

OLD GODS OF APPALACHIA

The Holiest Days of Bone and Shadow, Chapter Three: Something Old, Something New

Old Gods of Appalachia is a horror anthology podcast and therefore may contain material not suitable for all audiences, so listener discretion is advised.

The Holiest Days of Bone and Shadow, a special three-part mini-series. Chapter Three: Something Old, Something New. Jacob County, Kentucky—1935.

The morning of Eli Mullins's wedding dawned clear and bright, if a bit cold, although the weather forecast in the Jacob County Register assured the young groom that the temperature would rise to up around 50 degrees, which was downright balmy for February on Pine Mountain. Eli was up early, of course, helping his daddy on the farm, whose running he would likely take over in the next few years, as Joe Mullins's eldest boy.

Now, a farm requires tending every day, special occasions notwithstanding, and in the lean years of the 1930s, that was especially true. The Mullins family was more fortunate than most, one of their primary cash crops being tobacco, a commodity whose value wasn't hit as hard by the stock market crash as many others, but Joe had insisted they work harder than ever—expanding the farm so they could offer work to local folks who had fallen on hard times. The hard work paid off, and the Mullins clan shared their good fortune with their community, adding a little more here and there to the church offering

plate and helping folks out where they could—well, when folks would accept help, of course, which many were too proud to do.

Eli had undertaken much of the farm expansion himself over the past five years, as his daddy began to trust his grown son with more responsibilities and had eventually begun to accompany his daddy on trips north to Louisville to take the 'baccar to market. Going to Louisville to meet with buyers who worked for the tobacco companies that manufactured cigarettes, snuff, and the like was serious business. Joe Mullins would always wear his Sunday-best suit, along with an antique belt buckle that had been his daddy's, and his granddaddy's before him, going back a few generations. It was a beautiful thing—a polished white so bright it seemed to glow in the light, carved with vines and flowers, and Eli's daddy said it was made of some sort of antler, maybe from an elk—something big like that. And it was a family heirloom that would one day pass down to Eli himself when he was ready to take the reins of the family. Eli didn't own anything so fancy just yet, but he wore the new navy blue suit his mama had picked out for these business trips, and he played Joe's quiet and respectful shadow while observing closely the way his daddy negotiated with the buyers.

it was on one such excursion that Eli had met his bride-to-be, Miss Effie Brandt. Effie was the new secretary for one of the 'baccar buyers Eli's daddy frequently negotiated with. She was a pretty little thing with blonde hair so pale it looked silver, fair skin, and big gray eyes, and Eli was interested from the moment she first spoke to him. It wasn't nothing special what she said, just, "Mr. Mullins, he's ready for you now." But as she

said it, she looked up at him from under her long, dark lashes with a shy smile, and Eli was a goner. He'd asked her before he left if he could take her to lunch one day that week, and she allowed that she might make time for a quick bite at the diner on the corner, but no more than half an hour, as that's all her boss permitted.

Eli was waiting in a booth when Effie walked in through the door of Fry's Diner at 12:30 [twelve o'clock] the following afternoon. He bought her a cheeseburger, and french fries, and a root beer and spent the next glorious half hour getting to know the pretty young woman. Eli couldn't remember what he'd ordered himself or even what they talked about, but by the end of the meal, he was smitten. At 12:25, Eli paid the tab and asked Effie if he might walk her back to work. Effie consented, and he had escorted her down the street to the building where she worked. And when Eli asked if he could take her to a picture show the following evening, she'd given him that same shy smile and nodded. "That'd be all right."

He had offered to pick her up in his daddy's truck, but Effie declined. She said she would meet him at the theater at 6:45. They had watched the *Bride of Frankenstein*, which seemed to delight Effie. Although the film was meant to be scary, and Eli certainly found it unnerving, his date had simply laughed and laughed, and when the picture was over, Effie had favored him with a dazzling smile and thanked him for, "a very entertaining evening." Her smile was lovely enough, and Eli was infatuated enough, to give him courage. So he had asked her if he might ask her daddy's permission to court her. Effie had merely laughed again. "You don't need nobody's permission." And

then she said more soberly, “My mama and daddy died a long time ago. And yes, Mr. Mullins, I believe I’d like that.”

