

Ghosted
Episode 1

Written by Lindsay Sharman
Music and Sound Design by Laurence Owen

Music. Interrupted by -

MERTA

Ghosts never appear in crowded places, have you noticed? They never materialise live on stage with Bruce Springsteen at Madison Square Gardens. Or at a royal wedding, dragging their chains down the aisle directly behind the Archbishop of Canterbury. Caught on camera, watched by millions! No. It's always in the dead of night, when no-one's about, in a lonely place, seen by a single, unfortunate soul who few believe.

How convenient.

Ghosts don't exist. If they're invisible to so many of us, how can they?

Although...

I have a theory, and I grew up in sight of the light house, so perhaps I know more than most about this.

I think... a ghost is a warning that there is - or was - something terribly wrong.

Like pain! Ah, nobody wants to experience pain. But pain tells us something is damaged and needs to be fixed, or about to be damaged and we must stop what we're doing right away. Take your hand away from the fire, find a salve for the burn. Pain can be useful, see?

It's not always that simple. Pain can warn of a problem that's no longer there, that you can't do anything about; a missing limb that aches like the devil. Or say the body identifies a problem deep inside, and clever thing, it works to solve that problem, and in doing so forms scar tissue, and that same scar tissue pulls on healthy flesh, adheres one organ to another, intrudes on bundles of nerves... creates new sources of pain.

(MORE)

MERTA (cont'd)

Pain can beget new pain long after the source is gone. It can be a reminder of a thing that happened long ago.

Perhaps a ghost is the story of a single event, made manifest by the pain of what occurred. And perhaps it serves as a warning of what can happen in a desolate place.

EXT. LIGHT HOUSE

WAVES. WIND.

Keira's voice, an echo of the previous episode -

KEIRA

Beth, there is something I need to tell you. There's a dead seagull on the Widow's Walk.

EXT. WIDOW'S WALK, LIGHT HOUSE

Beth is out on the walk. Keira watches her from inside the lantern room, through the open window.

The wind BLOWS. The rain PATTERS.

The METAL of the walkway GROANS and CREAKS under Beth.

The women have to shout to be heard.

Beth is WOOZY from illness.

BETH

(groans)
(to self) Ohhh. Don't be sick. Don't look down. Ohhh, what am I doing up here. Ohhh this is so unsafe.

KEIRA

(calls) Is it slippery? I could come out and help?

BETH

(calls) No! Stay inside! I don't want to void my insurance.

KEIRA

I didn't expect you to go out there, Beth!

BETH

(to self) Don't look down. Ohhh why's it creaking...
Come on, get in the bin bag. Please Mr Gull, just get in the bin bag.

KEIRA

(calls) Do you need gloves? So you don't touch it?

BETH

Bit late for that.

The RUSTLE of a BINBAG as she drags the seagull in.

BETH (cont'd)

Get. In. The bin bag.

A small RIP as his beak snags the bin bag.

BETH (cont'd)

Ohhh, its beak...

KEIRA

(calls) Got it?

BETH

(calls) Almost!
(sotto) Oh look, blood on my hands, and on my trousers too, ohhh lovely. Lovely, lovely.
Don'tbesickitsfine.

KEIRA

(calls) Sorry you have to do this!

BETH

(calls) Mmmm! It's done. It's in the bag!

KEIRA

Weyyy!

Keira CLAPS.

BETH

(to self) Haha. 'In the bag.' Ahhh. What fun.
(calls) I'm coming in! Make way.

BREATHING heavily, WHIMPERING, Beth CLAMBERS back in through the window.

INT. LANTERN ROOM

Keira SHUTS the window, and the noise of the outside is muted.

KEIRA

Are you OK?

BETH

(gasping) Fuck. Fuck me. Jesus fucking Christ.

KEIRA

You're swaying.

BETH

(gasping) Don't like heights. And the seagull. Was much worse. Much worse than I expected. Blood! Look!

KEIRA

Ewww. Gross. Breathe, Beth. In. Out. In. Out.

Beth SUCKS AIR for a moment, as instructed.

BETH

There's blood all over the walkway.

KEIRA

Ew.

BETH

Was it bleeding last night? The seagull?

KEIRA

It must've been.

BETH

But so much? I don't get it. It looked like it'd been run over. It's skull was all... one of its eyes... oh god... I'm gonna be sick.

