

Ouija Broads: Forrest Fenn Treasure Update!

[theme music plays, fades out: Me and the Man in the Moon]

Liz: You're listening to Ouija Broads, this is Liz.

Devon: This is Devon.

Liz: We're back, back, back again. I have a whole passel of patrons to thank. And just like we ended the last episode saying we're going to make everybody rich with treasure, this is also a treasure episode. So hang on through all these patrons because there's a treasure at the other end.

Liz: All right. I would like to welcome Amy, Kylie, Fleen, Emma, and Heather Rose. Thank you, everybody.

Devon: Thank you guys so much.

Liz: This is very pertinent because Emma, on her birthday this year... It was a very special day, not just because of Emma, because Forrest Fenn's treasure was found.

Devon: [angrily] Wasn't by me.

Liz: No. And if you're frustrated now, wait an hour, because there is a lot and most of it is frustrating. But we're going to jump right into it. But first of all, I want to thank the new patrons--

Devon: Thank you, patrons.

Liz: --and our existing patrons.

Devon: Yes.

Liz: Thank you, patrons, for your ongoing support, your new support, and thank you to all of our listeners. Now, that sounded like the end. That sounded like I was sending them off.

Devon: Are you on PBS?

Liz: Isn't it?

Devon: Is that after a charity drive?

Liz: They say that's why you're not supposed to-- that's why they, in Hollywood, don't say goodbye on the phone because they say the audience tunes out when they hear goodbye.

Devon: Are you kidding me?

Liz: Now I've said it a bunch of times. That's probably an urban legend.

Devon: That's one of my mom's pet peeves in TV or movies--

Liz: Yeah!

Devon: When people hang up without saying goodbye. She's like, "You would never fucking do that in real life," except for she's my mom, so she didn't swear. But "You would never do that in real life."

Liz: No. I always get mad at the: [dramatic voice] "You've got to come down here and see this." Just explain! You fucking drama queen.

Devon: [excited agreement sounds]

Liz: Especially when it's like, "Hi, we're spaceship guys, and we're in the premier starship of the whole Earth space fleet. You should come down here, Captain." Be more specific.

Devon: Exactly.

Liz: You're not in charge of whether I should come down here. This feels like when Lydia's like, "Come look at this!" And I'm like, "Maybe! Sell me on it."

Devon: It's entirely possible. I don't want to come into your tent, which is a hot box of farts to look at some crayons that I bought you.

Liz: Yes. Let me be the judge of that. How about you sum it up quickly? How about that something that we teach in officer school in Starfleet is situation summarizing?

Devon: [laughing] Well, I want to know.

Liz: At least: "The warp core's fucked."

Devon: Totally.

Liz: Like, okay, you can cuss.

Devon: Totally.

Liz: He's got to run there with his own little two legs and take your space elevators. God. Okay, we're not getting anywhere with this.

Devon: [laughs]

Liz: We overshot the energy. Let's talk about Forrest Fenn's treasure.

Devon: Let's do it.

Liz: Which we did originally as an episode way, way back somewhere in the '50s, I think. Let me give you an outline of the episode, actually. Forrest Fenn is an interesting individual. We dug more into his life story in that original episode. For the purposes of this, what you need to know is that he is in his eighties.

Devon: Mmm-hmm.

Liz: And when he was in his late '70s, he decided to hide a chest full of treasure somewhere in the Rocky Mountains. I approve--

Devon: Yes.

Liz: --on the general principle. I think the Forrest Fenn episode was one where we went real hard about NAGPRA and a lot of opinions about his whole general approach to treasure, which is going to also circle back around as we get to this.

Liz: But the essence we always go for, like, no pun intended, the nugget of the story is that he had a near-death experience with, I believe, liver cancer, no, kidney cancer.

Devon: Okay.

Liz: When he recovered, he said, I want to make a mark on the world. So he had been an antiquities collector, slash grave robber--

Devon: Right.

Liz: Slash dealer in illegal antiquities, probably was mixed up in the Hobby Lobby thing. I'm just calling it from here.

Devon: [laughs]

Liz: Under investigation by the FBI for inappropriate purchase and obtainment, I don't even know, of artifacts. He has a huge collection and some of it was shadily acquired, can't nail down what proportion that would be.

Devon: Sure.

Liz: Okay, so he took some of his goodies that he had collected and he put them in a chest, which was also a goodie. It was like from the 12th century, beautiful, classic, everything that we were looking for with our pirate treasure last episode and didn't get.

Devon: Uh-huh.

Liz: This is a legit thing. It's actual treasure.

Liz: So at first, when he had the kidney cancer, he's like, I'll be buried next to it. Then he recovered. And he said, well, I still have this treasure box. So he toted it out and hid it in the mountains and wrote a life story in which he put a poem that is supposed to contain nine clues to the treasure.

Liz: So over the ten years that followed, thousands of people looked for this. More, probably, but it's not like there's an official register. It was estimated basically that there's a million dollars worth of stuff in the box and the box itself is worth a million.

Liz: Although, of course, you don't know what's in there, because he doesn't say. He hints at it. We know the stuff he has. It's not like Superman number one or something.

Devon: Right.

Liz: It's going to be gold and tribal artifacts he shouldn't have probably.

Devon: Right, you know that it was material metal goods for the most part, so gold, silver, platinum, whatever, as opposed-- And in addition to that, the funerary, and grave, and cultural goods, like you just said.

Liz: Yup. Yeah. So he's said over the years that it had precious jewels, it had diamonds, it had gold. The estimated number, according to Forrest, is that about 350,000 people have searched for the treasure. And I don't have the citation on that. So I don't know if that means everybody who's thought about it, everybody who actually got in the car and went someplace.

Devon: Right.

Liz: I don't know. But would you like to hear the poem?

Devon: Oh, yes, I, I-- Please do. I know I've read it and I don't remember it. And there's all kinds of really cool allusions in there.

Liz: "As I have gone alone in there and with my treasures bold / I can keep my secret where and hint of riches new and old." So I think that in itself seems, I don't know how the actual hard core people feel about it, but to me, that feels like a preamble. He's just saying, I had treasure. I went there. And it's a secret. And there's riches.

