

Have Monster, Will Travel
Episode 6: Gampa

TREY

Welcome back Crypto-Curious - Trey here. We're starting today's episode a little different than we normally do. Earlier this year my family lost my Gampa, my mother's dad. He was born in 1929 and passed on February 8th at the age of 91. My Gampa grew up in Central Alabama, in the country. At the height of World War II, his father sold the farm and moved his family to the city. He was fifteen that year and had to lie about his age so he could go to work driving a truck for a bolt and rivet factory. He stayed there for fifty years, eventually working his way up to shop foreman and secretary-treasurer of the Steel workers union.

Like a lot families - get-togethers were mostly spent sitting and passing around well-worn tales and family lore. If the conversation ever drifted to far away from what he knew about, or turned a little dull by his standards, Gampa would always chime in:

“Well, if anybody wants to know anything about bolts and rivets, you just let me know, ‘cause I’ve got something to say.”

He always had something to say. He was a storyteller, you see - and in truth, I wouldn't make my living telling stories today if I hadn't been taught how on his front porch.

Today's episode is dedicated to James Melvin Vaughan and is based on one of the first stories he ever told me.

GAMPA

It was a grave and it was rocked in - rocked in. Certain nights, balls of fire would come out of it.

MURIEL

They said it did.

GAMPA

Well it did - I saw it. So, Ms. Dean lived with us. She was the principal of that little school - Center School - there. She was Principal, but lived with us - always lived with us, several years, during the school years.

Well she called a professor from Auburn. So Auburn came out there, two guys came out there from Auburn University. It used to be Auburn Polytech, it wasn't Auburn University at that time, it was Auburn Polytech.



GAMPA (cont.)

They came out - and it just so happened, the night that they came, that big ball of fire come out of that cemetery. So they got to see, they didn't really know if it was happening or not. So, them two, and Ms. Dean, and of course, me - I was probably nine... eight or nine years old, ten maybe.

But anyway, I was tagging along too. And we got out there and that ball of fire just faded out you know. And then it would come up, get out and fade out.

(Theme song.)

(The GMC Safari pulls into a driveway and putters to a stop.)

DAD

You sister told me I wouldn't believe it. I thought she was being dramatic.

RILEY

Hey Dad.

DAD

What kind of gas mileage does this thing get?

RILEY

Oh... about 12.

DAD

It drives?

RILEY

Yeah Dad. It drives.

DAD

Seatbelts work?

RILEY

Yes.

DAD

Brakes are okay?



RILEY

Dad, it's a real car.

DAD

You take this on the interstate?

What? Don't look at me like this - this thing looks like the sort of thing that would burn up in reentry.

God A'mighty.

RILEY

What time do you want to leave for the hospital?

DAD

I like to get there by nine. We can be a little late today, I guess.

RILEY

We can still make it -

DAD

No. You haven't had breakfast, you'll probably want a shower.

RILEY

I'm fine.

DAD

It doesn't take long for sausage and biscuits - why don't you just

RILEY

Dad. I'm good to go. I want to see Gampa.

DAD

Okay. I made up the guest bed. Well come on - let's bring your things in. Your sister's here.

(DAD opens the back of the van.)



RILEY

No, Dad!

Sorry. I can get all that.

DAD

I don't mind carrying it for you.

RILEY

I know - here - I can get it.

(The front door opens. DANA enters.)

DAD

What - you got a bunch of contraband in here you don't want your Dad to find? D'you sneak a bottle for a party.

RILEY

No. I just don't want to trouble you.

DANA

Dad, phone. It's Margie

DAD

<of course it is.> Yeah, I'm coming.

(DAD closes the back of the van.)

[to RILEY:] She calls every ninety minutes for updates. She'll have us all in the hospital before long.

DANA

She's in a mood.

DAD

Thanks. Pop

Margie? Hold on - I gotta go inside, the cordless doesn't reach out here.



RILEY

Hey.

DANA

Hi.

(They hug.)

You get in okay?

RILEY

Early morning. How is he?

DANA

He hasn't woken up in two days. They've got him on oxygen. Only time he moves is when they change his feeding tube.

You're not going to recognize him.

