

Mockery Manor SEASON 2  
Episode 3  
'Whispering Trees'  
Written by Lindsay Sharman  
Music and Sound Design by Laurence Owen

THEME TUNE, punctuated by...

MARGOT V.O.  
Long Cat Media presents Mockery Manor  
Season 2, Episode 3: Whispering  
Trees.

INT. ELVES OF EUROPE RIDE - DAY

The Elves of Europe sing their happy pro-Europe (and prophetically anti-Brexit) song.

ELVES  
We are the elves of Europe  
Compatriots are we  
United by the magic  
Of hands across the sea  
The world was once a single island  
What better way to live than that?

We are the elves of Europe  
A ring of golden stars  
No friction at our borders  
No tariffs on our cars  
So join with us your elven siblings  
And sing a song of peace and cheer!

There are elves in every city  
Every village, every town  
Every forest, field and toadstool  
There's an elf that wants to be found  
We are all the elves of Europe  
And we all must play our part  
In the trading bloc of adventure  
We have Europe in our hearts.

They loop in the background as the ride goes on...

JJ  
Wow. Look at all the singing dolls.

HILDA  
It disturbs you?

JJ

Yeah. It's horrible.

HILDA

Most people think that, the first time they ride the Elves of Europe. But it grows on you. You build immunity to the horror. The nightmare becomes comforting.

JJ

People go on this ride more than once??

HILDA

(laughs) Only the die-hard fans. This is the scenic route to my office, so I've ridden it hundreds of times.

JJ

What's the non-scenic route?

HILDA

I don't tell anyone that. Don't want anyone sneaking up on me while I work, do I?  
Ah, we're coming up to the Italian section.

JJ

Oh!

HILDA

See the spaghetti waterfall ahead?

JJ

Yeah! A curtain of spaghetti! Are those meatballs too, on the noodles? Very good.

HILDA

When we go through it, climb onto the bank on the left hand side. We must be quick, so the boats behind don't see what we're doing. We don't want copy-cats. Alright?  
And... go!

They dismount onto the bank, grunting as they go.

HILDA (cont'd)

Careful. Mind the dolls. This way, behind the Leaning Tower of Pizza.

JJ  
Ha. Pizza. Yeah, of course.

A door closes and the Elves become muted. They walk.

JJ (cont'd)  
Ah, a boring old utility corridor.  
I loved that about Mockery, at first;  
how I got to see behind the scenes.  
It was like finding out how a magic  
trick is done.

HILDA  
Some people don't like that.

Door opens.

This is my office.  
Go right in. Phone's on the desk.

JJ  
Thanks for letting me use it.

HILDA  
Any time you wish to call your  
'parents', just ask.

JJ  
I'll only be ten minutes.

Hilda leaves, closing the door behind her.

JJ dials a number.

JJ (cont'd)  
(mutters) Can't believe I'm doing  
this.  
(sings) We are the elves of Europe...  
Ugh, shut up, JJ.  
Come on.

Dodgy Eric picks up on the other end.

DODGY ERIC  
'ello?

JJ  
Eric, it's JJ. I need some advice.

DODGY ERIC  
Hang on, got a load of wax in me ear.  
What did you say your name was?

JJ

JJ!

DODGY ERIC

JJ! Oh, one of the English twins!

JJ

Yes! *JJ!*

DODGY ERIC

Eyyy the twins! Which one are you;  
old stick-up-her-arse, or nutter?

JJ

The one you dated for 6 months.

DODGY ERIC

Weyyyy, nutter! Good to hear from  
you! So: back in town then? What can  
I get ya? Can't remember what your  
preference was.

JJ

I'm not calling for that, Eric! Look,  
do you happen to know anything  
about... stolen goods?

DODGY ERIC

(suspicious) What is this? You turned  
grass on me, nutter?

JJ

No, course not. I've got something I  
need to sell.

DODGY ERIC

I ain't a fence. You know that.