Liz: Okay: "Begin it where warm waters halt and take it in the canyon down / not far but too far to walk. Put in below the home of Brown. / From there, it's no place for the meek. The end is ever drawing nigh / There will be no paddle up your creek, just heavy loads and water high."

Liz: So of course, thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of words written about what any of that could mean.

Devon: Right, and the--

Liz: Brown is capitalized.

Devon: Okay.

Liz: "If you've been wise and found the blaze, look quickly down your quest to cease / But tarry scant with marvel gaze, just take the chest and go in peace / So why is it that I must go and leave my trove for all to seek? / The answers I already know. I've done it tired and now I'm weak / So hear me all and listen good. Your effort will be worth the cold / If you are brave and in the wood, I give you title to the gold."

Liz: It got a little shaky in the middle because I think he had to actually put clues in, but I'm like, okay, you've painted a really cool, eerie picture of your geriatric ass hauling 42 pounds--

Devon: [laughing]

Liz: --of equipment. So it is a 42 pound package. And he did two trips, basically, but he was in his 70s.

Devon: Oh, my.

Liz: So that's always been a factor, is... You know, it's the Rockies. You're presumably limited to places where somebody his age and health could go. So with that said, out of the 350,000 or so, there have been five deaths of people who were searching for that treasure.

Devon: Oh, that many?

Liz: That many. So first is Randy Bilyeu. He went missing in January 2016. He was found dead in July. This is straight from Wikipedia.

Devon: Mm-hmm.

Liz: They don't know exactly what happened to him, but they know he was looking for the treasure. But, you know... That was a lot of months.

Devon: Yeah. Yeah.

Liz: Jeff Murphy found dead in Yellowstone in 2017, so about a month before they found Randy. He fell down a steep slope. And so when Murphy's wife originally called authorities, she said he's looking for the treasure. Pastor Paris Wallace said, "I'm going to go look for the treasure." He doesn't show up, again in June 2017. I guess it was really heating up that... Was that Pokémon GO summer? Maybe that was Pokémon GO Summer.

Devon: Maybe Pokémon GO Summer, right? And you're like, okay, well, I get GPS out here, but they're apparently not in any Pokestops, but I want to hatch those fucking eggs, man.

Liz: Yeah. Man, you can tell I'm like, "I'm uncomfortable talking about all these people dying!" Okay, so they found his car and then eventually they found his body along the Rio Grande same as Randy. Eric Ashby was found dead in the Arkansas River. He moved, apparently, according to his friends, to Colorado specifically to look for the treasure and was last seen, again, in that June rafting on the river and then was found in July of 2017.

Devon: Oh, my gosh.

Liz: So most of these in one year. That was a really deadly year.

Devon: Well, and, I'm sorry, when did Fenn hide it? When did he bury it or release the poem? What year?

Liz: 2010.

Devon: Oh, wow. Okay, so it took people seven years before they started dying for this.

Liz: I think so. I think so. Michael Sexton was found in March 2020 alongside an unnamed male adult companion. The companion recovered, which is why his name is not given.

Devon: I see.

Liz: But Michael passed. They were discovered near the Dinosaur National Monument along the Utah-Colorado border. I don't have a map of where all these guys were, but it sounds like a lot of the attention as of at least 2017 was focusing on Colorado, specifically.

Devon: Yeah. I mean, Rio Grande is shoot, U-C-A-N. Okay, so Colorado and, and Mexico border each other, but with the Rio. Okay, I was trying to place that, too. So you're right. That's Colorado. We're good. I know my geography.

Liz: I'm impressed! So what's happened, of course-- and I understand it better now that I understand how quick those deaths came in succession... I think I was a little more frustrated

with it when we talked about it the first time, is people have said, "Forrest, you've got to call this off. People are dying."

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: And we went into it originally that proportionate to, like, people just going outside, this is not that bad.

Devon: Sure.

Liz: This is not an excess mortality rate I would be concerned about, although I'm sure it's very, very different when it's your loved one who took risks that you don't feel like they would have taken if the treasure hadn't been there.

Devon: Mm-hmm.

Liz: But what Forrest says about all this, and he does have a way with words, is "People are falling in the pool and drowning. Our job is not to close the pool. Our job is to teach them to swim."

Devon: Oh, Forrest. I love you.

Liz: And I'm like, [impressed tone] "Well, okay! Spit that cowboy truth at us."

Devon: Absolutely. Yes.

Liz: I get it, like yeah, a lot of people die in Yellowstone--

Devon: Right.

Liz: A lot of people die in natural settings. I feel bad for these folks and I feel bad for their families. But I don't think that there's a theory of law that really connects Forrest to this stuff. I

don't know. It becomes a philosophical question. If I were going to prosecute Forrest for something, it would not be this, you know?

Devon: It sounds like he's got many other actionable reasons to prosecute.

Liz: That's the human toll, which I did want to acknowledge. As of early June, 2020, rumors start to fly that the treasure has been found. And Forrest is saying this. People are saying they've heard Forrest saying this. And then June 7th, a post appears on a website that's basically Forrest's informal website. It's very weird, clearly handmade. It's not him, but it's somebody who knows him--

Devon: Okay.

Liz: And that's involved with the treasure who runs it for him. So here's what was posted. "Has the treasure been found? Yes, Forrest has confirmed that the treasure has been found. And here's his note. The search is over. It was under a canopy of stars in the lush, forested vegetation of the Rocky Mountains and had not moved from the spot where I hid it more than ten years ago."

Liz: So I said 2010 really confidently. What we know is he published the poem and the autobiography in 2010.

Devon: Mmm, okay.

Liz: It's possible he hid it earlier. But I don't know why. "I do not know the person who found it. But the poem in my book led him to the precise spot. I congratulate the thousands of people who participated in the search and hope they will continue to be drawn by the promise of other discoveries. So the search is over. Look for more information and photos in the coming days." So that's the note. What information is not in that note that you would be curious about, even as somebody who has not been searching for this?

Devon: Give me the actual exact coordinates!

Liz: Yeah! Where was it?

Devon: Tell me where it was. Yeah. Yeah.

Liz: What are the clues? What is the place of Brown? What do you mean if you're brave and in the wood? What was any of it? Who found it? How'd they figure it out? How do they contact you? No, all we get is, it was a guy who found it from the Eastern United States and the way that he knows it was found is the guy sent him a photograph.