KEIRA

Oh!

BETH

No I'm OK. I'm fine. Woo! Ha. I can't leave it like that. I'll have to clean the walkway.

KEIRA

What, now?

BETH

No. Later. If that's OK. The migraine's a bit worse. But I promise, as soon as I feel better, I'll clean it up.

KEIRA

You don't need to. The rain, the rain will wash it away.

A dull, slow DRIP, DRIP, DRIP starts.

DRIP.

BETH

The rain! Yes. You're right. Oh thank God!

DRIP.

KEIRA

Oh.
Beth.

DRIP.

BETH

What?

DRIP.

KEIRA

The bin bag... it's dripping?

Beat.

BETH

Shit! The carpet! It's going on the carpet! Open the window again!

KEIRA

The window?

BETH

Quick! Quick! I'll throw it out! Open it! Open it!

KEIRA

OK!

Keira OPENS the window.

Beth gives a small SHOUT OF EFFORT as she heaves the bin bag out of the window.

The BIN BAG hits a metal rail with a DULL 'TOINGG!' and THUMPS onto the walkway.

KEIRA (cont'd)
Beth! You threw it back on the walkway! Why'd you do that??

BETH
It was meant to go over the side! No! The bin bag caught on the scaffolding.

The bin bag FLAPS violently in the wind.

KEIRA
Ewww. One of the wings is poking out.

BETH
Oh God, it's grotesque!

Beat.

KEIRA
We're back where we started. What do we do now?

BETH
I can't go out there again.

KEIRA
I'll do it. I'll unhook it from the scaffolding and I'll throw it off the side.

BETH
No. Too dangerous. Stay inside. I've got it. There's a broom in the kitchen. I can use it to reach through the window and push it over. Yes!

She SHUTS the window.

KEIRA
Beth, if you're not feeling well, this can wait--

BETH
No! No, no. I can't leave that thing just hanging there. I'll go get the broom. Be right back.

Ignoring Keira, Beth heads downstairs. WE FOLLOW HER.

KEIRA
 (laughs, calls) I didn't expect this
 level of entertainment when I booked!
 You should put this on your website,
 Beth!

Keira's LAUGHTER follows Beth as she THUMPS downstairs.

INT. KITCHEN, LIGHT HOUSE

Beth BURSTS into the kitchen.

The RADIO is back on. It's playing the 2011 MUSIC from the
 uni scene; the past and the present colliding.

RADIO DJ
 ...from the naughty noughties
 playlist...

BETH
 (queasy) Right. OK. Right. Yes.
 What am I doing? Why am I here?
 Broom!

Beth goes to the CUPBOARD and takes a broom out.

Keira shouts down the stairwell.

KEIRA
 (distant) Beth! Bring something for
 the carpet! For the blood stains! Hot
 water?

BETH
 (calls) Yes!

Beth experiences a stab of pain, brought on by her own
 shouting.

BETH (cont'd)
 Ow. Ahhh.

Beth RUNS THE TAP. The plastic basin starts to fill.

RADIO DJ
 Brilliant stuff, is it too soon to
 call this a classic?

BETH
 (calls) What gets blood stains out?
 White wine? Salt?

Keira doesn't answer.

BETH (cont'd)
 Why did I put carpet down? I
 should've varnished the floorboards.
 Idiot!

RADIO DJ
 Coming up next, another banger from a
 decade ago. Feels like ten minutes
 since this stormed the charts.

The LANDLINE RINGS. RING RING.

The TAP RUNS, the phone RINGS, the radio DJ YAMMERS. The
 noise level rises.

BETH
 Oh my God. What next, a bloody brass
 band?
 Not now. Go away!
 (mutters) Bloody seagull. My carpet.
 Fucking storm. Ohh my head.
 It was fine before. This is her
 fault. This is what she brings.
 No. Shush. Don't be silly, Beth.

RADIO DJ
 Honestly, how does the time go so
 fast--

BETH
 Oh shut up. Go away!

Beth SNAPS the radio off.

The WATER RUSHES into the bowl.

The LANDLINE RINGS. RING RING.

BETH (cont'd)
 Alright, alright!

RING. RING RING.

She WALKS to the phone, picks it up.

BETH (cont'd)
 Yes what is it??
 I mean, Hello Bijou Lighthouse
 boutique stays Bethany Williams
 speaking can I help?

