

Ear Hustle
Episode 97: Do You Think There Are Ghosts Here
November 1, 2023

Ted: Hi, my name is Ted McGovern. I'm a producer for a day here on Ear Hustle. I'm a listener from Seattle. The following episode of Ear Hustle contains language and content that may not be appropriated for all listeners. Discretion is advised.

Nigel: *Do you think there's ghosts here?*

Fernandez: *I know there's ghosts here.*

Earlonne: Officer Fernandez has worked in corrections for over a decade.

Nigel: So, yeah, he's got a few stories for sure. A while back, you, me, our editor Amy Standen, and one of our team members inside San Quentin, Tony De Trinidad, sat down to talk to him.

Tony De Trinidad: *How do you know that there's ghosts here?*

Fernandez: *Well, I've seen one myself. I used to work at the hospital. It was a small hospital, and there was a nurse that came frantically crying because she had to go to Records. Records was located on the basement of the old hospital.*

Nigel: So, Earlonne, this hospital that they're talking about, it's the old hospital.

Earlonne: Correct.

Nigel: And I actually have not seen it, but everything you hear about it is that it is this abandoned building. I mean, San Quentin's old, right? When was it built?

Earlonne: San Quentin was built in 1852, and I think the hospital was one of the earlier buildings, and the older part of the prison are definitely the spooky parts.

Fernandez: *And I was like, "What happened?" "I saw the ghost," she said. She was really upset and crying and scared. And just to make her feel comfortable, I said something that perhaps opened the gate or opened the door.*

Nigel/Earlonne: *What did you say? What did you say?*

Fernandez: *I said, "Oh, I wish it happened to me, because I would chase after." I said that, and it did the trick. It made her feel at ease, made her feel better. And I told her, "Well, if it helps, I'll go with you next time." And she was cool with that.*

Nigel: *Did you believe her?*

Fernandez: *No. I hear the stories before, though, like this wasn't the first time. Other people have saw it too, but you never think it's going to happen to you until it does. So, one time I'm working in the overflow for crisis beds.*

Earlonne: *And the crisis bed is more of a mental health breakdown.*

Fernandez: *Correct. Yeah. And so, when we had full capacity, we had what is called "the overflow." And that was located on the top floor, on the fourth floor of that hospital. So, when I showed up, up to the fourth floor, there I was by myself.*

Nigel: And what time is it now?

Fernandez: Around 9:50.

Nigel: At night?

Fernandez: At night. As soon as I step out of the elevator, the light flickered. And I was like, "That's interesting," but it's an old building, so things happen. You hear noises. At the end of the hallway, immediately to my right, I saw a light glowing and a big white gown.

Nigel: Like a lady ghost?

Fernandez: It was a lady. The story is that this lady died in that building because she used to be an inmate here.

Tony De Trinidad: What does she look like, her face? Was she a white lady? Was she pretty?

Earlonne: It was 18 some 52 when they was here. So, you know she was a white lady.

Fernandez: She was a white lady for sure. [Nigel laughs] But I didn't get a really good look because there was one light at the middle of the hallway, and that's about it. It was dark, and that's why it was creepy, because when I saw the ghost, it almost had its own light.

Nigel: Did she look at you? Did she--?

Fernandez: Yeah, she stopped, stared at me, and then I looked at her, and then she continued to go down the hallway at the end of the building.

Earlonne: I have to know, was she walking or floating?

Fernandez: [sighs] Floating.

Tony De Trinidad: So, you said this lady used to be an inmate here. What was her story?

Fernandez: The story I've heard from people who was here before my time was that she was an inmate and she was, let's say, "a lady of the night" and then she was incarcerated for I don't know what reason. And then I think she was being abused in here and she passed from either a disease or by being abused.

Nigel: How did you feel when you saw her?

Fernandez: I gave chase.

Nigel: You did?

Fernandez: I gave chase and I was yelling. I was like, "Hey, come here," [chuckles] because I said I was going to do that. So, I was like preprogrammed to have that reaction. And so, I ran all the way down the hallway and I didn't see the ghost anymore. And so, I started going back and then I saw the light flicker again and then I stopped and then I felt a cold air rush through me from the back. And so, I started praying. I started praying.