JJ

Yeah, but you know people who are.  
Can you can tell me who to go to?

DODGY ERIC

You'll have to tell me what you're  
selling first.

JJ

Yeah, OK. It's... it's a painting.

DODGY ERIC

A painting?

JJ

Yeah, by... someone famous. Well,  
famous if you know about art.

DODGY ERIC

Stolen art?? You bloody nutter! I  
just thought you was a good-time gal!  
You robbing galleries now? Hahahahaha!

JJ

I didn't steal it... just fell into  
my hands.

DODGY ERIC

Course it did, course it did. Happens  
to the best of us. Who's the artist  
then?

JJ

Vermeer.

DODGY ERIC

Vermeer!!!

JJ

You've heard of him?

DODGY ERIC

Johannes Vermeer!! From that Boston  
heist??

JJ

Erm...

DODGY ERIC

Is the painting a couple of birds and  
a fella at the old Joanna?

JJ

Yes?

DODGY ERIC

Hahahaha! Brilliant!

JJ

Do you know someone who can help me  
sell it?

DODGY ERIC

Nutter, if you'd said 'I got a van-  
load of car stereos' I'd know who to  
point you to.

(MORE)

DODGY ERIC (cont'd)  
 But a bloody Vermeer?? You need a special kind of private buyer for that. Someone with loadsa money and no morals - plenty of them about, but I don't exactly move in them circles, do I?

JJ  
 Shit. Yeah. Course not.

DODGY ERIC  
 Cor, think what it's worth, though.

JJ  
 Eric, if you think you can help in any way, you can have a cut.

DODGY ERIC  
 (amused) Oh yeah. Hefty finder's fee for a bloody Vermeer.  
 I tell you what, nutter; this sounds like it might be worth me expanding my sphere of influence. I'll put a few feelers out, see what happens.

JJ  
 Thank you. I'll give you a ring in a few days, yeah?

DODGY ERIC  
 Alright. What's your number, in case I need to get in touch?

JJ  
 Erm. Look, just call Dunkelschloss theme park and ask for me. But don't tell them what it's about.

DODGY ERIC  
 (cheery voice) 'Just ringing about the Vermeer!' Hahahaha! Course not you *nutter*.

Phone click.

INT. DUNKELSCHLOSS SCHLOSS - NIGHT

CREEEEEAK of door.

THOMAS  
 Oh wait - there is light switch here somewhere. Ah.

The CLICK of a lightswitch.

JJ

Oh thank God. Electricity!

THOMAS

You see blue door? Go in blue door.  
It is open.

CREEEEEAK.

JJ sneezes.

JJ

Dusty.

THOMAS

I bring vacuum cleaner tomorrow.

JJ

It's modern! Well, a bit ten years ago, very orange and brown. But still, more modern than I thought it'd be! That's a relief. Thought I'd be sleeping in some musty old four poster bed.

THOMAS

Most of the rooms are still like that; very old, very neglected.

JJ

Yeah. What's the story here?

THOMAS

The story? (chuckle)

'Beauty and the Beast' style opening music starts.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Well.

Once upon a time, they started renovating the schloss, hoping to make it into a fancy hotel for high-paying guests. But the schloss proved more broken than they originally thought. Every repair demanded a thousand more. Rot lurked in the walls and floors. The old schloss was greedy - it gobbled up hundreds of thousands of deutschemarks, and it wanted more, millions more. So they were forced to stop.

(MORE)

THOMAS (cont'd)  
Years passed, and one day, a young girl took up residence in the broken castle, and she...

Music stops.

JJ  
(shivers) Ew, don't. Those fairytales don't tend to end well, do they?

THOMAS  
Yes. Do not accept any gifts from frightening older women, that's my advice.

JJ  
Gotcha. No apples or spinning wheels.

Swish of curtain.

Nice view of the park.

THOMAS  
And kitchenette is through here. I bring food tomorrow.