It had been a somewhat frustrating courtship, carried on primarily by post, except for those occasions when Eli had come to Louisville on the farm’s business, or could otherwise get away for a day or two. But as is the way of young people, Eli fell fast, and he fell hard; and before long, he found himself taking on extra work outside the farm so he could put money aside for an engagement ring. He could only afford a small diamond, but the setting was pretty, shaped like a flower. And when he got down on one knee to present it to Effie a week before Christmas, she had squealed with delight, and most importantly, she said yes. Eli had already invited her home to meet the family over the holidays—after all, the poor girl had no people of her own—and had been excited to introduce her as his fiancée. The family’s reaction, though, had been mixed.

His daddy, who’d of course met Effie on their visits to the city, had been impressed both with her sweet demeanor and her competence as a secretary. He was thrilled, throwing his arm around the girl in a big bear hug, and welcomed her to the family.

His mama, Lois, was more reserved. She seemed troubled by the speed with which Eli had proposed and told him with a shake of her head, “Well, we—we just don’t know this girl, Eli. I’m, I’m sure Effie’s lovely—it’ll just take time to, to get used to her, is all.”

Eli's granny was less circumspect. "Elijah Mullins, what do you do, bringing some stranger to your mama's house? We don't know his little hussy from Eve! She's from *away*. She's got no people of her own—nobody to stand up with her in church. I don't like it, and I don't like *her*. There's something not right about that girl." Thankfully, Granny Mullins had not delivered this indictment with an earshot of Eli's bride-to-be.

"Now Granny," he reassured her, "it's just like mama says—once you get to know her, you'll see she's a real sweetheart of a gal. We shouldn't judge her for having no family—that's a pity and a tragedy. We should be kind to her, welcome her to the family, like daddy says.

Granny snorted. "Marry in haste, repent at leisure, as they say. You mark my words, boy—this will not end well."

It must be said that Eli had some reason for his haste. The spring planting season would be upon them before they knew it, bringing with it long hours on the farm and little time to steal away to Louisville to visit his fiancée. A they settled on Valentine's Day for the wedding—a date that was both romantic and would leave a good month and a half to plan a small family affair in the little chapel where the Mullins family had attended services as long as anyone could remember. Eli's great uncle Frank on his mama's side, the current pastor, would marry them.

The time between Christmas and their wedding day had seemed to drag by for Eli. His daddy had taken to his bed with a bout of influenza, so Eli had to shoulder the burden of Joe's duty around the farm as well as his own. Preparations for the wedding were carried out largely by mail—a flurry of letters exchanged between Effie and Eli's mama, Lois. Effie was a biddable bride, accepting mama's suggestions with gratitude, not being familiar with the chapel herself, and, he suspected, because she hoped to make a good impression on his mother.

They were all surprised to learn that Effie was not entirely without family. The wedding would be attended by her two aunties, Eustace and Esther, who she said had taken her in following the death of her parents. Eager to meet her family, Lois had offered to find the two women a place to stay in town with one cousin or another, but she had received a brief note from Eustace who politely declined. Finally, a few days before the wedding Eli had driven his daddy's truck up to Louisville to collect Effie and a few boxes that contained all her worldly possessions from a tiny apartment where she'd been living.

Before leaving the city, they had visited a jeweler's shop to purchase their wedding bands, and Eli's heart swelled fit to bust through his chest as he looked into Effie's eyes and imagined placing the simple gold band on her finger.

Now, Valentine's Day had finally arrived. Once his chores were done, Eli and his daddy, who was finally back on his feet and feeling fit as a fiddle (or so he claimed), had driven into town to visit the barber shop for shaves and haircuts, forbidden from returning

home, lest Eli catch sight of the bride before the wedding. They had packed their Sunday suits into the back of the truck so they could go directly to the chapel afterwards.

In keeping with the holiday, the chapel was decorated with flowers and ribbons in shades of red, pink, and white. The carved oak altar and matching pews had been polished till they gleamed a bright amber, like honey. Eli had to admit, his mama and sisters had made the little church look beautiful. As he quickly changed into his suit in the vestry, he heard a soft knock at the door. A moment later his daddy stepped inside, holding a small, polished, cedar box.

“Son,” Joe began, “pretty soon you’ll be taking over the farm from your old man, and today you’ll begin your own family here with Effie. As our eldest, your mama and I think it’s time you get a little bit of your inheritance.” He opened the box and inside, the carved antler belt buckle rested on a bed of plush white velvet.

Eli smiled widely. “Oh, Daddy, thank you,” he said, reaching for the buckle. It was smooth and cold to the touch and shone just as brightly as ever in the afternoon sunlight slanting through the window. He quickly unfastened his belt to clip the buckle in place. “I promise I’ll take good care of it.”