Nigel: What was the prayer? What prayer-- [crosstalk]

Fernandez: I just prayed to God to help me with this situation. I was scared. I said, "Please Lord, help me overcome this fear, this situation, in the name of Jesus, your Son Christ." And I pray to be forgiven for what I did, for evoking the presence of this person because I think that was my fault for saying that to the nurse. Like I opened that door.

Earlone: Open that portal.

Fernandez: Open the portal. I obviously believe in these entities. They do exist, but it also has to do with you making that connection or open that portal.

Nigel: Yeah, you challenged it.

Fernandez: I did. I did.

Nigel: But then you had to stay up there until-- [crosstalk]

Fernandez: Yeah, I had to stay up there the whole night by myself, well, with the inmate. But let me say this. After I gave that prayer, I felt relieved and reset at things and I was fine.

Nigel: But for eight hours you sat there in that creepy area?

Fernandez: Yes, it's my job. I had to do it.

Nigel: And you weren't afraid because of the prayer? You felt protected?

Fernandez: Yeah, the power of prayer. I felt at ease.

Nigel: And were you afraid to go back there? I know you said it's your job, but--

Fernandez: No, soon after that, that whole building was condemned because it had a lot of like-- [crosstalk]

Earlone: The ghosts,

[laughter]

Fernandez: Asbestos. It's been abandoned for more than 10 years.

[intriguing music]

Earlone: So, when you signed out in the morning, in the logbook, did you write a comment?

[laughter]

Nigel: Oh yeah, you have to write a report?

Fernandez: [laughs] That's a good question. No, I just wanted to go home and sleep.

Nigel: So, let me ask you, Earlone, do you believe in ghosts?

Earlone: I believe there are other things. Like some people look at ghosts as bad. I don't think ghosts are bad. I think ghosts just want you to be like, "Hey, look, man, tell my wife, man, the money is under," you know what I'm saying?

Nigel: They want to pass out information.

Earlonne: Yeah, I think they want to get out, whatever they didn't get out.

Nigel: Okay, so you're a yes. Tony, do you believe in ghosts?

Tony De Trinidad: I believe in everything.

Nigel: Okay. Amy, what about you? Do you believe in ghosts?

Amy: I do not believe in ghosts.

Nigel: No.

Earlonne: She named her kid Casper.

Nigel: That's right. She named her kid Casper.

Tony De Trinidad: It's a friendly ghost.

Earlonne: So, do you believe in ghosts, Nigel? You do?

Nigel: I think there's-- Yeah, I do. So, what do you think of the fact that there's four out of five people in this room believe in ghosts?

Fernandez: Four out of five?

Nigel: Yeah.

Fernandez: That's a good ratio.

Nigel: Yeah. There's only one nonbeliever in here.

Earlonne: Who ended up naming someone a ghost.

Nigel: I know named her son after a ghost.

Fernandez: Oh, really? That's an interesting fact. That's a story for another day.

[laughter]

Nigel: Well, thank you.

Fernandez: Oh, you're welcome.

Earlonne: Can you do this for us? Can you tell us your name and how many years you've been working for the Department of San Quentin?

Fernandez: Officer Fernandez, I've been working in San Quentin State Prison, going on 16 years now.

Nigel: And you've seen one ghost?

Fernandez: I've seen one ghost. One enough. [laughs]

Nigel: *One's enough.*

Fernandez: *One too many.*

Nigel: Okay. So, you've been wanting to do a spooky episode for a long time. I mean, maybe even since Season 1.

Earlonne: Yeah, I figured there's got to be some great ghost stories out there in prison somewhere. We just had to go dig them up.

Nigel: I'm Nigel Poor.

Earlonne: And I'm Earlonne Woods. And this is Ear Hustle from PRX's Radiotopia.

Nigel: Okay, so my problem with ghost stories and the reason I was maybe a little reluctant to do this episode is that a lot of times, Earlonne, they aren't actually stories. Do you know what I mean?

Earlonne: Like, there's no twists, no plots. Are they just actually not scary?

Nigel: Well, it's just like, I saw a ghost, I had a creepy feeling, and it's not a story. I mean, we talk about this all the time. A story needs to have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Not just like, I felt something.

Earlonne: Right. But I wasn't going to give up that easy on this idea. So lately, whenever we go to a new prison, I always ask around, like, "You got a story? You got one, you got a ghost story."