RILEY

I just can't believe this - he sounded fine last time I talked to him.

DANA

[scoffs:] When was that? He had pneumonia for two weeks.

RILEY

Why didn't they admit him then?

DANA

His doctor said he was fine.

RILEY

91 with pneumonia and he's fine?

DANA

He wasn't feeling good so he went to the hospital on Friday. Cardiology ran some tests - that's when they found the congested heart disease. He crashed Sunday morning. Didn't have a heartbeat for four minutes. They did CPR on him and here we are.



RILEY

God... how are you holding up?

DANA

Fine, I guess. I'm more worried for Dad.

Took you two days to get here.

RILEY

Yeah - well, I left as soon as I heard.

DANA

You don't live two days away.

RILEY

I was on vacation, Dana. I was at the beach.

DANA

That sounds nice. Most people who don't have jobs don't get to go on vacation.

RILEY

Okay - why are you pushing me right now?

DANA

He doesn't sleep anymore. One to two hours a night. Cleaning the house, worrying nonstop about Gampa, worrying about you driving at night.

RILEY

Yeah, worrying is what he does.

DANA

And now you're here and he gets a whole new set of problems to fixate on.

RILEY

I'm fine.

DANA

You look it. You really do.



RILEY

Could you lay off, please.

DANA

You quit your job - you move into a van - you traipse around the country.

And Dad's like, "she's directionless right now. I wished she'd come back home."

Do you have any idea how hard it is to make your life look okay to him?

RILEY

I'm not asking for your help.

DANA

I'm not doing it for you!

You know, it'd be one thing if you met some guy named Jeremy and he convinced you to quit your job and move into his van with him so the two of you could follow a band around the country for a year. I'd be like, "Her life is in crisis" - but at least I'd get it.

This.

I don't get this.

RILEY

I don't have to explain my life to you.

DANA

Of course not. We're just sisters.

RILEY

Dana.

DANA

No, forget it, alright?

(The door opens. From the porch:)



DAD

Alright - everyone come get peed and watered. This is us a-leaving.

DANA

Yeah Dad - I just need to get my jacket.

[So only RILEY can hear:] The morning doctor is going to tell you that they've done everything they can and that it's up to him now if he's going to get better. The afternoon doctor is going to tell you that he looks great and will be out there any day now.

I don't know that I believe either of them - just... just don't let the morning doctor freak you out.

[to DAD:]

How was Margie?

DAD

Oh... just in top form. Come on.

(DANA exits.)

I don't like you arguing with your sister.

RILEY

We weren't arguing, Dad.

DAD

You think after thirty-something years I don't know when you two are ripping at each other's throats?

RILEY

Yeah, well, she started it.

DAD

... Guilty.

So uh, you know how to get there? You wanna just follow me?



RILEY

I was just gonna ride with you if that's okay.

DAD

Oh thank God. They'd probably call the bomb squad if you parked that van next to a hospital.

(RENDER. The Van. Later.)

RENDER

You ain't going to believe this.

ERIC

Well, the sun had almost completely set. Night was coming to the marshland, and with it new complications.

RENDER

[during, throughout:] Professor Bunion has his own show.

ERIC

The full moon was rising above the treeline, but its pale, luminous glow was nothing, compared with the blaze and glare of the nearby town.

RENDER

I mean, can the moon be both pale and luminous.

ERIC

I knew the only way to save the lives of the paladingslings would be to ensure that that town went dark. But what could be done - I'm only one man and time was of the essence! But you'll of course remember my previous research into the Unmentionables.

RENDER

It's called - are you ready for this? - Sask-watch. Yeah... Sask. Watch. Try searching for that online. Riley was right - homophones are rough.

ERIC

Well, it was with great determination and resolve that I decided to sacrifice my own personal car, transforming it into a force that could darken the town. I would have to lose my precious research in order to save the lives of those tiny monster-babies.



RENDER

There's absolutely no mention of us.

This is absolutely the best thing that's happened to me all week. I could ironically listen to this for hours.

ERIC

'But Eric, where's your proof?' I can hear you say. Well, you'll never believe what happened to my phone.

(The Hospital Beeps. Boops. Machine-assisted breathing.)