JJ  
Where's the bathroom?

THOMAS  
Ehhh there is no bathroom. Only chamber pot.

JJ  
Hahahha, good one! Very funny.  
(beat) Oh my God, are you serious?  
Where am I supposed to empty it?? Out the window?

THOMAS  
Hmmm. You could use park toilets. They are open until midnight, when cleaning staff leave.  
I will leave you to unpack.

JJ  
You could stay longer? I haven't spoken to many people lately. And I don't have anything to unpack...

THOMAS  
No bag?



JJ

No, left it in the forest. Which was a bit silly, all my clothes are in there too.

THOMAS

I am confused.

JJ

Sorry. Ignore me. Gotten a bit too used to talking to myself. Forgotten how to be normal.

THOMAS

That is very sad.

JJ

It's not that bad.

THOMAS

Goodnight, JJ.

JJ

It's only eight o'clock. You could stay if you'd like to..?

Door shuts.

OK, g'night.

Door opens. Thomas pokes his head back round.

THOMAS

Oh, one more thing - do not explore the schloss. It is unstable. It could be dangerous.

JJ

Aren't we all? Hahaha.

THOMAS

What do you mean?

JJ

I mean... some of us are... dangerously unstable.

THOMAS

You are dangerously unstable?

JJ

No! No, it was a joke. I'm fine.

THOMAS  
Mmm. Goodnight, JJ.

JJ  
Night Thomas.

Door closes. CREEEEAK.

JJ (cont'd)  
Shit, I need the toilet.

INT. DRAWING ROOM, MOCKERY MANOR - DAY

A grandfather clock chimes. The door opens, and several people walk into the drawing room.

BETTE  
Last time I was in this room, we were all lying to a detective about a murder investigation.

JENKINS  
Try not to say that sort of thing out loud, my dear.

Door closes.

DAVINA  
Lying to a detective?

BETTE  
Oh!

DAVINA  
What's she talking about?

BETTE  
Davina!

DAVINA  
Who was lying?

BETTE  
Oh! No-one. No-one! I was... joking?

JENKINS  
Davina, maybe you could go and... file something.

DAVINA  
Oh I don't do filing.

PARKER

What do you mean, you don't do filing? You're my secretary! Is that why I can never find anything??

MARGOT

Davina's been here a long time, Parker. If she doesn't want to do filing, she doesn't have to do filing.

PARKER

I don't believe this.

DAVINA

So hang on, you haven't explained yet. What was Bette saying about that murder investigation?

MARGOT

(interrupts) Davina dear, could you go ask the kitchen to make up an extra plate for lunch? And then you can go on a break.

DAVINA

(gets up) Right y'are, Margot. Good to have you back, Bette. Things were dead exciting when you were here. Catch you kids later.

Davina leaves.

BETTE

Sorry, I didn't see Davina there.

MARGOT

Yes. It's her special skill. Bette dear, I'm so glad you're here. I feared we'd never see or hear from you again.

BETTE

That was the plan. But circumstances changed. I've changed.

MARGOT

Mmm. You needed family.

BETTE

I've got one of those, thanks, and they're half the problem.

(MORE)

BETTE (cont'd)

Look, cards on the table: I came back to England because... because I had a baby.

JENKINS

Ohh!

PARKER

A baby?? A human baby???

JENKINS

Congratulations!

PARKER

Where is it?

BETTE

I left him outside in a flowerbed.

PARKER

Bette!

BETTE

I'm kidding! He's obviously with my parents.

MARGOT

Can I meet him?

BETTE

Of course, Margot.

PARKER

Can't believe you had a baby.

BETTE

His name is Freddie. He's just under a year old. Don't ask me who the father is. And I need somewhere we can live that isn't my bloody parent's house, and isn't a bloody backpackers hostel. So... here I am. Because I thought, Margot, you might be willing to give your prodigal niece a job. And maybe... a home?