Nigel: [laughs] Everywhere we go. I mean, Earlonne, you are tenacious.

Earlonne: Everyone I meet.

Earlonne: *I have a question for you. Have you seen a ghost?*

Woman: *No, I have not.*

Earlonne: *We are wondering if have you ever seen a ghost in prison.*

Woman: *No. [laughs]*

Earlonne: *No. If you know anyone in here that has a ghost story, let us know.*

[background conversations]

Have you seen a ghost here? [crosstalk] Excuse me we are looking for you. You have won a prize. Have you ever seen a ghost?

Speaker: *No, but I've heard lots of stories*

Earlonne: *Do you have one? You can share with us.*

Speaker: *No. [laughs]*

Earlonne: *If by chance, you have a ghost story here that you've seen a ghost or heard?*

Woman: Any ghost stories?

[laughter]

Earlone: I knew we'd eventually find one, and we did.

Nigel: Yes, we did. So, the woman we're about to hear from is named Shannon Guillory. She's incarcerated at the California Institution for Women, or as we call it, CIW.

Earlone: And she told us about something that happened late one night when she was working as a janitor in CIW's medical wing.

Shannon Guillory: *We had walked into this one exam room, and it was already cleaned. We had cleaned in there earlier, so we were just really just going to dump the trash. And went in there, zoomed in, zoomed out, closed the door. As we were leaving, I noticed that these blinds that were closed and always are closed were open. I was like, "Hey, does somebody go in there, open the blinds? You know that doctor doesn't like their blinds to be open." We knew not to mess with the blinds. So, we opened the door, closed the blinds. Nobody remembered opening the blinds up. And now we're leaving the room, and the blinds are open again. So, I was like, "Did you close the blinds?" They said, "Yeah, we closed the blinds."*

We went back in there, opened it up, closed the blinds again. But before we could even walk out the rooms, the blinds opened all on their own. They were like this. And then they just started slowly opening.

[blinds opening]

Nigel: So, whatever it was, it was trying to get your attention somehow.

Shannon Guillory: *Yeah, probably. But I didn't want it. I got spooked. So, I went outside the room. I don't know what's going on. We're looking at these blinds and wondering, "Why is this happening?" And the chair behind the doctor's desk just started turning [chair turning] all on its own. Nobody's in there. The wind is not blowing. The air conditioner is not on. There's no reason for that chair to be moving. [laughs]*

Earlone: And when you say moving, how is it moving?

Shannon Guillory: *It was spinning.*

Nigel: *Moving fast, slow?*

Shannon Guillory: *It was slow.*

Earlone: *Did you all think you all were being punked?*

Shannon Guillory: *No. Nobody else was there with us. Just my little crew. That was it. It was five of us girls and our supervisor. I walked out of that building, I told my boss, I will not be coming in here to work with you anymore at night. And I left. I never worked there again because that was a little too spooky for me.*

Nigel: So, what'd you think? Did that reach the level of a ghost story?

Earlone: Hmm. Now, I should be asking you that, Nigel.

Nigel: [laughs] Well, I think it was that scary stuff is happening. But what I want to know is the why of it. Why is a ghost doing something like, why would it be hanging out there?

Earlonne: I mean, I'm not sure people want to stick around long enough to ask those type of questions. You know what I mean? Like, you see a ghost, it's time to do it moving.

Nigel: I know, but I'm just going back to what we need for a story. What is the ghost's unfinished business? What is it trying to communicate to us? Does it want help? Does it want to scare us?

Earlonne: I can guarantee you that if a ghost is in prison, it's trying to get out, like everybody else in there.

Nigel: [laughs] Okay, come on. But there's got to be more to it. There just has to be.

Earlonne: We figured the best way to understand this ghost's motivation to be a ghost would be to go to the spot where Shannon had been working that night in the medical building.

Nigel: Okay. And so, Earlonne, when we got there, it was the most ordinary place ever. linoleum floors, ugly medical lighting.

Earlonne: It was just regular. Regular hospital.

Nigel: So, we thought we should talk to some of the officers who work there to see if they'd heard any spooky stories about this place.