DANA

Anybody want a coffee?

RILEY

I'm alright.

DAD

You go ahead.

(Dana walks off.)

RILEY

I don't think I've ever seen him with stubble.

DAD

No. You know, he never could stand to have any facial hair because he thought his beard was too patchy.

He'd be so mad if he saw himself.

I think he looks a lot better today.

RILEY

Yeah?

DAD

They say he's retaining a lot less fluid.

RILEY

This morning. I was thinking about that story he would always tell us. About growing up at the farm. The graveyard with the fire.

DAD

Yeah. That's one of the old standards.

RILEY

You never stayed there...

DAD

Uh-uh. They'd moved away from there long before I came around.

RILEY

Yeah.

DAD

I used to drive him up there. House is about caved in, but he liked to go up and look at the old place from time to time.

RILEY

It's still there?

DAD

Oh yeah. Same six or seven families. Same little convenience store. Little time capsule out in the country.

Last time we were out there... Maybe six months ago.

RILEY

But you never saw them?

DAD

Huh?

RILEY

The fires. In the graveyard.

DAD

What? Riley, that never happened.

RILEY

He used to tell it all the time.

DAD

That was just one of his stories. Just something to excite you girls and give you nightmares.

(Dana comes back. Coffee.)

DANA

Anything?

DAD

Oh yeah, soon as you left, Dad got up and did a whole dance around the bed.

DANA

Okay, dad...

DAD

Tell her, Riley.

RILEY

It was one of those Russian dances. With the squats and the kicks.

(That night. The Country.)

RENDER

Alright - go ahead.

RILEY

Crypto-Curious - Riley here.

We are standing on the edge of the family farm where my Gampa, my Dad's Dad, spent his youth. It is the middle of the night and Render and I are probably the only thing stirring for miles around... Maybe. We're here tonight to investigate a story that I've known about ever since I can remember.

RILEY (cont.)

It starts like this:

On the farm where he grew up, there was this long forgotten graveyard. It had a small stone wall that enclosed it and it sat just on the edge of the woods, at the end of the property. From his window, Gampa could just make it out thru the trees.

Well, in circumstances like these, it doesn't take long for stories of the supernatural to creep in and soon enough, the story of the ghost who lived in this graveyard was well known by all the local children.

“You're a coward if you don't walk that wall late at night by yourself,” they would say to one another.

Well, on certain nights, thru his window, Gampa claims that he saw the ghost, or something dark linked to it.

Balls of fire would lift up out of the ground, rise into the air and extinguish themselves.

We're here tonight - to lean into unknown, pull back the curtains around this graveyard, and peer into the bizarre mythos of old family lore.

(Dramatic Pause.)

RENDER

[mesmerized:] Omigod, there it is, can you believe that, it's so beautiful.

Alright - I feel like I've really gotten everything from this experience that I'm probably going to. Ready to get back?

RILEY

We just got here.

RENDER

And we'll cherish these memories forever. Come on.

RILEY

It's not that bad.



RENDER

It's a cemetery. An overgrown cemetery. At night. In the middle of the woods. I don't know if you need more reasons than that.

I could come up with some. I don't really like the way this place smells.

RILEY

Of all the places we've been.

RENDER

None of them were cemeteries.

RILEY

So what?

RENDER

So what! Ghosts what!

RILEY

No.

RENDER

Uh... Conservatively, I'm gonna go ahead and say (with confidence) that this place has 9 ¾ ghosts.

RILEY

Three quarters of a ghost.

RENDER

Olden times. Fall in a cotton gin, cave in at the mine. Nobody here was buried with all their body parts. Here we go.

RILEY

Render. Just take a second and breathe.

(They breathe.)

There are no ghosts.

RILEY (cont.)

A year ago, I didn't believe in monsters, but if you asked me, "what happens after you die?" - I don't know, yeah, maybe ghosts or spirits or

RENDER

Ecto-plasmic-goo?

RILEY

Yeah, something. Maybe. But definitely no monsters. And then I found you.

RENDER

I don't see how they're related.