On the other end of the phone, HEAVY BREATHING.

BETH (cont'd)

Hello? Of course. You again. What do you actually get out of this? Are you trying to scare me? I suppose you're wanking right now? With your tiny little member? Your shrivelled little peepee? Hmm? Why don't you fuck off and get a life--

VOICE

--Hello?

BETH

(shock) Oh.
Hello. Sorry! I thought you were someone else. Unless you are. Who is this?

VOICE

Hello?

BETH

Yes, I can hear you. Can you hear me?

FAINT, with INTERFERENCE -

VOICE

Tell me why...

The LIGHTS CLICK and FIZZ and almost obscure the words-

VOICE (cont'd)

...it's Wez.

BETH

Sorry? What did you say?

VOICE

...Wez....miss you...

BZZZ.

BETH

Wez?

VOICE

...miss you... (indistinct) do you remember...

BETH

Wez?? Is that you??

WEZ

(loud, present) Beth.

Chilling bell-like CLANG.

Beth SLAMS THE PHONE DOWN.

Her BREATH is SHAKY. Silence outside the sounds of her own body.

And then the world outside Beth's head rushes in as...

...the sink overflows. WATER CASCADES ONTO THE FLOOR.

BETH

(gasps) No no no, the tap, no no no!

She RUNS to the TAP and turns it off. She pauses for a second, BREATHES.

BETH (cont'd)

(sotto, to self) Wez.

From upstairs -

KEIRA

(calls) Beth? What's going on? I heard you talki--

CREAK of inside door. Keira arrives.

KEIRA (cont'd)

What's going on? You OK? Beth--

BETH

--Flooded the sink. Made a mess. I think... oh no... I think I really am going to be sick...

Beth INHALES SHARPLY.

...WHOOOOOSH, flashback time.

INT. BETH'S UNI ROOM - DAY

Keira knocks on the door.

KEIRA

Yo yo yo! Beth! You asleep? Get up, lazy bones! It's 4 o'clock. Knock knock! Knockety knock! Knockety knock knock noo.

The door OPENS a crack.

BETH
(quiet) What do you want?

KEIRA
Er, rude.

BETH
Sorry, I didn't mean--

KEIRA
--What's going on, what are you doing
in there?

BETH
Just... 'chilling'.

KEIRA
What's that smell? Have you been
smoking?

BETH
No...

Keira SNIFFS LOUDLY.

KEIRA
What's that smell then?

BETH
Is there a smell?

KEIRA
You've gone nose-blind. That's what
happens. My cousin's got 12 cats, her
house stinks of sour shit, she has no
idea.

BETH
You have a lot of cousins.

KEIRA
Are you gonna let me in?

BETH
No, I-- Keira, wait! Don't just--

Keira barges past.

The door CLICKS shut behind her.

Silence.

KEIRA
Oh kaaaay. Oh dear.

BETH
Just needs a tidy up. That's all.

KEIRA
Geez, look at this place.

BETH
Don't open the curtains!

SWISH of curtains.

The light hurts my eyes.

KEIRA
Right. Beth, this is an intervention.

BETH
An intervention.

KEIRA
Yeah. I asked Wez to join me, but he's got football. And Sarah and Mish said they don't know you well enough.

BETH
Sarah and Mish? From 19th Century American Literature??

KEIRA
Yeah. I asked Peter from Gothic Literature to come too but--

BETH
--Peter from Gothic Literature, who the fuck is Peter from Gothic Literature?

KEIRA
Exactly! If you ever left your room, you might make enough friends for a proper intervention. Which is what this intervention is about. Beth, you need to leave your room.

BETH
Hang on. You told Sarah and Mish and 'Peter' I never leave my room?

KEIRA
No, I made it more dramatic than that, to try and convince them to come. I said you were having a nervy b.

BETH

A nervy b.

KEIRA

It's a nervous breakdown.

BETH

I guessed what it means. I'm not having a..! I'm fine, Keira! I'm totally fine!

KEIRA

You're not coming to class. You eating properly? Beth, you look *feral*.

BETH

I can't believe you've told people I'm having a nervy b. (corrects self) Nervous breakdown.

KEIRA

So what's wrong then?

BETH

Nothing!
I mean, it's not... important. It's the migraines.

KEIRA

Migraines.