Devon: Huh.

Liz: So we don't know who this is. We don't know where it was. We haven't seen the photograph. This is not a satisfactory outcome.

Devon: Oh, no, that's total blue balls right there, man. I would rather you not tell me it was found and wait until you're able to divulge all the information, because, gosh, dang, this just makes me angry. It's not a wonderful tease. It's a frustrating tease.

Liz: No, people felt a lot of kinds of way about this. But I recover some of the major responses because we are not even halfway through my notes, my friend. The treasure has been found, but the party keeps rocking.

Devon: Oh, my goodness. Well, and I know there's got to be some conspiracy theory angles that you're going to cover, because one of the first things that I thought was, it wasn't found. You just pulled it because you had some heat. There was going to be a lawsuit over one of these deaths aimed at you if you didn't pull it.

Liz: Oh, we got a whole dim sum menu-

Devon: I can't wait.

Liz: --of conspiracy theories.

Devon: Give me the buffet.

Liz: And we'll go over some of them and then we'll just take the tastiest morsels.

Devon: Oh, marvelous.

Liz: So one initial response is exactly like you said: "No, you didn't." But this actually was an interesting one. This goes a step further. So this is Linda Bilyeu, whose name you might recognize--

Devon: No.

Liz: As the former wife of Randy, who's one of the people who died.

Devon: Oh, right.

Liz: She said, as of, mmm, a couple of days after the announcement, she thought the whole thing was a hoax.

Devon: [gasp]

Liz: She said, "He never hid the treasure. He needed attention. And this is how he got it. That's why he said the treasure was found and didn't give any proof or information."

Devon: Linda, oh my.

Liz: So that's a big swing. That's big swing. Because I'm like, it's not like somebody who has no reason to be in the woods or have treasure.

Devon: Uh-huh.

Liz: Means, motive and opportunity, but... Interesting. I have not seen follow up stuff from her on this.

Devon: But dang.

Liz: But what Fenn did in response was posting three pictures on that same fan blog, where there's one where it shows him sorting through the chest. There's a picture of what was in the chest. And it's captioned, "Removing objects from the chest. It is darker than it was 10 years ago when I left it on the ground and walked away." Which is wild, so he's saying it wasn't buried. It wasn't in a cave. He just left it on the ground and walked away.

Devon: Just hanging out.

Liz: Yeah, so another photo shows the treasure, it's captioned, "Not long after it was discovered." So sort of implicitly, this is a picture-- this is maybe the picture that the finder took of it? In the place where it was? And then there's a third picture where he's wearing a silver bracelet with turquoise in it that's tarnished black.

Devon: Hmm.

Liz: So are you satisfied?

Devon: No! Of course not! No, and that doesn't prove-- that still doesn't prove that you put it out in the woods 10 years ago and that it's been there since. That tells me that you at some point had a chest. You took some photos of all of your doubloons in said chest and then had the photos. That doesn't--

Liz: Yeah.

Devon: --prove anything further than evidence of, okay, you had this at one point.

Liz: Exactly. Dude with-- Dude with Scrooge McDuck level of treasure in your house?

Devon: Absolutely. Oh, I'm sorry, you--

Liz: It's like asking us to, like, take a picture with Ouija merchandise.

Devon: Yeah, do you want--

Liz: Or Bigfoot?

Devon: Right?

Liz: I turned slightly in my chair. Oh, there we go.

Devon: Mmhmm!

Liz: And so for him it's like, yeah, those are our treasures and these are his. He could have faked that so easily because nobody knew what it fucking looked like.

Devon: No, of course not.

Liz: I'm sure you've got another chest lying around or a tarnished turquoise bracelet.

Devon: Mmhmm.

Liz: Mmhmm!

Devon: Little bootblack will tarnish that up real nice for photos, Forrest.

Liz: So some people-- not, in this case, Linda. I haven't seen a follow up from her. I think this is probably an unpleasant time for her and she doesn't want to [unintelligible] everybody.

Devon: Totally.

Liz: But other people are like, no, that's a hoax. The-- the hoax-disproving pictures are themselves a hoax.

Devon: Gotcha.

Liz: According to, for instance, an anchor from CBS This Morning named Tony Dokoupil, who says--

Devon: That's a real name.

Liz: "I think the treasure's a hundred percent real. I don't, however, think it's been found." So that's an exciting take--

Devon: All right.

Liz: Of, the treasure is real, but that wasn't it. Which is a bold strategy, Cotton.

Devon: There's still hope for me to find it!

Liz: Mmhmm! I think that's, uh, driving a little of this. Tony-- Tony boy-

Devon: Yeah, Tony.

Liz: -- points out the same things that you did, right? Which is there's no time stamp. There's no date stamp. We don't know where he is.

Devon: Right.

Liz: The pictures that are actually-- have Forrest in them, you can tell he's in his 80s, he's clearly not in his 40s or something.

Devon: Yeah.

Devon: But that doesn't tell you anything.

Devon: Hell, no.

Liz: It could easily just been like, if he took two pictures before he buried the treasure and he's aged well. Or he took pictures of some other treasure. That's not great proof. So what Dokoupil says is that he spent time... How long was it? Nearly a week with Fenn at the compound in 2012.

Devon: At the compound?

Liz: Yeah, you know, he has his compound?

Devon: David Koresh?

Liz: Remember, with all the skeletons and stuff? You remember this. This guy went out there and basically was, like, terrified the entire time that they were going to trip over a skull and he'll have to watch Forrest decide whether to do anything with it.

Devon: Oh, yeah, that's right. Okay.

Liz: Weird vibe. He said that the publicity was what was important to Forrest. "At the time, he'd written the book *The Thrill of the Chase*, two years prior. The only people who had mentioned it were little publications or an airline magazine and he had no credibility as somebody who actually had a lot of collectible items, a.k.a. treasure, and who would do something as crazy as invite people to find it."

Liz: So Newsweek-- the article that this guy did, was when it really blew up--

Devon: Okay.