RILEY

It's just too much. If monsters exist and ghosts exist... then probably so do aliens and the bermuda triangle. Eh, it's just too much. Pick a lane, ya know? If monsters exist, no ghosts.

RENDER

Is that how that works?

RILEY

Just one weird thing at a time. Come on.

(They walk.)

This is a topic for another day, but we really got to work on this whole scaredy-cat vibe you got going on. Don't be afraid of the unknown.

(They walk deeper into the woods.)

RENDER

You've been here before.

RILEY

It's been a long time. This is where Gampa taught me how to drive stick shift - he wanted back country roads where there wouldn't be any police out.

So - straight back thru that patch of woods and we should hit the cemetery.



(They walk a little faster.)

RENDER

Hey slow down. This isn't a race.

You haven't said anything about the hospital.

(They walk.)

Riley...

RILEY

Yeah. I know.

(They walk. RILEY stops.)

I don't want him to die, Ren.

RENDER

I know.

RILEY

I mean... I really don't.

(Sounds of the night.)

sorry

RENDER

It's okay.

RILEY

I'm sorry

RENDER

No.

(RILEY walks on. RENDER follows.)

RENDER

So... Any stories about that murder farm house? Like a rat snake in the basement that could foretell how you would die?

RILEY

Stop saying creepy things - you're just gonna scare yourself more than you already are.

RENDER

Seems unlikely.

RILEY

It caught fire when he was a kid. My great granddaddy donated part of his farm for the town to build a schoolhouse. Ms. Dean, the principal of the school, lived with them. Well one night, someone left a candle burning and it caught the curtains. Gampa's daddy comes running in to put it out and Ms. Dean comes in at the same time.

They're both in their nightgowns and so they stop when they see each other and run back to their rooms. And then when the coast is clear, they come running back in, but stop and turn back when they see each other again.

And Ms. Dean shouts out, "We're not going to let our modesty kill us, are we?" And they put out the fire.

Thank you.

RENDER

You feel better?

RILEY

I'm okay.

RENDER

Hey. I think that's the stone wall?

RILEY

Come on.

RENDER

[to himself:] If I exist, ghosts aren't real. If I exist, ghosts aren't real.

(Cheesy Music.)

ERIC

Welcome back Chupa-compadres - this is your intrepid host Eric McDermott, big D, two Ts, and you're listening to SASK-watch!

As always, I'll be your guide tonight as we continue the hunt... for the unknown.

Hey - it's time for a new segment on our show - a listener mailbag!

I got an email today with a question from one of you.

Dear Eric -

I was wondering if you have any information regarding a cryptid with any connection to fire. I sometimes see small fires that rise up from the woods behind my house and was curious if you had come across anything like that in your illustrious travels. If not, do you have any other resources with pertinent information?

Am I just seeing things, or is there something out there?

Sincerely,

William Travel

Thank you for the email William - always great to hear from a fan. Now, normally I'm able to answer questions like this from my own experiences - but for this one - I had to dig deep.

(The sound of a large book opening)

As a lot of you probably know by now, I recently came into possession of a catalog - an atlas of monsters so complete that it contains creatures you probably didn't even know lived in your own backyards.

If you're interested in creatures with a penchant for fire - have I got a cryptid for you.

William, I think what you're seeing is none other than the Ash-footed Kit, sometimes also labeled the ash-footed fennec for the size of its ears. Highly territorial, families of Ash-footed kits are known to keep the same burrow for generation after generation.



ERIC (cont.)

These creatures - very skittish, spend most of their time staying out of sight - but when they want to be seen, do they ever make an impression.

The Ash-footed Kit is known to be able to, without warning, burst into flame as a defense mechanism. But the truly bizarre part, is their ability to extinguish themselves, leaving only ashen footprints behind as evidence to their whereabouts.

Happy Hunting, William, just make sure you don't get too close.

(The Van. Morning. RENDER is fidgeting with the recorder.)

RENDER

Rrrrrr. Snot otter. I was not ready. Okay... okay.

(The van door opens. RILEY sets down a plastic bag.)

Riley - I've got some great news -

RILEY

Render...

RENDER

Wait. Okay, first, you're never gonna believe, Professor Bunion -

RILEY

[harsh:] Not now.

