that anymore except just to verify that he could say and do whatever he wanted to us. So like one night I couldn't finish tomato soup and was forced to sit at the table until after midnight.

There were other times when I couldn't sleep, and instead of like calming me down, they told me, all right, you can't sleep then you're gonna stay up all night. And anytime I would drift off, he'd poke me really hard in the chest.

I started developing a little bit of an attitude. Often like if I was wearing something that wasn't what my mom considered to be 'me,' and I had any kind of an attitude at all, she would blame it on that article of clothing. Like if I was wearing a hat, she's like, I don't like you in this hat. You need to stop wearing hats. Uh, and that happened even more as a teenager when I tried to like paint my fingernails, she'd always be like, who are you trying to be?

She, I would see them fight, but then when I would come to her and tell her what was happening to me and what I was going through, she would call me a liar and tell me to get over it. That got to the point where know we told my granny, and the whole family had a meeting without my parents about him, about what they were going to do to somehow get us away from them. And all that happened from that is that my sister and I got punished and weren't allowed to see my granny for a couple of months after that.

One summer night when I was about 11 years old, my family thought we'd take a little after dinner swim in our swimming pool. And so I went to the bathroom to put my suit on. Um, my stepdad said he needed the restroom so he said, take your suit, go change in your bedroom. So I took it and I went down the hall. And I opened my door, and I could feel something was wrong before I could pinpoint it. And then my eyes found it. There was a large black hunting knife stabbed in the middle of my bed mattress and it was unnatural looking like it didn't go together. It's like finding like a handgun in a dollhouse or something.

And I just remember thinking why, why is there, why is that there? Why me? Why does it want to hurt me? Why is there a knife where my heart goes? Cause it was right in the center of the bed and I just kind of backed out of the room, unable to speak, just pointing at my room. They went and looked, uh, confirmed it. Um, and then sort of all sort of came around me and started hugging me. Um, I kind of came to a little later that night at my granny's house, and didn't have to go to school the next day. Uh, got to go to a movie. But uh, my parents said that they took the, the hunting knife down to the end of Pere Marquette and dropped it into Lake Michigan.

After the knife was stabbed in my bed, I felt like I was inches from death at any moment. I was afraid to go swimming in our pool because I was afraid the ghost would grab me while I was in the water and drag me to the bottom and not let me up. I was afraid to sleep in my bedroom at night. I would sometimes wake up with my hand in the slits cause there was slits in the blanket in the, in the mattress. If I, if I woke up touching it, I would like wake up screaming.

There was a part of my mind that was like, don't think demonic things. Don't think about the devil. Don't think about that. Don't think about that stuff. And in doing that, I of course couldn't stop thinking about that stuff. So I, my solution was to try to sleep with my fingers pointing up at heaven because if I thought something that was accidentally like a prayer to the devil, I didn't want my hands pointing down so that it counted as a, like a satanic prayer to the devil. And I started to kind of go crazy. I saw an episode of this show, *Night Gallery* with Rod Serling.

*Rod Serling: We welcome you ladies and gentlemen, to an exhibit of art. A collection of oils and still lifes that share one thing in common. You won't find them in the average salon or exhibition hauler art museum...*

Where, uh, this picture in this rich guy's house, it has this graveyard out back. And then one day he sees a guy rise from a grave in the picture. And every day that guy gets closer and closer to the door. Until the day he's there, and the doorbell rings and he opens it and screams. I used to be afraid that this picture of a Brontosaurus in my room would turn into that. And I had to make my mom take it down off my wall and put it under my bed.

I was just confused about why it was okay for me to be scared of some things, but not all the things. So, um, my parents went to our church, which was a Calvinist church, which is Protestant. Um, they're like, well, our house is haunted. And, uh, I guess our pastor said, well, you know, this is really more of a Catholic thing, you know. Right. Um, but they, uh, they cobbled together something. They got the elders of the church together and they brought over the praise team, which were

people that were high up in the church that I guess were, you know, mighty warriors for God in the eyes of our church.

Um, one of them was my granny. We all agreed that my dad would never want to hurt or scare us. They believed that the spirit had been pretending to be my father so that we would welcome it so that it could grow stronger. They went around our house and with oil, I think canola, just regular canola oil that they blessed and they put a cross on all of our walls and blessed each room.

When they were done, they had a couple of suggestions. And one was that they had found a record player in our basement that they seemed fairly certain that an album containing the satanic Bible had once been played on this record player. We could never confirm nor deny that because the record player was there when we moved in. And another thing that they said we needed to get rid of was my, My Pet Monster doll.

*[My Pet Monster ad plays]*

A lot of people won't remember My Pet Monster, but that is a soft and cuddly blue monster. It had a bright orange pair of handcuffs that would break apart.

*[My Pet Monster ad]*

So he'd be like RAW and break apart.