Liz: And people started looking for it and it became a national spotlight thing. But what this guy says, the guy who brought him to such prominence is- "The real reason why I don't think the

treasure has really been found, is because Forrest told me that his plan was to entomb himself along with the treasure. I think the treasure is in a location where an older man can still get to it and crawl or insert himself in and alongside the chest. I mean, that's how it was explained to me. You have a guy who's been collecting archeology his whole life--" Which is quite a phrase. He's been collecting archeology by the bucketful, I guess.

Devon: Uh, yeah. Buy one get one free.

Liz: Yeah. "--is so in love with it he's hatched a plan to make himself part of that record for all time and invite the public in to try to find it and his bones," he continued. "I am confident it is not a hoax. Forrest wants to be remembered for thousands of years and this is his way of doing so." So that's an exciting psychological aspect of this.

Devon: I'm just baffled. Yes, that he thinks that this guy wants to be like Pharaoh 2.0 and then go to his grave with all of his treasures and then someone finds him that's part of the--

Liz: That's part of the treasure. [crosstalk, inaudible]

Devon: He is the treasure himself.

Liz: Yeah, he's the treasure? I don't know. This seems like... I get that his original plan was, "I will bury the treasure and die next to it." He thought he was dying of kidney cancer. But man, you lived 10 more years into your late '80s. You're less mobile, in general, than you were. And I think you also probably get a better perspective of how much warning you get that you're going to die. And if you're going to die... Nobody dies like that.

Devon: No.

Liz: "Well, I have exactly enough energy to to get to the plot point. I get to my save point and lie down next to it, and then I guess I'm done."

Devon: Unless he had like a cyanide tooth or something that he could bite on like a spy and just be like, "Awesome, I'm super ready." But I could never do that, because I'd be like, as soon as I bite down on the tooth, I remember I left the oven on. It would never work.

Liz: Well, and with Forrest, too, you're like... I think he likes the publicity. So if picture this guy who... I've been on some of the forums, they can say confidently "Forrest has never been to this part of the state" or whatever. They have tracked him so intensely--

Devon: No, creepy.

Liz: -- over the time period. Oh, yeah. No, this is wild. The shit gets wild. You think that that guy could just die? He could just walk away? He could ricket his ass back to the Rocky Mountains? He could leave his, his compound, drive to where this thing is, get out and climb in, and nobody would watch this happen?

Devon: [laughing]

Liz: Or nobody would be like, "He died! There won't be a burial, we're not sure where he went." Like, no!

Devon: "We're still collecting the Social Security checks, though. Don't worry." I was thinking, how many people have trail cams at places that they're like, "Forrest could be out here." And they're just waiting for a notification on their phone like fucking doorbell but for the back 40, that's saying, "Oh, yeah, there's dude hanging out here. Oh, no, this one was just a cougar. False alarm. Raccoon was last week."

Liz: Yeah. Like, you don't-- you don't return to the scene of the crime for something like this to lie down and die, that is just-- I mean, I'm not saying that nobody would ever make a plan like that? But it does not seem like a well thought through plan. And I will give Forrest this. He does seem to think this stuff through, right?

Devon: Well, I mean, if you think it's not a well thought through plan, then I guess there goes my plan. I'm not doing it now. I mean, I was all on board until you just pooh-poohed it.

Liz: [condescending] Oh, no, honey, it's different if you do it.

Devon: Yeah, sure. That's got a great personality, too. What other pretty lies you wanna feed me?

Liz: So there's another take on this. There's two different people who are suing him or suing somebody else. So one is.. You know what, I'm just gonna not include her name because I don't want to deal with it. But there's this attorney, and I'm using that very loosely. The only cases she's really prosecuted are ones of her suing people, which is not a typical approach--

Devon: Not usually, no.

Liz: --to being an attorney. She [exasperated sigh]. She filed a suit in Santa Fe with Fenn and the finder of the treasure as the defendants. So what she says basically is, she got very into this hunt a couple of years ago during a divorce. She made about 20 trips from Chicago to Santa Fe trying to get the treasure, which she says she was going to either donate or sell off and use the proceeds to start a charity.

Devon: Mmmkay.

Liz: Sure. She's like, oh, I thought it would be fun. I'd write a book. And she's actually says "A funny follow-up book." And I'm like, "Dang, you're good at this. Just, like, slide in the fact that you already have a book available. Nice plug."

Devon: Yeah, well done, lady.

Liz: So she feels very cheated, because she says, and I was not able to get a hold of the actual filing and frankly not going to worry about it--

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: That somebody was texting her obscene things over the past couple months. And somehow in a way that is unclear from any of the articles, he got her solve and got to the treasure before her.

Devon: I see.

Liz: Yeah, so what she says is, "All this time I've invested the money, the car shot to heck, and then some guy comes out of nowhere and just follows you and grabs it." So that is one thing that she's saying is that he basically stalked her--

Devon: Okay.

Liz: And that is what happened. I don't know where Fenn comes into this.

Devon: Yeah, I was like, why is he a defendant?

Liz: Because to be honest, I'm too over reading frivolous lawsuits at this point.

Devon: I bet you are.

Liz: Because I think this is a pretty frivolous lawsuit. You cannot do this. Although this was exactly what people were saying right after-- in the couple days after the solve-- or, not the solve, but after he said "It's been found." There are a lot of people saying, "I wouldn't announce it if it were me, because everybody's going to come after you."

Devon: Yes.

Liz: And say, you know... I mean, people share their work. There's communities of thousands of people who are like, "Here's my theory about this. And I was looking at this little corner of this map."

Devon: Yes, yes.

Liz: Like, it's a big community. So it is not like most of these treasure hunters are completely free of having ever put a hint out there that may have been correct. So if you were the person who found it, I mean, they can't say, hey, I posted that it was this, and that's where it was, and you stole my idea, but they can sure waste your time because now they know you're rich.

Devon: Exactly. You've got the money to go defend yourself.

Liz: Yeah, you painted a huge target on your back for other reasons as well that we'll get into in a little bit.

Devon: Oh, I see.

Liz: So I'm not worried about her. Now, there's an exciting other lawsuit happening with a family, who were originally from Florida, they live in Wyoming, and what they say is that on June 5th, they called Forrest. They presented him with this information. So I guess they don't know if it was a phone call or what it was.