Officer: *There's a cell down the hallway too that they have seen a man inside the cell. And inmates have come and told me this. It has a bad vibe.*

Nigel: *You feel a bad vibe down there?*

Officer: *Yes.*

Nigel: *What happens when you walk by.*

Officer: *It just feels eerie.*

Nigel: *Does your skin get tingly?*

Officer: *Yes.*

Nigel: *Does the temperature change?*

Officer: *No. No temperature changes. It just feels odd.*

Nigel: Earlonne. Again, not a story, just a feeling.

Earlonne: Yep. We're going to have to do a little better than that.

Nigel: *Do you think women's prisons in general would attract ghosts?*

Officer: *I don't know. I would think all prisons would attract bad vibes. We do have some people that have a bad aura. It's just bad.*

Earlone: Just down the hall from where the officers were hanging out at was the exam room, where Shannon had seen the window shades and the spinning chair.

Nigel: Okay, so we're walking down the hallway at long term medical housing, past the office where we heard the story about the chair that swiveled around on its own. And Earlone's scared. He's holding onto my hand because he's so afraid.

Earlone: Really?

Nigel: Yes. So, we found it. And you know what? It turns out it was an OBGYN office.

Earlone: An OBGYN'S office. I'm no expert, but I would think there would be some intense feelings around that spot.

Nigel: Yeah, I think there probably are sad stories that get played out here, and maybe something does get left behind.

Earlone: That's a motivation for a ghost story, Nyge.

Nigel: So, next we headed outside behind the building. Lieutenant Newborg wanted to show us something.

Newborg: *You see the long ramp right here to our left? Of course, that leads to that door. But if we want, we can walk around and walk down and knock on the door.*

Nigel: *And see if somebody opens it.*

Newborg: *I'll try my keys.*

Nigel: *Okay.*

So, there was something else about the building where CIW's medical facility is.

Earlone: Might be [Nigel laughs] relevant for a ghost story. Might be fertile grounds, Nigel. [Nigel laughs]

Newborg: *I think you can see the parking here in this long ramp. It's perfect for getting a body heavy or light on a gurney down here for storage, short term storage.*

Earlone: *So currently, we just came down a ramp to a door that leads to the morgue. The morgue from back in the day, maybe back in the 60s.*

Newborg: *So, all I know is CIW here since the early 50s. And as inmates passed, they had an onsite morgue to house the bodies until the coroner can come pick them up. And before the city had the ability to store the bodies in their own morgue, they utilized this space in addition. So, if somebody passed on the streets, they had to bring them here for storage until they can get them to the families in a funeral. I haven't seen anything myself. Heard stories. There's always been stories of ghosts in institutions. Officers feel they've been grabbed from behind in towers and stuff. This institution is no different.*

Nigel: *Why would ghosts even want to be at a prison?*

Newborg: *Well, death occurs often inside prison from natural causes, if not from incidents of riots, overdoses from drugs. I think energy transfers in different ways. So, could energies be staying around that actually have the ability to affect our world we're in? I think it's possible.*

Nigel: You think it could be incarcerated ghosts and people who work here ghosts, mingling?

Newborg: Yeah, I think absolutely. And I would lean more towards, it's the people who actually died in this area. I think the energy would be, like in homes, you hear ghost stories in houses that somebody who passed in the home, the energy stays there. So, I think if anything going around here are the individuals that passed here on grounds that still tend to hang out for whatever reason.

Nigel: Forgive me for asking this question, if you were ever in that situation, do you think you'd find your ghost hanging out here?

Newborg: No, hopefully I don't pass here at CIW. Yeah, I don't know. I have my own thoughts and beliefs, of course, on what happens after, if anything. But I hope I'd find a way to find a little more palm trees and sandy beach type of, or something to hang out and haunt some turtles and some crabs or something other than the institution.

Nigel: So, why would a ghost want to be at a place that's so pretty unpleasant?

Newborg: Yeah. I don't know. Some people come in young. This is all they know. So, if this is out their mind believes maybe was a home and they stay here or they're locked, who knows the rules that govern the realm of. I think the sad part comes from just being away from family. And I lost my mom to cancer, but we were able to be there through that. So, I think that takes away some of the sadness from it. And I think if the separation from the public to inside institution and passing in prison is a lonely thing, and maybe that's part of why there's more ghosts stories.

[somber music]

Earlone: We'll be back after a quick break.

Nigel: Yeah. Don't you dare disappear.

Earlone: Ooh.

Nigel: [laughs] Don't you disappear, Earlone.