(The door to the house opens. From the porch:)

DANA

What, are you leaving now?

RILEY

No Dana, I'm not leaving. I'm waiting for Dad to come and get me.

DANA

Ok well we were in the middle of -



RILEY

We were in the middle of you yelling at me and I don't actually have to sit around and listen to it.

DANA

I'm not yelling at you - I'm just trying to understand.

RILEY

There's nothing to understand.

DANA

That's insane. That's an insane thing you just said. You live in a van.

RILEY

I don't live in a van - I'm traveling.

DANA

In a van. That you sleep in. Next to your food.

RILEY

You know - I could walk into your house and point out things that I don't like about your life all day long too.

DANA

He can't go thru this again. If Gampa dies, which every day it seems like... not again.

RILEY

Do not make this about that.

DANA

I'm not - I'm just saying -

RILEY

Do not. I asked. I asked Dad.

DANA

You weren't here - you don't know.

RILEY

When Mom died, Dad and I had a long talk and he told me he didn't want me to uproot my life.

DANA

Of course he did.

RILEY

No. I asked him. I offered. He knows that.

(A moment.)

DANA

Every few years. Riley has to move. And every time, she gets a little further away.

And it used to make sense. She has a career, she's moving up, she's making lots of new connections.

But now. You live like this. And you clearly prefer this to us.

RILEY

Dana...

DANA

I'm not finished. You know, there are families that get together for dinner on weekends, see each other on birthdays. We're just not ever going to be that. I get that. But I swear:

If I didn't know the people who raised, I would swear that family just isn't a thing you care about.

(RILEY has nothing.)

Tell Dad that I'll wait around until the Posey's bring by dinner and then I'll head over.

(She goes inside.)

RENDER

Riley.

RILEY

Not now pal... There's some food in the bag.

(She shuts the door.)

(The Hospital.)

(Breathing machines.)

DAD

Careful.

RILEY

I am.

DAD

Okay. You just don't look like you have any idea what you're doing.

RILEY

Not really.

DAD

You want my help?

RILEY

No. I'm okay.

(Shaving cream from a can.)

DAD

Okay don't get it up his nostrils.

RILEY

I'm not.

Do I go both ways?

DAD

No, just go the direction of the hair.

(A razor pulling across skin.)

Yeah. Like that.

RILEY

Oh. I'm not gonna do his neck.

DAD

No, you're fine.

RILEY

But he has all this... like, neck wattle.

DAD

Turkeys have wattles, Riley.

RILEY

Okay, what would you call that?

DAD

... It's a wattle.

(They laugh.)

Yeah, go ahead and get the whole thing.

RILEY

I'm afraid I'm gonna - I don't know - slice his throat open.

(laughter)

It's not funny, Dad.

DAD

I guarantee, you will not slice his throat open.

[louder because, you know, old people:] Does that feel good, Dad?

Feel good, huh? Have a nice close shave. You look like a young man again.

RILEY

Anything new from the doctors this morning?

DAD

Just day by day. Hour by hour. A little good news. A little bad news. A bad night. A good morning. Just one after the other.

[louder (to GAMPA):] But you look good - so there's some good news, huh?

(The Van. Evening. Muffled: the sound of the front door closing. Footsteps. And then, suddenly, the back door of the van swings open.)

(RENDER screams. DANA screams. Slams shut van.)

(A moment. Door opens. A moment. DANA screams. RENDER screams. Slams door.)

(A moment. Van door opens. A moment.)

RENDER

I'm sorry - how many times are we going to do this?

(DANA screams. Slams shut van.)

Dana?

[to himself:] This isn't good. Snot otter.

(The hospital.)

(A moment.)

DAD

How long do you plan on staying?

RILEY

I'm in no rush.

I can stay a couple of days, couple of weeks, whatever you need.

DAD



I meant tonight. You gotta be getting hungry.

RILEY

No. I'm okay. Don't think I could eat.

I could use a drink.

DAD

Yeah. I could too.

RILEY

Are you staying all night?

DAD

Yeah, but I could run you back.

RILEY

No. I'm fine right here.

DAD

Filter King Kools.

RILEY

What?