Liz: Okay, yes. No, we called him and said, "Sir, we're calling bluff." So basically they have been in contact with him. They've been searching for a long time. For years. For years, they've been searching. And they said that this winter they talked to him, and he said, "Let the snow melt and the mud dry before you go after the treasure." Which is maybe just a nice thing to say.

Devon: Just common sense.

Liz: I mean, I feel like they're trying to imply that it means that he was like, "You're on the right track, but be careful." Or he's just saying, "Please be careful."

Devon: Right. Yeah, exactly.

Liz: Yeah, so what they say is that they called him on June 5th and said, here's our solution, and that they had narrowed it down to one 12 foot by 12 foot area on a blueprint. And then two days later, he says the treasure has been found. So what they say happened is that he basically had somebody pull it, that he didn't want them to get it. So as soon as they sent him the solve,

he had somebody go out there and get it. So they're saying the treasure was real, but the solve was not, of the person who was getting the credit. So complicated, right?

Devon: Oh, my gosh.

Liz: And that actually would be fucked up.

Devon: Oh, they'd be so shady. That's so not cool. But also, like, guys, I'm sorry, were you, like, teacher's pet trying to show off? Like, "I solved the riddle." Just go find it. Show-- deeds, not words, you dicks.

Liz: I'm like, look, a lot of people have solved a lot of problems from their couch.

Devon: Uh-huh!

Liz: But if you're going to actually go there... If you think you've actually solved it, do it. Otherwise, you're just asking the teacher, well, is it A? Okay, well, is it B? Okay, he want you to get your asses out there.

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: So these guys are frustrated. And they're saying, look, I don't want to sue him. He's our idol. He's not handling this right. And they think he just basically took it and put it in the bank. And I'm like... mmm... I think it sounds like you guys were not ready for it to be done. Now, if they did do that, then if they can have maybe any evidence that this June 5th phone call happened, I would be more won to their side. Because I'm not saying Forrest isn't shady, because this dude is incredibly shady.

Devon: But also, I mean, come on now. What was in it? Alexander Graham Bell and the guy that we don't know about telephones went to try to patent telephones on the same date. You can have inspiration strike the same time it's striking another dude. And he was just two minutes ahead of you guys.

Liz: Yeah. Yeah. Because we're all seething in the same cultural reference pool. They presumably are all reading the same forums. So maybe there were two things that two different people posted that everybody made the connection with, or maybe they weren't actually that close, but they're exaggerating because nobody can prove it.

Liz: So he's been sued before. A couple people have, let's see, Bryan-- well, you know what, I won't name him.

Devon: That's good.

Liz: Somebody has sued him saying it was a written contract, basically, that the poem is a contract. And that means that if I've solved the poem, you have to give me the treasure.

Devon: [laughs]

Liz: And that didn't work.

Devon: Imagine!

Liz: And then another guy sued him and said, "You gave conflicting and misleading clues in order to deliberately misdirect me away from the treasure." So if you are hardcore into this lifestyle... I don't even know what to call it. If you're hardcore into Forrest Fenn treasure life twenty-four sev', then you are not just looking at the poem. You're looking at the book. You are looking at everything else he's ever said, ever done, every photo he's ever posted. The lady who's suing him is kind of infamous for having gone off her solve based on some mildew on a hat in a picture that he posted.

Devon: What?

Liz: Which she said was shaped like a certain state, I think.

Devon: What?

Liz: I'm probably butchering it, but I'm probably not making it weirder.

Devon: I bet you're not making it weirder. Oh, my goodness.

Liz: A lot of legal stuff happening here in terms of, uhhhhh... People trying to use civil courts to shake this out. And of course, we also have the criminal aspect of the people who are falling to their death, say the people who are turning on each other, all this kind of stuff. But what Fenn said at the time, along with the swimming thing is, he said, "Look, I've been there, where there's been hundreds of thousands of people that have invested time, money, heart, soul, blood, sweat, and tears. It's unfair if I call it off now. It's unfair if I pull it." And I'm like, yeah, okay, I see that.

Devon: It does make the five confirmed deaths kinda meaningless to me?

Liz: If the treasure was pulled?

Devon: If the treasure's pulled, yes. And I don't mean that to sound callous.

Liz: Yeah, that's not what they'd want.

Devon: No, I don't know. Yeah, like you said, it's not my loved one, so I don't want to be flippant and say "They died doing what they love." That doesn't bring back a person. But yeah, I would think that if I had died trying to find Forrest Fenn's treasure, I would want him to keep the treasure growing.

Liz: Yeah, I would want it to be solved properly. I do not want him to just be like, "Oh, it's all over. Don't worry about it. Nobody else go out there."

Devon: Right, right.

Liz: No, that would be very disappointing. I will cover a few more pieces and then I'll open it up to discussion, but I think I'll let you get a word in.

Devon: Oh, totally. Well, yeah, one thing I was going to say about the, the whole people going off on these tangents based on his entire life ephemera, not just the poem, but looking for these very specific clues or very, um, what's the word, like, esoteric? Clues just makes, dude, like... If you toast enough pieces of bread, you'll find one that looks like Virgin Mary. So if you look at enough photos, you're going to find some mold that looks like Mississippi, if that's what you're looking for. I just can't-- As someone who's not a treasure hunter at all and also doesn't decode ciphers even a little bit, I still think that I would look at the poem itself and not assume that these other facets of his life... I guess, maybe they could provide additional information, but I don't think you have to fit all of them together to see the whole picture. I think it's just within the poem.

Liz: Yeah, I feel like if he did something really unusual or always used a certain phrase, I might start to think about it. But he's-- Not even Kubrick was actually like that. It's just that human brains love patterns.

Devon: Totally.

Liz: They love patterns, we've said this a million times. And you want to be able to solve it. We want to solve it. That's what so frustrating about this is not getting the solve.

Devon: No, you don't get the solve, yea.

Liz: A treasure is nice, but I want to know what the answer is. And I would like it even more if I'd been working on it forever. So with that in mind, let's talk about how the treasure hunters feel, or what were you going to say?