“I know you will, son,” his daddy said and clapped him on the shoulder.

“Congratulations. I hope you and Effie will be as happy as your mother and I have been.”

Around three in the afternoon, the guests had begun to arrive. Given the lack of guests on the bride’s side, folks were encouraged to sit wherever they like, barring the first pew on each side of the church, which, of course, was reserved for family. Effie’s aunts Eustace and Esther were seated in the left pew. They were both mature women, though Eli would not have called them old. They seemed almost ageless, despite their silvery gray hair pinned neatly up. They were tall and angular, their posture ramrod-straight with piercing gray eyes like Effie’s, but colder—sharper. Those eyes seemed to judge Eli and find him wanting. Their skin was also pale, almost ashen—an effect made all the more noticeable by their choice of dress. Each wore an expensive-looking black suit dress with a stiff, high, velvet collar. Were people even supposed to wear black to weddings? Eli didn’t know, but no one in his family had chosen black for the occasion. They seemed nice enough, he supposed. Eli and his daddy met them at the door to welcome them when they arrived. It was obvious who they must be, as the only strangers who’d come to the wedding, and the two ladies shook their hands and smiled showing gleaming white teeth.

[Third Gray Lady, huskily:] “Charmed, we’re sure,” said the first one. Eli couldn’t remember if she was Eustace or Esther—it was hard to tell them apart. “It’s—”

[Second Gray Lady, roughly:] “So lovely to meet our dear Effie’s beau,” the second one finished, for her.

They had shown the ladies to their seats, and now the appointed hour had arrived. Eli’s mama and daddy had taken their seats in the right front pew, along with his younger brother Carl and his sisters, Nell and Joanne. Eli stood at the altar with his great uncle Frank. The church bell struck four o’clock, and right on cue, the doors at the back of the church swung open.

The organist, Letty Hayes, struck up the wedding march, and Eli’s bride appeared in the doorway. Effie was breathtaking—more beautiful than Eli had ever seen her. Her fair skin was radiant, and her gray eyes seemed to glow. She wore a simple white satin dress, cut on the bias, with lace sleeves. Her silvery hair was pinned up, and her veil hung from a simple crown of tiny white rosebuds. She carried a bouquet of red roses wrapped in white ribbon.

Eli stared at her in wonder and in love as she walked towards him, slow and steady as the traditional tune dictated. And then, she was handing her bouquet to Eli’s mama and taking her place at his side. If you’d asked him, Eli would have told you he was too bowled over and tongue-tied to speak, but somehow, when it came time, he managed to find his voice, solemnly reciting his vows: “I, Elijah, take thee, Effie,” and his heart filled with joy as she did the same. Before he knew it, it was done—their vows made, their hearts joined forever.

And Uncle Frank said, “I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the bride.” Eli closed his eyes and bent his head to press his lips to Effie’s, [growls and snarls] and he felt her hand brush the front of his waist and the world went black with sudden agony, as his bride closed her razor-sharp teeth on his bottom lip, tearing it away from his face, and in the same instant, he felt something punch through his gut and tear out his back.

All around him, people began to scream. Eli’s eyes snapped open in shock and pain, and he stared uncomprehendingly at Effie as she stepped back, pulling her fist from his guts with a wet sucking sound, her arms slicked with gore to the elbow. Eli thought he might pass out or throw up, not quite realizing the latter was now impossible, as he fell to his knees. His last vision in this world was his bride’s triumphant, red grin, and what she held in her bloody fist: the belt buckle—great-whatever-granddaddy’s belt buckle, his inheritance. With her prize in hand, and the problem of the groom eliminated, Effie turned her attention to the pastor. Great Uncle Frank had tripped and fallen as he tried to scramble back from the scene before him and now cowered against the altar, his eyes squeezed shut, hands clasped before him, as he sputtered every prayer he’d ever known. And Effie smiled as her limbs began to twist and elongate, her skin darkening, becoming the gray of shark skin, of a coelacanth’s belly, of things that had never seen the light of day and never would.

“Your God can’t help you here,” she said sweetly as her jaw spread impossibly wide, and she struck at him, quick as an eel, with a maw full of razor-sharp teeth. Blood sprayed across the altar, soaked her white dress.

Behind her, she heard a hollow boom and the splintering of wood as one of the women she had introduced as her aunties hurled a pew at the chapel doors, barring them effectively and efficiently. She threw back her head and laughed delightedly as more guests began to scream. Her wedding feast had begun.