MARGOT

Live here? With us? Yes. Yes! We will look after you!

BETTE

Not forever, I won't impose any longer than necessary...

MARGOT  
As long as you want!

PARKER  
What does JJ think about all this?

BETTE  
She doesn't know about Freddie.

PARKER  
She doesn't know??

BETTE  
I haven't seen her in a long time.  
(upset) I don't even know where she  
is. To be perfectly honest, I don't  
even know if she's alive.

PARKER  
Who, JJ? Oh, she's fine.

JENKINS  
Parker's been in touch with her  
recently.

BETTE  
What?? Parker, you've spoken to her??  
When? Is she *here*??

PARKER  
Nah nah. She's in Germany, working at  
another Wizzard park.

MARGOT  
Hang on. Is she?

BETTE  
Are you kidding?? (happy tears) Oh  
thank God! Oh! Oh, I'm so relieved. I  
can't believe she's got a *job*. She  
must've really sorted herself out!

PARKER  
Errrr well...

BETTE  
I thought she might be in a crack den  
somewhere, or dead in a ditch. Oh  
thank God she's alright! (sobs)

PARKER  
Ahhh, Bette, you poor old thing...

BETTE  
(happy sobs) Shut up, Parker.

MARGOT  
Parker, go and make Bette a strong cup of tea.

PARKER  
Yeah, course. Strong emotions, strong tea. Good idea.

JENKINS  
Oh, and some finger sandwiches, while you're at it. Egg and cress.

PARKER  
Will do. Chin up, Bette! I'll be back in a mo.

Footsteps. Door opens and closes.

JENKINS  
Well, then. Happy news all round. JJ is safe. You are safe. Long may that continue.  
When would you like to move in, my dear?

BETTE  
Soon as poss?

MARGOT  
Today?

JENKINS  
Yes, why not.

BETTE  
Yes please. I can't bear another night at my parents'.

JENKINS  
Then we must arrange things right away. Margot, you should ask Davina to make up a room. The Bloomsbury suite?

MARGOT  
Yes! Yes! We have much to do! I will find Davina.

JENKINS  
And Bette and I shall fetch Freddie!

BETTE

What, now?

Jenkins gets up.

BETTE (cont'd)

Oh right. Guess we're off then.

MARGOT

This is so exciting. So wonderful.

Bette and Jenkins walk out.

JENKINS

Come along, Bette! Shall we take the Rolls? Would Freddie like that?

BETTE

Should we tell Parker we're..?

JENKINS

This way to the garage!

BETTE

Right. OK. It's, umm, about 2 hours away...

JENKINS

We can get to know each other on the way. We've never really chatted before, have we, Bette? Not properly.

BETTE

Guess not. I know who you are, though. You're Margot's chap. Joplin.

JENKINS

Jenkins. Margot told us the last thing you said as you left, three years ago - 'goodbye, freaks!'

BETTE

I don't think I said that, did I?

JENKINS

You certainly did.

Beep beep of security system - Jenkins has got the place tightly controlled.

Door open and shut. Jangle of keys.

JENKINS (cont'd)  
 Paint pot, ahh. Oh dear, you've seen  
 where I hide the keys to the Rolls!  
 If it ever goes missing, I'll know  
 who took it, haha.

Bette POLITE LAUGHS. Jenkins unlocks the car.

JENKINS (cont'd)  
 In you get, then!

They get in.

JENKINS (cont'd)  
 Ahhh. The scent of a Rolls. Breathe  
 it in. What do you smell?

BETTE  
 (sniffs) Old man?

JENKINS  
 Hahaha! Incredibly rude.

Key in ignition. Engine grumbles into life.

JENKINS (cont'd)  
 Marvelous. In which case, maybe we  
 should skip the polite chit-chat.

BETTE  
 Oh yeah, yes please. Deathly boring.