Devon: I was going to say that it's not even like a magic trick, where a magician never reveals his secrets and that does take the fun out of it once you know. There are some tricks where you're left going, "Okay, don't actually tell me. I don't really want to know." But there are some things where you just-- you need to know the solve, because it's not, it's not about the trick anymore. It wasn't about the illusion. It's about I want to see how this whole thing fits together. I've been thinking about this one levitating woman for 20 years. Just tell me how you effing do it.

Liz: Yeah. Yeah. I'm not enjoying the mystery. There's no enjoyment here.

Devon: Yeah. Yeah. The mystery is not part, yeah.

Liz: Okay, so the treasure hunters in general, besides the ones that are tied up in litigation.

Devon: Okay.

Liz: An estimate by at least one of them has said that a third think it's a hoax, a third think it was never found, and the rest think "It's great, someone found it, let's move on with our lives." And that's from somebody who estimates she's taken 300 trips looking for the treasure.

Devon: Oh, my gosh.

Liz: And she has an interesting perspective. She's gotten very, very positive about this to a degree that I wouldn't have been able to. But here's what she says is, "It's better not to know where it was, because what if you are a hundred percent right and you just missed it?"

Liz: "Or what if you were a hundred percent wrong, and you've been working on this for years, and you weren't even close."

Devon: You're right. Different ballpark.

Liz: "And you wasted so much time." Or yeah, if you were 99 percent of the way there, you still wasted your time. So what she says is "As long as we don't know the location, we can each be right in our own minds."

Devon: That's so sweet.

Liz: And you're like, well, that's interesting, because you can keep trying to solve it because you still don't know where it is. You still don't know if your interpretation of "warm waters" or mine is correct. So you could keep arguing about it.

Devon: Oh, good. And that's what I love to do is argue on the Internet with strangers.

Liz: Well, they're not strangers, though.

Devon: That's right.

Liz: They're a family.

Devon: A family.

Liz: And that came out kinda sarcastically, but any shared interests like that you get to know people. There's people who are saying like, "Look, the treasure hunter's like, I lost my home in a fire and they organized a fundraiser for me." Or they have a thing called Fenn-boree--

Devon: [laughs] Fenn-boree!

Liz: Which sadly this year was cancelled, of course, because of the whole COVID situation. But they're hoping to get together at least one more time in person and swap war stories and enjoy each other's company.

Devon: Sure.

Liz: I mean, that's sweet. That's nice.

Devon: That is, but I mean, hell, even Juggalo fans call themselves family. So like you said, you find your weird thing. You find weird people who like your weird thing and you are chosen family.

Liz: Yeah, you can't say fairer than that. So there's the perspective of, like, "Cool, all right, that was fun. I'm moving on to the next thing." There's people who are like, "Can you just give us something so we know if we were close, because I have no closure? This is so frustrating."

Devon: No closure, right? And he's said before that there have been people who were within how many yards was it. He has said people were tantalizingly close, could have seen it if their eyeballs had just landed in the right part of the forest.

Liz: Yeah, oh, the thing about that, too, is it's not like he published this and then disappeared. He'll talk to you. He'll pick up the phone, apparently, if you're really into this.

Devon: Oh, my gosh.

Liz: So that's got to be its own thing, too. Where you're like, do I have information that nobody else does? Or yknow, maybe that's why they called him as they thought he would be like, "Oh, yeah, you're within a hundred yards" or something. And then they'd plan the trip.

Devon: For sure.

Liz: And instead, all of a sudden he's like, "No, treasure's gone."

Devon: "Sorry, I'm out. No more treasure."

Liz: So how Forrest feels is mixed. He says, "I feel halfway kind of glad, halfway kind of sad, because the chase is over." Okay, yeah.

Devon: All right.

Liz: I can-- I can see that, but also you're getting a lot of publicity. And I'm sure that it hurts so bad.

Devon: Oh, you poor baby. You multimillionaire, full of all of your stolen artifacts, who's getting a whole lot of the attention that you crave? You're kind of sad. Oh, buddy.

Liz: Hide another one! Start another one!

Devon: Start another one is right!

Liz: You've had ten years to come with your sequel to this! What's your sophomore album, man?

Devon: Exactly.

Liz: Lay it on us! When's it dropping?

Devon: Yeah!

Liz: Okay, there's one person in this who we have not talked about how they feel. We've talked about how people who think they almost got it feel. How other hunters feel. How Forrest feels. The person who found it.

Devon: Mmmhmm?

Liz: How do they feel? So we don't know, but we can guess that they are smarter than the average bear, by which I mean, this was not a case of somebody stumbling on it.

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: This is not a case of somebody who decided to get into it for a weekend thing, because here's the complication about this treasure. It varies by state. But in general, when you find treasure on private property, it's not yours.

Devon: Mmhmm.

Liz: It belongs to the person whose private property it is. On federal land, you need a permit if you're going to keep anything you find. And even then, as this article points out, you're going to need lawyers. Because treasure is a legal category.

Devon: I see.

Liz: There is a legal definition of a treasure. There is a legal definition of lost treasure, and Forrest's treasure isn't lost. It wasn't misplaced. It wasn't abandoned. He knows exactly where it was.

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: Hidden is a different thing. It's not from antiquity. It's not like-- there are laws to deal with, you know, what if you find a shipwreck from three hundred years ago, whose is that? Who has rights to it? There's laws about this stuff. So if the owner is known, then the property is supposed to go back to them, which is complicated given that some of his stuff probably should be going back to the people who made it.

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: Now, another thing that a lawyer points out here, Ben Costello, who's a board member of the 1715 Fleet Society, which researches and documents the recovery of shipwrecks.

Devon: Oh, cool.

Liz: And I got to say, I'm like, "Okay, that's cool. I don't want to participate, but I do want to, like, get you guys drunk sometime."

Devon: Absolutely.

Liz: I just want to hear the dirt for one long sangria-laden in the evening. And then you go your way and I'll go mine. Because I bet the dirt is great, and the rest is super dry.

Devon: Totally.

Liz: But thank you for doing this. But he points out, we don't really have laws about who it belongs to if you know who the gold belongs to, but he doesn't want it. That's not usually a situation that comes up, where somebody is like, "No, okay, no, you're right. That is my gold in

the sense that I put it there and I know where it is, but I don't want it." What are you supposed to do with that?