BETH

They've got worse.

KEIRA

Beth. There's no shame in a nervy b.

BETH

I am not having a nervy b! And please can you stop calling it that. I've been slammed with migraines the last few weeks. Can you tell everyone that? Mish and 'Peter' and anyone else you've said anything to.

KEIRA

You want me to tell everyone you have a bad headache.

BETH

That's why I don't bother talking about this. It's not just a bad... uhhh!! Forget it. Forget it.

KEIRA

No, nono, OK, I believe you. I believe you! No need to get upset.

BETH

I'm not upset.

KEIRA

C'mon, Beth. If your head hurts for weeks on end, you should go to the doctors. It might be a brain tumour.

BETH

(deep breath) It's not a brain tumour. I have actually told you this before, Keira. I was diagnosed with chronic migraine at 14.

KEIRA

Uh! That was five years ago.

BETH

Yes. That's what chronic means. You don't cure it, you manage it and sometimes it flares. If I don't sleep well, or eat at the usual times, or the weather changes, or stress, or... Oh, Keira! You shouldn't have drawn attention to it. They're going to treat me differently now! Why do you have to be so dramatic..??

KEIRA

I'm not dramatic! I was worried about you!

BETH

Why?

KEIRA

Because I'm not an asshole!
Because you're my friend. And because... it's my fault, isn't it. I'm the one who said we should do the seance.

Beat.

BETH

The seance? What's that got to do with anything?

KEIRA

You said it. Stress. You're stressed.
When Gabby said 'join me'--

BETH

It wasn't Gabby.

Beat.

KEIRA

Yeah? Is that what you think? OK.
Well, whatever it was, I should have
followed you when you got spooked and
ran off and I'm sorry I didn't. I
shoulda made sure you were OK. I was
going to, but Wez was like, 'oh leave
her. Let's just go to pub.'

BETH

He didn't? Did he?

KEIRA

And now you're a complete shut-in,
and you stink and I dunno, I feel
responsible.

BETH

Well. You shouldn't. That's silly.
Do I stink?

KEIRA

I'm the one who said we should do it.
And I drew the ouija board.

BETH

I went along with it. You wanted to
stop. Remember?

KEIRA

Guess so.

Beat

KEIRA (cont'd)

So you don't think it was Gabby?

Beth SIGHS and opens a drawer. She RUMMAGES.

BETH

(mutters) Where's the sumatriptan?

KEIRA

What do you think?

BETH

I think I need to increase my migraine prescription but I've barely been able to move to book an appointment.

KEIRA

Oh right. Yeah. Sucks. But I meant... if it wasn't Gabby, what was it?

BETH

Oh.
I don't know.
I mean, I've been thinking about it quite a lot.

KEIRA

Yeah? Me too.

BETH

I think there are two possibilities. Well, three, but one of them is... stupid.

KEIRA

Go on.

BETH

One. Wez was right. I was subconsciously pushing the glass.

KEIRA

Mmm. That makes sense.

BETH

But I swear to God, Keira, when the glass moved, my fingers slipped off. No contact! So how was I pushing it? I couldn't have been.

KEIRA

OK. Two?

BETH

Two. Either you or Wez were pushing it.

KEIRA

Right.

BETH

But like he said, neither of you knew about Gabby. And why would you, even if you did?

KEIRA

Three?

BETH

(sighs) It wasn't Gabby that came through... it was something else. We connected with... something pretending to be Gabby. Something that got in my head, found her there. Used it against me. I know how that sounds. I know what people would think if I told them, so... can we keep this a secret?

KEIRA

Yeah. Course.

BETH

Good. Thank you. But that, that doesn't mean I want to forget it, you know. I think I want to explore what it means. It almost seems cowardly not to. Don't you think? Maybe we can try again... it's up to you, obviously, but if you want, maybe we could explore this together. What do you think? Do you want to... ha... join me?

Before she can finish, *WHOOOSH*, back to the present.

EXT. BEACH, NEAR LIGHT HOUSE

The WAVES CRASH on the shore. SEAGULLS CAW. The WIND is brutal.

The muted sound of a phone - RING RING.

BETH

Pick up the phone.

It goes to answer phone.

ANSWERPHONE

Hello, you've reached the mobile telephone of Theresa Williams, I'm not in right now, or rather, this is a mobile - I'm not available to chat, leave a message and I'll get back to you soon as possible. Toodles.