DAD

I was just sitting here thinking. Mind wandering, I guess. Funny how it does that. I was just thinking back on old stories.

“Filter King Kool” - that's what he used to say to me. “Run in there and tell ‘em your dad wants a pack of Filter King Kools.” This was back in the 70s - back when you had to specify you wanted your cigarettes with filters.

RILEY

How old were you - when he would send you in?

DAD

Ten. Eleven.

RILEY

They sold cigarettes to a ten year old.

DAD

Oh yeah. I mean, they could see him in the truck.

RILEY

I didn't know he smoked.

DAD

Oh yeah.

You know what a penny cigarette is? No? Penny cigarette is a thing where an eight-year-old child hands you a dime and you give him back ten cigarettes.

RILEY

He started when he was eight?

DAD

If you believe him.

(Some alarm goes off. Beeping.)

See if you can grab that nurse.

(The Van. Full-blown night.)

DANA

What does that even mean?

RENDER

No - it's just a thing we say.

DANA

It's not even a real word.

RENDER

If you say it enough you don't really notice.

DANA



... Crypto... Curious, this is Dana. I'm being forced to drive my sister's death-trap of a van against my will. We are currently traveling north on highway 11 and -

RENDER

Okay - this isn't a ransom note. It's an introduction.

DANA

An introduction to what?

RENDER

To the episode. We banter back and forth for a little bit - one of us says something funny and then Theme Song!

DANA

You have a theme song?

RENDER

What kind of program do you think this is - of course we have a theme song. Oo - I think you want to take this right.

DANA

And we've left the main road. So, is this it - you're taking me somewhere to eat me?

RENDER

What? No. Serious? Gross. I'm not going to eat you.

DANA

Then what are we doing?

RENDER

I'm trying to get there but you keep derailing the introduction. Crypto-Curious, Dana and I had a bit of a rocky start. But after some screaming and some yelling and a little more screaming, I feel like we're really starting to hit it off.

So, where are we going - you're probably wondering. Armed with new information, we are heading back to the hidden cemetery.

DANA

Oh god - he's gonna eat me.

RENDER

Stop it. I am not. Why would I take you to a cemetery first?

DANA

I don't know - I don't know how this works - it's probably part of some ritual.

RENDER

You know - not to make you feel bad - most people are a lot more chill about all this.

DANA

How many people have you and my sister done this to?

RENDER

Okay - Alright - Look - See - You see this?

(RENDER opens a chip bag. Starts eating.)

See, I'm eating Doritos. Okay? So. Unless you're nacho-flavored, you're fine.

DANA

... he said moments before he ate me.

RENDER

I'm Not Going to Eat You!

(Theme Song.)

("Hey Riley - I've been working on my roar - ya wanna hear it?" -- "Obviously." --
"Rawr." -- "That's awesome. That's awesome.")

(DANA stops the podcast.)

DANA

So. This is what you and Riley do?

RENDER

I mean. There are more episodes. But I wasn't going to make you go thru all of them. Can we please walk now?

DANA

Sure.

RENDER

Come on - this way.

DANA

Into the woods?

RENDER

Yeah. That's where the cemetery is.

DANA

You go on and report back.

RENDER

You're fine.

DANA

I think my system has had enough shock for one night without adding ghosts to the mix.

RENDER

Really? Monsters exist and ghosts exist? What next, the Beluga triangle?

DANA

That's not right.

RENDER

Exactly, it's not possible.

Do you know what your sister would say to you right now - Stop being a scaredy cat - you don't have to be afraid of the unknown.

(They walk.)

So, last time - we got here - hung around all night - nothing. No sightings.

DANA

Sightings of what?

RENDER

The fireballs. Your Gampa's story.

DANA

She came out here for that?

RENDER

Of course. But seriously. Nothing. Not so much as a rustle.

Here. Climb over.

DANA

Into the cemetery?

RENDER

Come on - I'll help you over.

But. And this is my theory. We didn't see anything because last time we stayed on the other side of the wall - because I was the scaredy cat - like you.

DANA

You didn't really have to make this about me.

RENDER

We didn't disturb their habitat, so they had no reason to be defensive.