[music]

Nigel: So, we wanted to talk to you because we heard you have either a spooky story, a scary story, something about a haunting maybe.

Kelton O'Connor: It is about events around which some folklore evolved.

Earlone: Kelton O'Connor spent about six years on D Yard, a psychiatric yard at Salinas Valley State Prison, which is a level four prison a few hours away from San Francisco.

Nigel: Right. And he's at San Quentin now. And that's where our editor, Amy, our inside colleague, Tony Tafoya, and I sat him down to talk.

Kelton: Salinas Valley State Prison is one of the more rough prisons in the state. So, for Salinas Valley, D Yard was pretty mellow. But for psychiatric yards in general, it was pretty rough. People who are in the psychiatric system in prison are frequently medicated, and if that medication works, then those individuals behave well, and they end up on the lower

security yards. And then there are certain individuals that no matter how you medicate them, they still act out. And so, they end up on the high security. People commit violence in some cases because of the voices in their head, and you don't know why they're doing it at that time. They're the only person that knows why it is they're doing this. And it can be quite random. You can be attacked by somebody because they think that you're plotting against them or something.

When I first arrived at Salinas Valley State Prison, somebody told me this story about an individual named Gary. Gary was someone who, years previous, had decided that he did not want to live with anybody anymore. He didn't want to have a cellmate. This is something that happens to people who are locked up, sometimes. They just get sick of having cellmates for different reasons. And so, he went to his doctors and said, "If you don't give me a single cell, I'm going to kill my cellmate." When you kill your cellmate in the system, that's one of the things that can get you put on single cell status. So, there's a clear purpose by threatening that. And when they didn't give him his single cell status, Gary went and killed his cellmate. Gary was put on single cell status for 10 years.

And over the course of this time, the doctors came to Gary repeatedly and said, "Well, we're thinking about, do you feel like you're ready for a cellmate again?" And every time they came to Gary and said, "Well, we're thinking you've been doing so good lately that we'll maybe give you a cellmate. How do you feel about that?" He said, "Well, I'll kill him." And they go, "Okay," and would back off on it. And finally, after 10 years, they just did it. They just said, "Well, we think you'll behave yourself." So, they gave him a cellmate, and that cellmate's name was Shoes. I never met him because by the time I got to the yard, Gary had killed Shoes. Gary had killed Shoes in his sleep. If I remember correctly, he had strangled him. I believe on the first night that they were in the cell. They put Gary back on single cell status after that.

So, it was something of a tale of caution that people passed around, you really want to do the footwork to find a cellmate you feel good about and not let the doctors just put whoever in there. And of course, the cell where Shoes was killed, some folklore evolved around that cell. That's how that particular cell came to be known as the haunted cell, D Yard in Salinas Valley State Prison.

Tony Tafoya: Did you ever walk up to the cell and just look inside of it.

Kelton: Yeah. Yeah.

Nigel: And was there anything remarkable about it?

Kelton: No, that was just a normal prison cell. What I found interesting is that it was frequently empty and nobody ever stayed there for very long. People didn't like living in the cell. Who knows? Maybe it's because of the folklore or maybe there was something bad about that cell. I don't know.

Nigel: If you had been assigned to that cell, would you live there?

Kelton: I'm someone who's prone to flights of morbid thoughts, and I'm easily spooked. I had a lot of trauma when I was young, and it ended up causing me to be flighty. [laughs] Scary books and scary movies really get a hold of me. Any cell for me, I can get carried away. Maybe I would have been particularly freaked out by that cell, and maybe it would have only been as weird and creepy as any other cell appears to me.

Amy: Have you ever worried that your cellie would kill you while you were asleep?

Kelton: *I had a cellmate who was a really paranoid guy once, and he thought that I was going to kill him in his sleep. He was very worried that I would kill him in his sleep. And the thing that sometimes occurs when somebody's that paranoid is that they think they have to kill you first. I think that the question, like, "Have you ever been scared your cellmate was going to kill you?" Is a really interesting question, because I was introduced to this tale and this fear when I was really young. My father had done 20 years in prison. And when he got out, and I first went to live with him when I was 11, he actually told me a bedtime story that was about two prisoners living in a cell.*

One prisoner, he comes in, he's a new guy, they just meet. And the first night he says, "Hey, just so you know, when I go to sleep, you might notice this tattoo on my back, sometimes it does interesting things. Don't worry about it. No harm can come to you. Some people really get surprised by it, though, but just don't worry about it, okay? And if you want to talk to me about it, just don't wake me up. Just wait until tomorrow." So, we'll call one guy, Paul, and the other guy, Chris. Paul's the one with the tattoos. Just come in and told Chris that sometimes his tattoo does something interesting at night.