BETH

Mum, it's me. Hope you can hear me.
 Sorry about the wind. Calling from
 the beach. I'm just getting some air.
 Lots of air up here! (big gust)
 Really violent air.

Beth LAUGHS. She's semi hysterical.

BETH (cont'd)

I just called to say hi. And Keira's
 here! D'you remember Keira? From uni?
 Maybe not, you only met her once.
 When you moved me into halls; she was
 the chatty one with the infected nose
 piercing, and you told her she might
 get sepsis? Her.
 I sound like you when you're telling
 me about one of your friends.
 Anyway, so Wez is dead. Remember Wez?
 You never met him. But I needed to
 tell someone he was dead, someone
 who... cared about me, because it's
 freaked me out a bit. A lot.
 I think I'm hearing things.
 And I was sick in the kitchen sink.
 That's why I needed some air. I left
 Keira to clean it up. Oh God, I
 shouldn't have done that. I better go
 back. OK. Bye mum.

Beth turns round to go back.

She calls her mum again. While the answerphone message plays
 Beth mutters-

BETH (cont'd)

(mutters) Oh why did I tell her that.
 She's going to go mad. . Sound
 normal, Beth. Sound normal. Perky.
 Happy. Lalala!

ANSWERPHONE

Hello, you've reached the mobile
 telephone of Theresa Williams, I'm
 not in right now, or rather, this is
 a mobile - I'm not available to chat,
 leave a message and I'll get back to
 you soon as possible. Toodles.

BETH

Me again! I just wanted to add, I'm
 completely fine.

(MORE)

BETH (cont'd)

I was sick because of migraine but the pills are working - I know you'd rather I went the natural route, but they really do work - and it's almost gone now. I feel much better! Especially with all this bracing sea air. Mmm!
And Keira's here! So that's nice, a friend visiting me, it's been really lovely. See, I've got friends! So yeah, no need to worry about--

Beth breaks off.

A DRONE, some subtle MUSIC that builds throughout the rest of the scene.

BETH (cont'd)

--Oh what the fuck! What the fuck!
Sorry mum! Language! That wasn't directed at you, I just saw something on the...
It's nothing bad, don't worry!
There's just... someone on the Widow's Walk. The, err, walkway around the light house.
What is she doing? I told her not to go out there.
Anyway. Everything's great. Gotta go. Speak soon. Bye.

Ends the call.

BETH (cont'd)

(mutters) Fucks sake, Keira! Get off the Widow's Walk! What are you doing? In this wind?? Ughhh!

She dials the light house.

It RINGS. BRING BRING.

BETH (cont'd)

Hear that? Bring bring! Go answer it, you fruitcake. Get off the walkway and gooo answer the phooooone--

KEIRA VO

Hello?

Beth is shocked into silence. She BREATHES heavily.

KEIRA VO (cont'd)
 Helloooo? This is the, uh, light
 house. Boutique... something. Can I
 help?

BETH
 (scared) Keira?

KEIRA VO
 Beth! Feeling better? I've, uh, just
 poured bleach down the sink--

BETH
 I thought you were on the walkway.

KEIRA VO
 No? I'm in the kitchen.

BETH
 But if it's not you... who's that on
 the walkway?

KEIRA VO
 What do you mean?

BETH
 Keira, someone's up there. Get out of
 the light house.

Beth JOGS down the beach. Ragged breath.

KEIRA VO
 There can't be--

BETH
 I can see them! They're standing on
 the walkway!

KEIRA VO
 What? How? How would they have gotten
 up there?

BETH
 I'm coming back. Five minutes.

KEIRA VO
 They would've had to pass me, the
 front door's the only way in. No-
 one's here! Are you trying to freak
 me out or--

BETH

There is a person on the walkway
right now. I am looking at... it's a
man! Fuck! It's a man.
Keira, get out.

KEIRA VO

I know what it is! It's the bin bag!
It's caught on the scaffolding.

BETH

It's not a fucking bin bag, Keira.

KEIRA VO

Are you sure? I'll go check.

BETH

No!

KEIRA VO

It's fine, honestly, I can guarantee
no-one's there. I'm going up.

BETH

Keira!

KEIRA VO

I'll see you in a min.

BETH

Keira!

DIAL TONE.

End of episode 3.