But -

(RENDER starts rustling old vines and brambles in the graveyard.)

Stir up a little of this and -

(WOOMPH - a tiny fire glows. Gasps all around.)

Look at that.

DANA

What is that?

RENDER

It's an Ash-footed Kit.

DANA

That's amazing. Look, there's another one.

RENDER

Oo - come here little buddy. It's okay. That's right.

Hi!

(WOOMPH!)

DANA

Oh! - Drop it - your hand is on fire.

RENDER

It tickles. Wanna hold it?

DANA

How are you doing that?

RENDER

Up here, where the flames are, super hot - but down here, these little feet are cold and dewy.

DANA

Look at those big ears.

RENDER

You wanna hold one. Here.

DANA

Oh - no no no - Oh - uh, hi there. Aren't you amazing.

RENDER

See - don't fear the unknown.

Hey - are you hungry?

DANA

We're not going to -

RENDER

No - I meant. Hold on - I'll be right back.

DANA

You're leaving me here with these? Where are you going?

RENDER

We're gonna roast some marshmallows!

(The hospital.)

DAD

How's the coffee?

RILEY

I think it's the same pot from this afternoon. I'm not really in it for the flavor tho.

DAD

I'm glad you came.

RILEY

Of course.

DAD

You need to quit being so angry at your sister.

RILEY

I'm not the one who's starting it-

DAD

I know that.

She gets scared and she doesn't know what to do with it and she lashes out. You've just always been a little tougher than she is. It's why I don't worry about you as much.

RILEY

She says you're worried.

DAD

Well... maybe a little.

RILEY

Why, 'cause I'm homeless and live in a van?

(DAD laughs.)

DAD

You say you're okay?

RILEY

I'm okay.

DAD

And you've got money.

RILEY

Dad...

DAD

Yeah. Then that's all I needed to hear.

(A moment.)

Hey. Look who's awake.

(Beep. Boop. Hiss. RILEY and DAD get up.)

Dad. You know who this is? This is your granddaughter. Been here all day waiting to see you.

No. Leave that in. You're okay.

RILEY

Hey Gampa.

(a moment.)

I love you too.

(The Van. Morning. The driveway.)

DANA

So do you feel like you're closer.

RENDER

No. But they're out there. And until I find them... I've got Riley.

DANA

I feel like you're closer to her than I am.

RENDER

I don't know if I have siblings, so I can't pretend like I would know, but that doesn't sound right to me.

DANA

And you want to find your family - even tho they might have left you?

RENDER

Yeah... Families matter... And I think you know who I learned that from.

Hey - I think that's your Dad's car at the end of the block - you better -

DANA

Yeah.

(DANA leaves the van. A car pulls up, doors open.)

RILEY

Hey. We thought you were coming by last -

Oof.

(A big bear hug. A moment.)

RENDER

I know you can't see it - but I bet you can feel that big ole hug from wherever you are. We'll leave it here for today. Until next time - remember, don't fear the unknown.

RENDER (cont.)

And as they say where I'm from:

Oh - that creature's heading straight for the high school dance!

GAMPA

The professors that came out there was from the Polytech Laboratories. And they said it was on account of the honeysuckle that grew up on the inside - said the cemetery hadn't been cared for in years - and the Kettlers had all died out - and it was gases building up under them honeysuckles. And it built up so much and it had to come out.

And it was foxfire on it. That's what we all thought was the ghost.

(end of episode)

CREDITS

DAVE LEVY

Hi, this is Dave Levy. Have Monster, Will Travel features the vocal talents of Jordan Trovillion as Riley Kate, Paul Kerford Wilson as Render, Dave Powell as the dulcet-toned Professor Bunion –

DAVE POWELL

Hey! I don't hate that.

DAVE LEVY

and me, Dave Levy. Today's episode was written by Trey Tatum and directed by Bridget Leak. Have Monster, Will Travel is a production of Queen City Flash out of Cincinnati, Ohio.

CAITLIN

Hi, this is Caitlin McWethy. Thanks as always for listening - if you enjoying the show, the simplest way you can help us is by recommending us to a friend - or rating and reviewing the show wherever you found us.

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