For three days, the Gray Ladies pressed deeper into the mountains, first in Eli’s brand-new pickup—a surprise gift from his mommy and daddy that had been left idling right outside the church, still bedecked in “JUST MARRIED” paint, streamers, and the ritual tin cans. Once the gas run out of that truck, they continued on even deeper, still on foot, or on what passed for feet, to the old house at the end of Lonely Creek.

It was a bad place. There aren’t many places in this world you can truly define as bad, but this is one of them. The earth itself will groan your name if you walk across the marshy old yard approaching the porch. You would hear the voice of the last person you loved begging for your help in the distance, calling to you from the tree line, if you made it to the porch. If you touched the doorknob of the surprisingly stout front door, you would hear them die. If you tried to open the door, you would find yourself inside the house, and for most of us, this would be worse than dying, be assured, family. When the Gray Ladies slipped from the high weeds on the near side of the yard, the ground held

its breath. When they reached the porch and the eldest placed her hand upon the door, no voices came from the woods. Because the Gray Ladies loved only one person, place, and/or thing, and it was waiting for them inside.

From the outside, the house looked like a two-story monstrosity, about to collapse under its own weight; and on the inside, the second floor had long since caved in, leaving behind a single, cavernous, square room. Placed dead in the center, and facing the west corner of that square, was the room's sole furnishing. Carved from a wood that was not native to these mountains, or probably not this world, was what was unmistakably an altar. Upon it was draped an unadorned black cloth of a painstakingly intricate weave, and upon that cloth lay two items: on the left rested a pale, bone-colored ring, worn almost smooth, but still bearing the marks of fine carving. On the right lay a finely jeweled comb, its coloration and texture matching the ring in such a way that you would swear they must have come as a set.

The three women entered and knelt before the altar. The youngest of the three—who was on the third day of her honeymoon, fresh from her own wedding—pulled a handkerchief from her bag and unfolded it, revealing what until very recently had been the treasured heirloom of the Family Mullins. All three women kept their eyes downcast as the belt buckle was placed in the center of the altar. The air thrummed. This was a picture of reverence and worship: three pilgrims returning blessed relics to their proper place in an act of love and devotion to their very own patron saint, as a service to a just and living god—a god who, in this case, was neither just nor living. He was, however,

looking down on them with great pleasure from the upper left-hand corner of the rafters.

Cast your eyes up if you dare, family, and behold: the Lord of the Night and the Forest Day. The Betrayer. The Black Judas. The Maker of the Poisoned Promise. Old Horny. The Uncast Shadow. The Liar Saint. The Black Stag. The Thing Whose Name Sounds Like Horned Head But Is Not. Standing on the precipice of rebirth and resurrection, it is no longer pretending to be human nor animal. It's not hiding in the basement of an orphanage, or skulking in the dark waters of a pond, or haunting the dreams of the daughters of well-intentioned mothers. No, there is no more apology or disguise for the thing that has ensconced itself into the upper corner of the House at the End of Lonely Creek.

It is almost, but not, a hoofed mammal. It has far too many legs to be one of those, and those legs are many-jointed and insectoid and hold it in an unnatural crouch above its rapt congregation. Darkness streams from its body like ribbons of fabric that seem also to plaster it to the wall, covering it bit by bit, but still blowing free to reveal a hideous carcass of writhing bones that slither into unholy configurations and reshape themselves as if they were trying to get comfortable. Its head is once again the shape of an enormous stag, eyes the color of blood clots. Its antlers, its crown of Bone and Shadow, are broken and unlit. Its snout flares as it breathes heavily, the exertion of this rebirth clear as it gazes down upon the items crafted from the leavings of its greatest failure.

And the Gray Ladies begin to pray.

[The three Gray Ladies have characteristic voices: the first is bright, cheerful, and proper. The second voice is rough, frantic, and grating. The third voice is bored, low, and husky.]

[First Gray Lady, brightly:] “O Master...”

[Third Gray Lady, huskily:] “O Prince...”

[Second Gray Lady, roughly:] “O Lord of Night and Day.”

[First Gray Lady, brightly:] “Master...”

[Third Gray Lady, huskily:] “O Prince...”

[Second Gray Lady, roughly:] “Black-tongued Singer...”

[Third Gray Lady, huskily:] “O Master...”

[First Gray Lady, brightly:] “Prince!”

[Second Gray Lady, roughly:] “Father! Hear us, o Lord!”

[Third Gray Lady, huskily:] “We bring you this day...”