So, Chris stays up at night on the first night. He's so curious. "What is the deal with this tattoo? What happens with this guy's tattoo when he goes to sleep?"

Just when he's about to fall asleep and give up and think that Paul was messing with him, Chris sees that something strange happens on that tattoo. It's almost like the tattoo there's a ripple in it, it's water or something. And then all of a sudden, right before his eyes, the tattoo comes alive. It's a tattoo of a dragon. The dragon comes alive and looks at him. And in the dragon's claws is his eyeball, and [chuckles] he's shocked. But nevertheless, the art starts to move, and he's hypnotized by it. And he watches this dragon come alive and look at him and then turn away and start flying off into the distance. And the tattoo becomes just a scene of the countryside. So, he now feels like he's like a bird flying through the countryside and just looking at everything happening. He sees people driving along roads and walking along sidewalks and working on farms, and he watches this and it just goes on and on and on for hours.

And finally, it stops. The dragon comes back and then reassumes its position on Paul's back and freezes in the same position it was at the beginning of the night, holding this eyeball on its claws. And then, of course, it's breakfast time, and Chris hasn't gotten very much sleep, and, of course, he's amazed, and he wants to ask Paul everything about his tattoo. And he's like, "Where did you get this tattoo? And it's so amazing, right?" And Paul goes, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, I know. Look, I've got to go get breakfast, and we'll talk about it later."

And so, night after night, Chris stays up watching Paul's tattoo. And one night, the tattoo isn't just showing him scenes of the countryside and people in the free world. It starts to show him scenes of the prison, people he knows and he sees every day. And those things start to happen in real life the next day. So, he sees a scene where in the kitchen, there's a riot, and one of his friends dies, and the next day, in reality, there's a riot in the kitchen, and one of his friends dies. So now he's even more interested in this tattoo, and after it's told the future, a number of times successfully, one night, he's watching it, and it shows their cell. He's looking down at this tattoo, and it's showing him and Paul in the same cell, getting ready to go to sleep at night.

And after they go to sleep, Paul gets up and takes a knife out from under his pillow and stabs Chris over, over, and over again until Chris is dead. And then the tattoo goes back being a dragon, holding this eyeball. And, of course, Chris now has to face the reality of what he's going to do. How is he going to deal with this information that the tattoo has given him? And when my father told me this story, he said, "Okay, that's the end of the story. Have a good night." And naturally, I said-- well, and my brother as well, he said, "Dad, dad, you got

to tell us the end of the story. What are you doing? It's not over, what happens?" And he goes, "Oh, well, he says, this is actually a story that you get to finish yourself. You get to decide how the story ends. If you were Chris, what would you do?" And then he leaves, and he actually just lets us sleep on that for the night.

I think what he was trying to say is that if you know somebody's going to kill you, how do you deal with that? I think his message is that you kill them first. I think that's the last thing he said before he left the room. He says, "What would you do if you were Chris? You know where Paul keeps his knife now." And my response to my father is, I told him, "There's always a third option. You might think that it's either being killed or killing. But there's always a third way."

Nigel: When you said to your dad, there's a third option, how do you think, in his mind, he responded to that?

Kelton: My dad did 20 years in prison. During the 70s and 80s, and I think a lot of people would come out of that experience thinking that they should instill on their children and understanding that violence is part of life, and sometimes it's necessary. There's a whole lot of information gathering that goes on in prison all the time. Sometimes, you might run across confirmable evidence that someone else has a plan to do you harm. Here it is. Here's the note says, "Kill so and so," so and so is you. [chuckles]

I mean, this is like, this is a little bit of extraordinary circumstances, but it happens. People write down lists of people that need to be dealt with. And sometimes those lists occasionally fall into someone's hands and they say, "Hey," or they tell, somebody tells you, comes and says, "Hey, by the way, they're going to knock you off tomorrow." It's either the other guy or it's you. Now, who's it going to be? Do you just sit around and hope for the best, or do you take the initiative?