*[My Pet Monster ad]*

And they said that those things had to be burned. I wasn't allowed to be at the fire when they were doing that, but I, I did watch through the slats of our fence in our backyard.

The parting words of the praise team were, we've done everything we can. We think we've cleansed this house, but if it does come back, there is a specific set of

things you need to do. You need to fast for three days so that your body is pure. And you also need to be living a pure Christian life, uh, so that you're able to call out whatever entity is in your home, in the name of Jesus Christ. And as the purified owner of the home, it's supposed to obey you and leave. After they left, it died down for several months, but then picked back up again slowly. And instead of doing that, my family just decided to move.

My granny, uh, as an elder in our church, member of the prayer team, uh, began to pray that my stepdad would go away. While we were clearing some brush on our new property. He'd got stabbed in the leg with a stick and contracted Beta Strep blood infection. Uh, he got so bad that the hospital in Muskegon, Hackley, couldn't handle it. So they helicoptered him to the U of M hospital in Ann Arbor and he died there. He went from healthy to dead within a month.

When my stepdad died, I felt a lot of mixed up emotions. Um, I was so happy that he wasn't around anymore. But at the same time, my mom was depressed again and seemingly more depressed than when my first dad died. I didn't take that to mean that she loved him more. I just took it to mean that she was compounding both deaths at once, and going like a double version of the first time.

Um, I do remember the moment when we all realized that we could wiggle our foot in the living room again. This is something that he would stop us from doing if we were a little bit jittery and we'd, you know, maybe have a slight wiggle to our foot. He would like put his foot down and say, don't do that. And like, we would get in trouble if we kept doing it. And there was this moment when all three of us looked at each other and we were all wiggling our feet, and we just kind of laughed at the relief that he was gone.

And it wasn't too long until mom was changing the narrative to: that was so horrible for all of us, wasn't it?

SAM: Our story continues after the break.

### [AD BREAK 3]

NATALIE: I discovered that I was transgender at the age of 30 and it felt like a shock out of nowhere. I realized that all of the things that I just thought were anomalies were all pointing one very specific direction. Um, well, so when I found out that I was trans, uh, very much not, the first thing that I did was tell my mom.

In fact, I, I kept it a secret from her as long as humanly possible. Um, and in fact, I didn't even want to tell her until I'd been on hormone replacement therapy for a couple months because like being at odds with her felt impossible sometimes.

So I'm on the phone with my mom and, um, I remember that her tone is very light and happy and all of my instincts are to match it. Uh, because I, I never wanted to ever make her sad or bring her down or if she was happy, that's how I want to keep her.

So like there was a moment where I was prolonging the before of just having what would be like the last normal phone call, uh, before I had to sort of go, mom, there's something I have to tell you and it's really, really hard. And she's like, well, what? You can just tell me honey. And um, I said, I'm transitioning and I'm transgender. And she says, no, you're not. And I go, mom, I know that this might be hard for you to take a, I know that if dad were still alive, he wouldn't like it one bit. And she said, if your father was still alive, he would have killed you. Uh, and I said, well, I guess I'm glad he's still dead then.

Then she said to me, so what, you like boys now? So you like boys, you're gonna like you're gonna start dating boys? And I'm like, no, mom. I like girls. My gender is different, not my orientation. That's not how it works. And she's like, you will, you'll like them. And she, uh, um, I'm just like trying to get her to say anything that would be helpful. I'm trying to joke, it's not working. She says, I need to go. I can't talk about this right now. And I said, talk to you later maybe? And she hung up.

Um, but a couple of days later she sent me an email that was a lot of like explaining why her brand of homophobia and transphobia was actually okay. Um, uh, and then the end of it said something like, my mind is closed, but my arms are open.

Which really hit me. It still hits me bad. It's like, I still want you to treat me with all of the love and respect that you treat me with, but just know I will never change for you. That was not enough for me. I need more than that. Like, cause the lie was that it was unconditional love. It wasn't unconditional love. It was love that would be unconditional as long as I was the person it was okay for me to be. The minute that I was something else, those conditions were right on there. And that's something that I could suddenly see so clearly.

And it's, uh, it's about that time, uh, that I thought therapy would be a good idea. And by the way, when I have a therapist and in the first meeting with me, they give me a Galadriel quote from Lord of the Rings, I'm feeling very close to this therapist.

So we're, we're really, we've really hit it off. We're having a great, great couple of sessions. And, um, I start to, I'm talking about how mad I still am about my mom not accepting me and being this way and saying those things. And I go, it especially hurts because of how much I've been there for her through like I was there when her first husband died. I was there when her second husband died. I was there when she had to have both of her hips replaced and had spinal stenosis. I was there through the haunting. I was there when she had a brief Vicodin addiction.