[First Gray Lady, brightly:] “The pieces of your crown...”

[Third Gray Lady, huskily:] “Tainted and profaned—”

[Second Gray Lady, roughly:] “As they might be by mortal hands...”

[First Gray Lady, brightly:] “We bring them to you, so you might—”

[Third Gray Lady, huskily:] “Again cast a shade against their lamp...”

[First Gray Lady, brightly:] “Darken the brightest path...”

[Second Gray Lady, roughly:] “And that you might hide your words in their heart...”

[Third Gray Lady, huskily:] “So they might lose sight—”

[First Gray Lady, brightly:] “Of all but you.”

[Third Gray Lady, huskily:] “We are unworthy of your love.”

[Second Gray Lady, roughly:] “And your dark and hungry heart—oh Lord...”

[First Gray Lady, brightly:] “We would name you our Master, our King, our—”

[Dark, snarling voice] “You have no name for what I am,” came a voice in their minds that both felt like whisper and roar in the same breath. The Thing Whose Name Sounded Like Horned Head But Was Not almost flinched. It had been so long since it used its proper voice. It had pushed air through the pipes of that corpse at the Home, had murmured in dreams, and given orders and visions, but had it really been that long?

“One hundred and forty years... When this world was younger, such time would pass like an idle daydream, but like this—broken and hollowed out like a lightning-struck oak—it crawls. When we were first cast into this pit, like maggots packed into a wound and buried beneath the skin of this world, they did not make a perfect prison. This world does not allow for perfection. They could build a cage, yes, but there was always space between the bars. So a few of us had crept upward to see what we could see. After a time, we established domains and boundaries. We each had our gifts and our unique needs.

“One of us held the master’s hunger, while another carried the torch of their fear to drive the cattle before us. I was tasked with... acquisitions. Finding those amongst the unworthy that crawl the surface of this world, who bore gifts from the powers of this

place, and turning them to our purpose was my calling. I fed my masters well. Clever little creatures with gifts of prophecy or elemental manipulation or the power to bend the very world itself to their whims. Ignorant children with the might of gods, so easily led with lovely dreams or visitations from long-dead loved ones, to bring them to their new calling with me.

“When the girl and her family crossed into these lands, I thought I had found the ripest fruit in all of Eden, all alone in the woods with but a shack, her wits, and her considerable gifts to keep her alive. Oh, she was my prize. She would be my crown jewel, my little Queen. She had seen so much death that an offer of never seeing it again brought her right into our little family. I gave her servants and tutors, taught her things her mothers would have never dreamed to know, and hid her away until it was time—until the fruit was ripe and dark and sweet. And when the time did come: we bathe her in the blood of a whole town, break her mind and her heart, and turn back her clock until she was but a wee babe for us to raise, to fill with a new spirit, whole and entire.

"And then we would split our masters' prison wide and get on with the business for which we were created.

"And then, it all went wrong. The fool doctor, the perversion of the cleansing ritual, and her—her power, her rage, her broken heart—it all should have pushed her to us. But instead she turned it on us.”

In the throes of his transformation, the beast's mind fell back through time to a darkened Kentucky holler on the bloody ground where it all began and all ended.

[Bold, lilting, feminine voice] "Ha! So let's see what you can do without your sponsors backing you up. Your power versus mine, beast! Winner takes home that baby. What say you?"

And thus they had done fearsome battle. The girl was every bit as strong as the Black Stag had ever dreamed. It would call up fire, and she'd summon rain; it breathed poisonous black smoke, and she'd call a wind to blow it back; she throw fistfuls of leaves that turned into hawks and other raptors, and it'd make those glowing antlers pulse and burn them to ash in the air; she'd call vines and saplings from the ground to bind its gore-smeared hooves, and it would freeze them brittle and stomp them to dust.

Back and forth they went in the long night, neither one of them seeming to tire, neither one willing to give an inch. And then the Black Stag reached for its oldest trick and dug deep into Daughter Dooley's heart with those burning eyes and called up visions of her mothers once again. But this time, the two women were bound and being burned at the stake, skin bubbling and blistering, hair burning, but then just as she turned all the others, the visions of the women turned and shouted both praise and jeers at the pair of them.

"Oh, stand fast my true heart! We're so proud of you!" Ma Edie had called.

“Oi, you great horned cunt! My daughter’s gonna kick your arse into jerky, you know that, don’t you?” Ma Katie cackled as the flames leapt higher, choking smoke carrying the pair from view. And that had broken the dam, but not the way the Black Stag had hoped. The girl screamed and rushed forward, leaping high, grabbing that burning hot crown of bone and pulling the beast’s face to hers as she landed.