JENKINS  
 Let's get straight to the point,  
 then; you don't want to be here, do  
 you? You've simply run out of  
 options. You're broke, saddled with a  
 child, and you've realised that  
 living with your parents is even less  
 appealing than returning to the  
 'freaks' as a charity case.

BETTE  
 Bloody hell! Maybe we should do  
 small-talk!

Jenkins LAUGHS.

JENKINS  
 Too accurate?



BETTE

Does it matter why I'm here? Margot's happy to see me, even if you're not.

JENKINS

Au contraire, I'm thrilled you've come back. How long are you planning to stay with us?

BETTE

I dunno. 6 months. Enough time to save some rent money, and find another job. Somewhere far away from here and you bunch of freaks.

JENKINS

What kind of job?

BETTE

Anything. Cleaning, shop work...

JENKINS

Oh dear oh dear. A small flat with your baby, and a minimum wage job. For a pampered boarding school girl such as yourself?

BETTE

Excuse me!? I am not *pampered*. The last few years I've been living on my bloody wits and nothing else. I've done all sorts of jobs too, so you--

JENKINS

But you knew it was temporary, didn't you?

BETTE

No! I didn't...

JENKINS

Living wild before you trotted off to university.

BETTE

That's not...

JENKINS

And then, after graduation, a job in swinging London town, living the high life!

BETTE

I... I can still do that.

JENKINS

Of course!

BETTE

One day.

JENKINS

For now, though, you need to survive. And this job you take: it'll have to fit around childcare. And you won't be able to save... children are so very expensive.

BETTE

I'm not stupid! I have thought about this. But I don't have much choice, do I?

JENKINS

But you do, my dear! You have a doting aunt. You could stay at Mockery for a few years, no rent to pay, work in the park... save enough to launch yourself into that glittering future you once dreamed of.

BETTE

A few years at Mockery. Oh God. I don't know if I can bear it.

JENKINS

Mmmm. A few years seems like a lifetime at your age. You don't like that plan, then?

BETTE

No, I don't. But it makes sense. I can see that. I'm not an idiot. Maybe I will stay longer than I'd planned, then.

JENKINS

If only there were another way. Luckily for you, there is.

Mocker piano music starts.

JENKINS (cont'd)  
 How would you like to earn a  
 substantial amount of money in just a  
 few weeks, and then you and your  
 little boy can skip off into the  
 distance, your pockets bulging!

BETTE  
 (suspicious) How would I do that,  
 then?

JENKINS  
 Have you ever been to Germany, my  
 dear?

INT. JACK'S GIANT LAND, DUNKELSCHLOSS PARK - NIGHT

Jack's Giant Land music plays in the background.

JJ walks through the park.

JJ  
 (calls) Oh! Hi, yeah. Erm. Excuse me?  
 Look, I really need to use the  
 bathroom, I need someone to unlock  
 it, can you...

MAN  
 Nah nah.

He walks off.

JJ  
 ...oh why are you going away?? What  
 is wrong with this place??

She spots someone else.

JJ (cont'd)  
 Oh, yeah, sorry, can you help me, I  
 really need to go to the toilet and I  
 really need someone to..

DIFFERENT MAN  
 Nein, ich bin beschäftigt!

JJ  
 Why... why are you going away from  
 me??  
 I just need the toilet! I AM NOT  
 POOING IN A WASH BASIN!

Spots someone else.

JJ (cont'd)  
Hi, yeah, excuse me.

GRETCHEN  
(panic) I'm not doing anything!  
I'm...ummm... just cleaning!

JJ  
Great! You're talking to me! Everyone else is acting like I'm invisible. Are they always like that? Sorry; I'm JJ, I'm new here, I'm living in the schloss, and I need the toilet.

GRETCHEN  
The schloss? No-one lives in the schloss!

JJ  
Yeah, it's a bit weird, innit. Anyway, the toilet--

The sound of MEN'S MURMURED VOICES nearby.

GRETCHEN  
(hushed) Sssh! Keep your voice down! Come, over here, keep to the shadows. Does anyone know you're living in the schloss?

