



Narrator

Witchever Path explores mature themes, language, and scenarios that require a mature audience. Listener Discretion is advised.

On the day the veil between those we lost and those who remain is at its lowest, we've come back to you. This is Witchever Path. An interactive, horror anthology set in the cities and forests of New England.

If you've never listened before, here's how it works. At the end of this episode, there will be a cliffhanger. And the protagonist will be presented with a choice. One that you and the rest of the audience will decide for them. We'll tell you where to go to vote, and at the end of the week, we'll go with the majority opinion. Then the fun will start again. Your decisions will actively change the course of the story.

In honor of the old ways, we're summoning a new interactive story that invokes the characters from our very first tale, Squirrels. There is a farm on the outskirts of Warren and Bradford, where the rich and powerful come to reap what they have sown through their whole lives, in the hopes that the harvest will be enough to grant them an escape from damnation.

This is a story about the owners of that barn. Some of you may recognize it from the first story we ever did. If you're new to the party, you don't necessarily need to go back to have a good time with this one. There's no penalty to coming to the party now. You can sit down with those who've been here since the beginning and enjoy our SECOND Course. Part 1.

Welcome home.

[Opening – FEED BEING DROPPED FOR GOATS – GOATS MAKING HUNGRY BLEATING SOUNDS]

JOHN – feeding all of them.

CHIRP OF WALKIE TALKIE

GUY

[over walkie]

Joanna's coming' up the drive.

JOHN

[annoyed]

All right, I'm on my way.

JOHN

[narrate]



Robert's son, Big, nudges me as I'm about to leave the goat pen. I give him a playful scratch on the ear and fish a root beer barrel out of my pocket

Two years ago, I wouldn't be anywhere near these goats. I still think about Robert, shrieking and charging, eyes wild. The Big Gray Bastard falling into the dirt after he was shot. And all the blood and death that followed.

But when Greg disappeared from the farm, the day-to-day maintenance fell onto me. Joanna's cousins fed the animals for the first six months, while I fixed things around the property. I helped Guy with security updates. I practiced shooting with him and Angela every week. And I watched, slowly, as the cousins fought with one another and Joanna about the direction she was taking the family business.

When they began fighting during the presidential election, they all stopped talking outside of doing their jobs. Angela quit, Guy was offered more money to stay, and the animals, they weren't being fed as often. The chickens and sheep, they were easy to do. But the goats, I kept waiting for someone else to do it until it was obvious nobody had gone over to even clean the pen in three days.

I'm not afraid of much anymore. And as much as I didn't like those Muppet-eyed motherfuckers... I couldn't let animals starve. So I fed and cleaned Robert's relatives. I took care of them daily, and now... now I come to the pen to chill out away from the rest of the family.

The gate closes behind me with a satisfying thud, and I lock it before heading back up to the house. Joanna's Maverick whips past me and parks in front of the porch. She gets out and opens up the cab's back door.

[sound of grabbing a duffle bag]

JOHN

[confused]

What's in the bag?

JOANNA

[calm]

Payment for Friday's job. The client refuses to wire money.
Sent a courier to meet me in Concord.

JOHN

[concerned]

You said you were just going out to get more coffee.

JOANNA



[brushing off his concern]
I don't have to tell you everything.

JOHN

[torn]

Joanna. Come on. I don't think you going out to meet anyone for business is a good idea, given the way things have changed. You should have somebody watching you.

JOANNA

[annoyed]

Take the bag into Randy. Have him count it and lock it up.
Then get Guy and the guys to come in for a run-through of how Friday ought to go.

JOHN

[pissed]

Jo, wait a minute.

JOANNA

[cold]

Do it. Now. Or you're out of this week's take.

JOHN

[chastised]

Understood.

JOHN

[narrate]

The duffle bag's heavy with cash. I didn't need to open it to know its more money than I was ever meant to have. But with what we do, it made sense.
Feeling its weight makes me realize Friday's going to suck. Whatever the client's coming up to say, it's going to haunt whoever hears it.
I might want to sit it out.

I bring the bag to Randy, Guy's kid. He turned 18 a week ago. He's got long, thick red hair tied up in a messy bun. I drop the duffle on the table he's at. He puts down his phone, talks to me about some video game or meme or whatever, and then gets to counting.
He's a good kid. Guy keeps him away from the clients.
But he knows what we do.
It's the family business.

[SOUND of pouring of Cider]



I meet up with Guy in the kitchen. We start drinking cider while we wait for Joanna. He starts pacing across the checkerboard tile.

GUY

[stressed]

I got to finish the security camera setup on the perimeter.
When she coming in?

JOHN

[resigned]

She's in a mood, Guy. I don't fucking know what to tell you.

GUY

[taking that in]

Fuck me, what you do?

JOHN

She met with somebody in the city without anybody watching.
I wasn't happy with it.

GUY

You guys back together?

JOHN

No.

GUY

[relieved]

Good.

[door opens]

[overheard]

Sorry for the wait.

Did you get to the part where John forgot who he was working for?

[GUY CLEAR HIS THROAT]

JOANNA

Now that you're all done, let's get down to business.



We've got a high-profile client coming.
Maybe the most important one we've ever had.
And we have four days to beef up security.
We need to make this one as discreet as possible.
Which means we're keeping only the family near the client.

JOHN

[puzzled]

What kind of high profile are we talking about?

GUY

[concurring]

Right, Senator, Big CEO?