“So you’d undo me, would you, beast? You would turn back the clock and undo all that the women who came before me did to make me as I am?”

The beast tried to shake free, but her grip tightened as she spoke, her taunts becoming a working, a spell of a magnitude she’d never cast before. “You’d undo Sister Amy and Sister Zelda, teaching me to weave strong cloth, to speak true and believe no lies? You’d undo Grandma Karen and Auntie Jonna who taught me the songs and the stories of the old place, so I’d never forget where I came from? You’d undo the blood and the love my mothers shed and bled for me, after you had the very stones to take them from me in the first place? Oh beast, oh beast, I pity you—because in their names, in the names of Edith Nielsen Dooley and Mary Catherine Vivian Dooley, I bind you, I break you, and beast, I cast you OUT!”

[Crashing, cracking, and shattering noises]

There had been a sound like the world cracking open as the crown shattered in her hands, and then there was only darkness.

The inhuman sounds of his servants' prayers, now distorted by the shapes of their true mouths and their true bodies, drew the great beast back to the moment.

“One hundred and forty years spent crawling, scraping by on whatever could be scavenged. Oh yes, the girl had done well in her breaking, leaving me a literal shadow of myself. But what had that night gotten her? Bound to walk a cell of her own making, an eternal life bound up in the weavings of death. Let her drag her martyr's bones within a cage till the end of the last day for all I care. She earned it—she deserves it. Oh, but now...”

The atoms of the altar slowly rose into the air, rotating gently as the Gray Ladies, their bodies shifting fully into their horrific true forms, sang and wailed in praise and ecstasy. The ring, the comb, and the buckle vanished into the swelling light that had begun to pour from the fragments of broken bone, jutting from the beast's forehead, rejoining and mending. The earth of that wretched place groaned and cried out. The rafters split, the walls shuddered as the beast pulled free and fell to the ground. Four massive, gore-smeared hooves cracking the stone floor as they landed, taller and broader than any stag had any right to be. It shook its head, and the light emanating from the enormous crown of bone and shadow that sprung from its head, now fully restored, settled into a poisonous, deadly pulse.

“Now, my lovelies, let us make it known to all who walk the secret roads at night and keep the old ways that tonight, on this night, the woods grow ever darker. All markers have come due. All debts will be repaid. And no one, and I mean *no one*, is safe.”

[The Bride by Landon Blood]

Well hey there, family. And thus concludes our special three-part holiday mini-series, The Holiest Days of Bone and Shadow. And I think y’all figured out a long time ago where this was going, but I didn’t know if you all would realize it would go this far. But yes, in the year of our world 1935, he is back. Interestingly enough, none of our current live storylines have gotten that far, now, have they? I guess we’ll have to see what’s waiting for them once they reach that fateful year. It’s going to be wild, family.

We appreciate your support. In fact, we can’t exist without it—and I mean that in the moral and financial ways. If you would like to join us in any of our various forms of social media, be it tweeting into the void, gazing at our graven images on Instagram, hanging out in the Fellowship Hall over on the Facebook group, or coming to the Discord side of things and joining the Red Thread Society as they collect every easter egg they can find to put in their little hand basket—and we all know where hand baskets go, now, don’t we? But all those things can be found over at oldgodsofappalachia.com, links to every last one of them. The Discord is free and open

to the public—there are Patreon-exclusive options on discord that you get from joining Patreon, but the Discord in general is wide open to everyone.

And speaking of the [Patreon](#)—if you would like to cast your lot with us, if you would like to help us keep the home fires burning and fires burning above and below, you can go over there and gain access to things like the 17-part epic season of Build Mama a Coffin that's waiting for you. The newly-completed, full-cast production of Door Under the Floor, a whole two-part epic written by Cam Collins and performed by the Old Gods of Appalachia family of voice actors. And there's all kinds of new, secret stuff creeping through the shadows of snail mail. We have finally found some suppliers and solutions, and that's all I'm gonna say about that.

But just gotta let y'all know that Old Gods of Appalachia is a production of DeepNerd Media. Today's story was written by Cam Collins and Steve Shell, performed by Steve Shell. And all of today's music, from top to bottom, was written and performed exclusively for us by our brother Landon Blood—keep feeling better, Landon.

We love you, and we need you.

And we'll see you soon, family. Real soon.