Devon: Is it considered abandoned property at that point? Yeah. Okay, so my thing, and I'm not trying to jump the gun here because I bet you do touch on this, but my whole thing was, if I ever found that treasure, it's just like if I won the lottery, I'd keep my damn mouth shut. I don't want to pay capital gains tax on all these doubloons. Are you kidding me? No, I'm not telling anybody. I'm just going to change them at a rare coin dealer once every decade.

Liz: A little bit at a time? Yeah, you have completely nailed it. So we have a tax attorney in Portland, Oregon, Larry Brant, who says, "I saw the announcement that someone found Fenn's million dollar treasure. And I thought, do they know they're about to pay \$450,000 or so in income taxes?"

Devon: [laughing]

Liz: Yeah, so that's exciting.

Devon: Good point, Larry. Oh, man.

Liz: The moment you find it, you owe taxes on it. Treasure is income!

Devon: Oh, man.

Liz: Treasure is income as far as the IRS is concerned.

Devon: Oh, man.

Liz: So you owe taxes on it. And so if, for instance, you were a very dedicated hunter who wanted to just keep it and enjoy it? Fuck you.

Devon: Oh, totally.

Liz: You can't do that.

Devon: Big Daddy IRA's getting his piece.

Liz: What?

Devon: Big Daddy IRA is getting his piece!

Liz: Big Daddy IRA.

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: Yeah, getting the piece. Just like if you won the lottery, just if you were an NBA player who has to file income taxes every place you play, you have to do it. If it's in New Mexico, there's an extra proportion off the top. If you.. let's see, so you probably are going to do about half of it in taxes. And then what's left, you still need to deal with all the lawsuits. You have to sort out the claim to the property, to sort out whether you're allowed to be there in the first place. This is, as they put it, "It all adds up to an income to headache ratio that doesn't look so good."

Devon: Right.

Liz: Fair.

Devon: Super fair, guys.

Liz: I didn't realize treasure was this complicated. Over the years, the guy who runs the Fenn Treasure website, the guy who posts this stuff, his initial reaction when he got the message from Forrest that was like, "Hey, post this." He's like, "Oh, my God, somebody's spoofing Forrest's email. This is a fake."

Devon: Got you.

Liz: "This isn't actually happening." But he says a couple things. He says, one is that he wants Forrest to put closure on it because people need to know if they were close. The guess that a lot of people have in the community right now is that Forrest is sorting out the legal implications of what he's allowed to say and not say. Because if there's anybody who's very, very used to having everything he says incredibly, tightly scrutinized, and picked apart, it's this guy, right?

Devon: Totally.

Liz: So he may be in a situation, where there's some kind of settlement or deal between him and the finder of like, look, "I'm going to, you know, give you this back. Or I'm going too-- if you reveal this information, you're revealing my identity and putting me at risk and then I'm going to sue you, or I'll take you to court some other way."

Devon: Okay.

Liz: The theory as to why he said, "Hey, I'm going to give you more information" and then didn't, is because the lawyers got involved.

Devon: Sure.

Liz: This guy who does the blog has an idea that I really like. And he says one of the ideas that people on the blog kept circling back to... The treasure hunters who really love this hunt... Is that if they found it, they would take a little something out for themselves, keep it quiet, and put the treasure back without ever saying anything.

Devon: Really?

Liz: Isn't that the best idea?

Devon: Oh, it's like a geocache, but with actual money. That's really cool. Oh, I love that.

Liz: Yeah, because what that means is the hunt is over, but the game can go on.

Devon: Yes.

Liz: So you know! You know you solved it. You know you figured it out. Maybe you even called Forrest. You're like, hey, man, it's down one doubloon.

Devon: Yeah, exactly.

Liz: That was a good time. Catch you on the next go around, whatever you want to say. But other people can still find it. And then also you don't have the tax situation. You don't have the publicity situation. You haven't killed the hunt for everyone else--

Devon: Totally.

Liz: --and made your own life a living hell. You just are like, I have a coin. I have one thing.

Devon: Oh, I love that. I really, really like that.

Liz: I took a picture of me with it. I got a sweet selfie and then went about my way. Now, would I be able to do that as a person who's not already a millionaire? That might be a little challenging.

Devon: No, because a hundred thousand dollars to me, even if \$900,000 of it was paid to the government in taxes, is still a hundred thousand dollars more than I have right now.

Liz: Yeah, you're like, it's money I didn't have. I'm not gonna--

Devon: Yup.

Liz: I don't know. So I think the, the spiritual, the ethical, the trueness to the spirit of the game reflected in just taking a piece is very appealing.

Devon: That's really nice.

Liz: The pragmatist in me doesn't love it. There's also a rumor, and this was like blowing up when I first started researching this episode and then has been drifting away, there was a rumor basically that somebody solved it and then sold the solve at auction for two million dollars.

Devon: Like, on the dark web?

Liz: Well, I could see it, so no. They just put up a website, were basically like: "I solved it. I'm taking closed bids." That would, I think, be the worst one. Because then you're like, the treasure... Now, it is a good one for the person who did the solve, because they get cash.

Devon: Yup.

Liz: And they don't have to put their name out there. They don't have to call Forrest. They don't have to log any doubloons out of anywhere. They can just live their life with their crisp American bills. But that's so unsatisfying that somebody would just pay their way to it, isn't it?

Devon: Absolutely. That's back when I used to buy gold in World of Warcraft. You know? Yeah, it was cool. I got to buy my new mount, but I didn't really earn it. I didn't work for it.

Liz: It doesn't feel the same. It doesn't hit the same.

Devon: No, it's like why you won't play Sims with money cheat sometimes.

Liz: Yeah. I like being able to, to work within the restrictions. It makes more interesting outcomes sometimes, and sometimes I just cheat. But, yeah. So I personally feel like we haven't heard the end of this.

Devon: Yes.

Liz: I do think that it's probably never going to be the big satisfactory, "Here's the annotated poem. Here's all the pictures so you can see what the blaze was and what it meant by don't go

too fast or whatever." It's never going to be that "Everybody gather in the parlor, we're revealing the murderer thing."

Devon: Mmhmm.

Liz: I don't think we're going to get that.

Devon: Okay.

Liz: We will get more. And I think it's become clear I have some strong personal preferences about what fits the spirit of the treasure hunt better. But I want to get your take.