Earlone: So, what would you have done if you have seen that last act of that tattoo?

Nigel: See, this is what I like about the story. Remember how Kelton said there's always three choices?

Earlone: Okay.

Nigel: So, until you're in that situation, I think you don't actually know if there is, in fact, a third. And that's what makes this story so scary to me, because it points out that the assumptions you have about your own morality might not play out the way you think they will when you're in a dangerous or spooky situation. I mean, you might disappoint yourself. So, for me, Earlone, it's a super successful ghost story.

Earlone: Okay. But what you had done, Nigel?

Nigel: One thing you've taught me, don't always answer every question that's asked.

Earlone: Okay. [Nigel laughs] That's a good comeback. Use my own words against me, cool.

Nigel: [laughs] How about you? What do you think?

Earlone: I think I listen to that ghost. You know why?

Nigel: Why?

Earlonne: I'm not ready to be a ghost myself.

Nigel: Before we start, I have a really important question for you. Do you believe in ghosts?

Casper Collin: No.

Nigel: No?

Casper Collin: No.

Nigel: How come?

Casper Collin: I don't know. I just don't.

Nigel: You never believed in ghosts even when you were much younger?

Casper Collin: Maybe, but I don't remember. I mean, probably at some point, but not now.

Nigel: So, you've never been, like, afraid at night? You've never heard a bump or a boo or something?

Casper Collin: No.

Nigel: All right, I got to have you come to my house because I believe in them.

[laughter]

Nigel: All right. All right. Let's get down to business. You ready?

Casper Collin: My name is Casper Collin. Right now, I'm getting ready for Halloween. I'm making my costume. It is a business hotdog. Yeah.

Nigel: Okay. Groovy.

Casper Collin: Ear hustle is produced by Nigel Poor, Earlonne Woods, Amy Standen, Bruce Wallace, and Rahsaan "New York" Thomas. Shabnam Sigman is the managing producer. The producing team inside San Quentin includes Steve Brooks, Derrell Sadiq Davis, Tony de Trinidad, and Tom Nguyen. The inside managing producer is Tony Tafoya, Earlonne Woods sound designs and engineers the show with help from Fernando Arruda, Rhashiyd Zinnamon, Derrell Sadiq Davis. Thanks to acting Warden Smith at San Quentin, acting Warden Hill, and Lieutenant Newborg at the California Institution for Women for their support of the show. Thanks also to this woman here.

Lt. Guim'Mara Berry: I am Lt. Guim'Mara Berry the public information officer at San Quentin Rehabilitation Center, and I approve this episode.

Casper Collin: This episode was made possible by The Just Trust, working to amplify the voices, vision, and power of communities that are transforming the justice system. For more information about the episode, check out the show notes on Ear Hustle's website, earhustlesq.com.

You can also find out more about the show on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram [@earhustlesq](https://www.instagram.com/earhustlesq).

Nigel: Want more Ear Hustle? Subscribe to Ear Hustle Plus.

Earlonne: When you sign up, you get access to bonus episodes, discount on Ear Hustle merchandise, and live chats, where we get to chop it up with our listeners in real time.

Nigel: Earlonne, I have always wanted a way to do that, so clearly, I am very excited about this.

Earlonne: Subscribe at earhustlesq.com/plus.

Nigel: And don't forget to sign up for our free newsletter, The Lowdown. Every issue we've got extra tidbits like team members favorite scary movies or photos of people you've heard in our episodes.

Earlonne: That's right. Sign up at earhustlesq.com/newsletter and while you're at it, leave us a review on Apple Podcasts. That's a big help to the show, and we surely appreciate you for doing it.

Nigel: Music for this episode came from Antwan Banks, Rhashiyd Zinnamon.

Earlonne: And me, Earlonne Woods. Ear Hustle is a proud member of Radiotopia from PRX, a network of independent, creator owned, listener supported podcasts.

Nigel: Discover audio with vision at [Radiotopia.fm](https://radiotopia.fm).

Earlonne: I'm Earlonne Woods.

Nigel: I'm Nigel Poor.

Unison: Thanks for listening.

Earlonne: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed--

Nigel: Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

[Transcript provided by [SpeechDocs Podcast Transcription](#)]

End of Episode