And my therapist is like, wait, hang on. Did you say that there was a haunting in there? And I'm like, Oh yeah, yeah, Oh yeah, this is not something I talk about much. Um, but she, she's very interested and she gives me the green light to start talking about everything. And so I do, I tell her about the boots and, uh, the bite and the knife, stuff moved, like, like, I dunno, like there's be like 30 or 40 instances and I tell that to my therapist and she's like, that's high.

And so she has me rewalk through these things, but she asks me like where I was and what I saw. And one of the things that became clearer and clearer is that, um, how much of it that I'd actually seen, I not hardly any of it. I saw the knife, but I didn't see the knife go in the bed. I saw it after the fact. I saw the furniture. I didn't see the furniture move. Um, the only thing I did see move were those boots. But now that I think about that dad's chair had been broken forever. Like it didn't even popped out on its own when he was still alive, sitting in it.

I go, I see where you're going with this. But I'm like, my stepdad couldn't have done it. I mean, we, we suspected him for sure, but some of it happened before he was around and some of it happened in a way where I know it wasn't possible for him to have done it. Uh, which, you know, it was like the end of the ballgame. And then my therapist is like, no. I was wondering if you'd ever thought maybe your mom did it. And I think my response was like, I have no, I don't think she, I mean she couldn't have. Like what would her motive and oh, oh, oh.

And it just all started to like hit me like the fact that like, she's the one who said that like no human mind could think of this about the furniture, the fact that she said that you can't bite yourself on the elbow near where that bite mark was. I never thought that she bit him and posed him for the picture. And so then my, my, the floor of my reality just dropped out.

The choice that you're left with: either the person I thought loved me the most in this world, abused me terribly and lied about it or ghosts are real and fucked with me personally.

So that's enough to drive anybody crazy. I was talking to anybody who would even talk to me about it. I was telling the story to even half sympathetic Uber drivers and after months and months of running the scenarios, even in my sleep, um, I got to one where I could sort of explain things away, which was that she was like really badly messed up after my dad died. Maybe she, like, she asked me to sleep in her bed with her and everyone was telling me to be man of the house now. So I said no. So maybe my mom did it to keep me where she wanted me.

After my stepdad was around, I think that she allowed it to sort of continue an escalate maybe as a way of toughening me up. Um, I don't know if any of that's true. And I, and I felt like I knew her so well. I've felt like I fully believed in ghosts when I was going through that situation and um, up right until I was 30 honestly.

Um, I needed it at that time. I needed them to be real because if those stories were real, then I mean I may be going through a lot of hard things, but I'm like this special person that the ghosts picked and that was the only real feather I had in my cap at that time. The stuff that had been done to me was from the devil and my mom was in my corner trying to protect me. As scary as that is it's far less scary than my mom being the one that haunted me my whole childhood.

No, I don't believe in ghosts anymore.

[music]

*Family Ghosts* is hosted and produced by me, Sam Dingman. With Vera Carothers, Soraya Shockley, Sally Helm, Odelia Ruben, Jenna Hannam and Janielle Kastner. This episode was reported and produced by Odelia. Our story editor is Mikaela Blei. Natalie, who told this week's story, is an actress and storyteller based in Los Angeles. She wrote a play about the haunting called *There is Evil In this House*. If you're interested, you can find a link to it in the show notes for this episode. Our production assistant is Julia Press. This episode was mixed by Evan Arnett. Our theme music is by Luis Guera, and this episode featured original music by Ben Levin. Executive producers for season three are myself, along with Keith Reynolds and Alia Tavakolian at Spoke Media. Special thanks this week to David Crab, and as always to the Kindred Spirits, our supporters on Patreon who help make our work possible. In addition to ad-free episodes and exclusive bonus content, Kindred Spirits have already heard this episode. They get to listen to everything we make before anyone else, and this week they're getting a special bonus episode featuring a story about a supernatural incident that recently happened to me. If you have the means, please consider becoming a member of the kindred spirits for just

\$5 a month at [patreon.com/familyghosts](https://patreon.com/familyghosts). We are proud creative partners of Spoke Media. Find more great podcasts at [spokemedia.io](https://spokemedia.io). Season three continues next week. We'll talk to you then, and thank you for listening to *Family Ghosts* where every house is haunted.

Next time on *Family Ghosts*...

Mac's brother has been dead for years, but Mac still feels his presence everywhere he goes.

*Mac: Once, on a cross town bus, I was absolutely convinced he was riding behind me. The same dark hair parted to fall over his right eye. Had he faked it all in order to what? Move to New York? It couldn't be. Was it?*

Recently, Mac thinks he might have figured out the reason his brother's ghost won't leave him alone.

*Mac: He had a real like internal kind of like code of loyalty about the family. And um, in a way I didn't and could definitely summon strong feelings about the family in a way. I don't.*

Next week, Mac confronts two spirits from his past, his brother and his mom.

*Mac: I mean, I feel like she's just kinda like died to me at some point and I just couldn't see the way back*

Season three of *Family Ghosts* continues next week, right here on WALT.