JJ  
You clearly didn't. Anyway, really really need to use the toilet very soon, so..?

GRETCHEN  
I don't have keys to the toilets.

JJ  
(loud) Oh God! What do I do!

GRETCHEN  
Shhh! Alright! The toilet next to Koschei the Deathless is always unlocked.

JJ  
Oh thank God. Where is Kosh... that? I haven't been here long.

GRETCHEN  
It's in Baba Yaga Land.

JJ

Can you take me there?

GRETCHEN

Ohhh! Really?? Fine. But you follow me, and keep your voice quiet.

They walk.

JJ

OK. But... why?

GRETCHEN

Because I... I think I have a migraine coming on. The sounds and light...

JJ

Riiight. So what's your name?

GRETCHEN

My name? My name, my name is... Heidi.

JJ

But your name-tag says Gretchen.

GRETCHEN

Ah scheisse.

JJ

That's cool. I've got two names too. So am I right; the staff are a bit unfriendly, or is it me?

GRETCHEN

It's them. The night shift are very weird. Very weird.

JJ

Including you?

GRETCHEN

I don't normally do night shift. I'm not officially here.

JJ

Ohhh! Interesting. Are you *stealing* something?

GRETCHEN

No!

JJ

No judgement!

GRETCHEN

I'm not! I'm just curious what they do here at night. Why am I even telling you this? I don't know why I'm helping you.

JJ

Well, if you don't, there might be a *nasty accident*.

GRETCHEN

Are you *threatening* me?

JJ

No. I mean I'll poo myself.

GRETCHEN

Oh.

Crows caw. Spooky ambient sounds.

JJ

Oh man, is this Baba Yaga Land?

GRETCHEN

Yah. The toilet is on the other side of the Forest of Ice.

JJ

Why is everything still on?

GRETCHEN

The generator is on a timer. It goes off at midnight. The park is very automated, we barely do anything ourselves.

The WHISPERING TREES do their thang.

JJ

What. The hell. Is that?

GRETCHEN

It's the Whispering Trees. Each one tells a different Russian folktale. If you wanna hear one, press your ear against the trunk.

JJ

Yeah, I'll pass thanks. Ah, toilets!

GRETCHEN  
I have to leave you here.

JJ  
Thanks for your help. See you  
tomorrow maybe? During work hours?

GRETCHEN  
Yah yah yah yah. Wait! One more  
thing.

JJ  
I really need to go...

GRETCHEN  
You must be careful. I think there is  
something going on in the park.  
Something... dangerous.

Beat.

JJ LAUGHS.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)  
(v serious) I am not joking.

JJ  
Look, Gretchen. No offense, right.  
But... that's statistically unlikely.

GRETCHEN  
Huh?

JJ  
It wouldn't happen twice to the same  
person, would it?

GRETCHEN  
What do you mean..?

JJ  
This isn't Murder She Wrote. I'm not  
Angela Lansbury.

GRETCHEN  
(baffled) Angela Lansbury?

JJ  
Trust me. There's nothing to be  
scared of. And there is definitely -  
absolutely nothing going on in this  
park.

End music.

CREDITS

Mockery Manor was written and  
directed by Lindsay Sharman

Music, sound design and editing by  
Laurence Owen

Hayley Evenett was JJ and Bette  
Laurence Owen was Parker, Jenkins and  
additional voices

Lindsay Sharman was Hilda, Margot and  
Davina

Alasdair Beckett-King was Tomasz and  
Dodgy Eric

and Abbie Eastwood was Gretchen

If you'd like to hear our full  
performance from the London Podcast  
Festival, you can - by going to our  
Ko-fi page and buying us a coffee!  
That's [ko-fi.com/longcatmedia](https://ko-fi.com/longcatmedia) - It  
all goes towards making Mockery  
Manor, and Lindsay and I really  
appreciate your support.