JOANNA

[sigh]

Hold on.

[sound of the phone typing]

Here.

[puts phone on the table]

JOHN

[shocked]

Are you fucking kidding me?

GUY

[CURSES in FRENCH]

Tabernak , Joanna!

He's fucking everywhere!

JOANNA

[unbothered]

He's got cancer.

Nobody knows.

He'll be dead in five months.



JOHN

[narrate]

She deleted his name off her little note app.
She didn't have to show us a picture.
I've seen this guy around for as long as I could remember.

JOANNA

[clear]

Nobody outside of the kitchen gets to know who it is until he arrives. But this is the biggest payday so far. It could actually be our last, really, if we wanted it to be.

GUY

[stress]

But the press, Joanna
How we going to keep this place secure?

JOANNA

[blowing it off]

The way we have our entire lives.

JOHN

[narrate]

I'm somewhere else as they start fighting in French.
I'm looking at the kitchen wall. Joanna and I had repainted it a year ago. Before the final fight, where she challenged to me to let loose. To finally scream back or hit the wall. I was getting tired of the influx of politicians and fascists she was giving a pass to in that barn. Even Angela, weird fuck that she was, objected to two of them before she left. But the woman I was in love with, who was deep inside Joanna, had stopped showing her face. The day we were painting this kitchen, we were laughing and flirting... And that makes me hate her a bit. That I can't just think about that day as the good one that it was.

GUY

[Swearing]

Mais pourquoi diable me fait ça, Joanna?

[DOOR SLAMS]



JOHN

[needing to go]
I'm going out.

JOANNA

[angry]
Yeah? Every boy in this house storming out?
Where are you going?

JOHN

I don't have to tell you everything.

[SOUND of a bar]

JOHN

[narrate]
The scotch in my glass doesn't even sting as I drink. I've been in the fucking bar for an hour, back to the wall. The laughter of people on dates, the lame conversations, I let them fill my ears, trying to kill my thoughts. I've been at this for years now.
I'm in too deep. I can't quit.

MR. O

[amused]
John, have you thought about killing her?

JOHN

You're not real.

Waiter

What?

JOHN

Oh, sorry, I thought you were. Um, What did you need?

Waiter

I said, you want me to keep filling her? Your glass?

JOHN

Ah... sorry, yeah. One more. Please.

[narrate]



She gives me a look and I realize I'm either too drunk or finally snapping. Hearing his voice again, thinking about the first night. The squirrels. My wound. And Greg. That kind, sappy little guy. I can see him at the bar, looking a little more confident, nice jacket. His hair cut short. No, wait. I *See him. At. The bar.* And he sees me. He walks over and sits with me.

GREG

[sort of amused at getting caught]
Hey bud. I didn't expect to see you so soon.

JOHN

I can't believe you're alive.
We lost track of you and you... are you okay?

GREG

[pleasantly surprised at the concern]
Yeah, John. I'm okay.

JOHN

[hesitant]

I – Joanna's going to need to see you.

GREG

[not really looking forward to it]

I know. I'm going to head up in a couple of days. I got a couple of things to do tomorrow.
[slight pause seeing John's haunted face]

John? You look really upset. What's wrong?

JOHN

Things have been getting to be a lot right now, Greg.
Joanna's been working us hard. Guy's on edge.
I don't think you know but Angela...

[narrate]

Greg looks at this phone and types something.
I catch myself and then ask him.

Wait. Why are you back now?

GREG

[light sigh and then into...]



It was time to come home.

[trying to politely leave]

Look, I'm gonna go, as I had a date tonight and they're not going to show.
I have a big day coming, so I think I'll just go to bed.

Look, I know you're probably going to want to call Joanna or somebody to tell them I'm coming,
but if you could me favor, bud? Don't?
I think it's better I reach out or show up myself.

JOHN

[disbelief]

Why?

GREG

I just think it's easier to talk to Joanna when she's not already determined to say whatever she's
going to say. You know?

JOHN

Yeah.

GREG

I'll text you my new number. I still got yours.

GREG

[pause]

Maybe you can help me out with another thing.
Are you busy tomorrow?

JOHN

Yes.

GREG

I'll be free tomorrow night, why don't we get together?
I'll fill you in on what I've been up to. We'll catch up.

JOHN



Catch Up? We need you up there... It's getting... *busy*.

GREG

I bet it is.

I'll text you.

Just please... keep it to yourself I'm here for a bit, yeah?

See you.

JOHN

[narrate]

The waitress brings me another drink as Greg goes. He texts me as he gets outside- "Good seeing you." I'm thinking about the upcoming client, and the one who stabbed Greg and me in the barn... the one who changed everything. The one I hear in my head whenever I'm not paying attention.

I finish my drink and settle up at the bar, rather than wait for the waitress. I tip well, in cash, and I walk out, headed to whatever is gonna come next.

NARRATOR

John's choices are:

Tell Joanna Greg is back.

Meet up with Greg tomorrow.

Just stay quiet.

You can vote now at WicheverPath.com/vote. You have until next Wednesday, November 9.

Second Course Part 1 was written by Journee and Steven.

Produced by Wichever Path.

It features:

Steven as John

Nick Zalowski as Guy

Journee as Joanna

Bryan Tylec as the Waiter

Ragnar Arneson as Greg

Sound effects by Audio Hero and Wichever Path

The music in this podcast came from Epidemic Sound, please see our website for artist information and track lists.

Happy Halloween.