Devon: Yes. Oh, absolutely. I mean, the spirit of the treasure hunt when you were talking about everybody, you take a piece you haven't solved and you leave it for the next person, where like, I said, it's a very expensive. It's a very posh geocache I absolutely adore. I think that is so cool. And that would be my favorite outcome. I hate the idea that somebody could have sold the solution. That's just poor sportsmanship, poor form, Smee, all around, absolutely unacceptable. I don't know one way or another whether or not someone actually found it or if Fenn pulled it. But for sure, I mean, I truly would not tell a fucking soul other than, I guess the guy I live with, because we're, like, kind of married and shit. But I wouldn't tell anyone if I found it. I really don't think I would have. Although... I mean, I realize now, I guess that's stealing, since there are laws around treasure hunting and treasure finding and stuff like that. So I guess call the cops, arrest me, I would have committed thoughtcrime in my heart. I wouldn't say shit, though. What about you?

Liz: [laughing] Sorry, I was just along for the ride, and then I just spun at the end like I'd come out of a water slide into the pool. I'm just thinking about all the things you said. I have a problem with the theory that Fenn pulled it because they called him. Because if Fenn was going to chicken out, then he should have done it five years earlier, or seven years earlier, or something. I feel like the way that he's portrayed, how he feels about it, there has to be a real treasure. This is a guy who believes in real treasure, right?

Devon: Yeah, he seems to.

Liz: And so if you were like, "You know what, I don't want people to have it," why would you not just pull it the day that occurred to you?

Devon: Yeah, exactly.

Liz: You wouldn't leave it out there.

Devon: No.

Liz: You wouldn't-- Why? And that's not to say that greedy people don't stay greedy. They do. But that seems like such a wet fart of an outcome to this project that's 10 years of his life. I don't think he likes this ending. I don't feel like he does. So I don't think he would have just pulled it. I mean, this is like a father and son team who are saying that he pulled it and they spent 15 years looking for it. That's a good story. I feel like Forrest would like that story.

Devon: You would think so. You would think so. Yeah.

Liz: Yeah. My hope is that at some point either he'll be allowed to talk about it or Freedom of Information Act or something will at least confirm the premise of, it was sold or somebody solved it and paid taxes on it or whatever. I hope we get enough to at least rule out some of the things that are on the table, like he never had it out there in the first place. But I guess this is the reality of a treasure hunt, right?

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: Which is that this has so much going for it that so many of the other treasures don't, where they're so fantastical and they're so vague. This was a real treasure in a real spot. I do believe that. I don't know if it was there June 6th, but I think that he put a real treasure out there. I don't think it vibes for me with how he approaches life that he would not have done that. A lot of people looked for it, had a good time. Five people died. That's unfortunate.

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: I think that it reveals that this is always so much more complicated than the stories we want to tell ourselves. That-- hmm. I know I come back to this a lot, but it really made an impression on me the first time. I feel like I don't know how old I was when I saw one of those hippie dippy T-shirt that says, like, "You can't throw things away. There is no away." And it just shows the Earth. Oh, there really isn't. No, there's no away. And this is a, there's no start. There's no-- there's no once upon a time to the story--

Devon: Okay, yes.

Liz: Because it's happening with us. We can't say once upon a time there was a man who had some treasure, because once upon a time there were other people who owned those things.

Devon: Oh.

Liz: And then a man who had other ideas about it ended up with them. So it makes the story complicated on both ends, because you're like, well, who's the hero of this? Who's the protagonist? Who's-- What's the moral of the story and who's the bad guy? And it doesn't shake out so neatly, because I admire that Forrest came up with this way to make the world a little weirder and get people out there. I like treasure hunts. And I like puzzles and mysteries, and escape rooms, and all this kind of stuff. That's really fun. I think it's good to do that. I want to do something like that. But he's a complicated person. And people got really intense about it.

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: I mean, I wonder if he could have gotten the same effect if it were worth \$10,000. Because that's the thing is at a certain point, you would have to go, hey, if my loved one died looking for this and I know that we were living paycheck to paycheck, would my loved one have been out there, if it were \$25,000 worth of treasure or \$5,000?

Devon: Right. You start to do this cost-benefit analysis for yourself and for your people.

Liz: Yeah, there's a tipping point where you're like, what's the amount, and this is something that I deal with in research a lot, what's the amount where it's-- I'm rewarding you for doing it, but I'm not coercing you?

Devon: Got you. Yeah. Oh.

Liz: That's really tricky to find. right.?

Devon: It would be. Yeah. Very situational and very specific to each person I'm sure.

Liz: Yeah. Yeah, it was a ride. I don't think we're going to have a whole episodes worth of update if more stuff comes out about this, but if it really gets exciting, we will. But I hope this was informative, because it's been exciting, even though there was not a new treasure. It's been exciting to pull at all the threads of, what went into this, and what did we expect, and what did we get instead.

Devon: Right. That's also a, um-- I mean, if you want to come up with a moral to it or something like that, you can talk about the... Look how many people became friends because of this or met new like-minded souls. Look how many people got out into the woods. It was like Pokémon GO and Michelle Obama happening at the same time, being like, get your fucking exercise in, you need your steps. Also, does it inspire the next person to do some treasure or something that gets a whole bunch of people moving and sparking dialogue and imagination together?

Liz: Yeah, the dialogue and imagination part of it really counts with me. I mean, obviously, we have a lot to say about all the folks on the forums over the years at their Fenn-borees and stuff. It's fun. It's fun when you're really interested in something and somebody else is. That's all you need in life sometimes.

Devon: Oh, yeah!

Liz: Sometimes it's just like, "I just want to think about this and not the rest of everything else." I feel-- like I worry about some of the treasure hunters because I feel like this was probably a coping mechanism.

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: And it's really unfortunate that that got taken away during a time when a lot of rough stuff is going on.

Devon: Yeah.

Liz: So that part is rough. I hope they're able to find something else that works. But also like, I mean, there's worse hobbies. What if you didn't find the treasure? Can you imagine sitting down next to somebody at a dinner party and you're like, "What do you do for fun?" And they're like, "I hunt treasure. I look for buried treasure."

Devon: How marvelous would that be.

Liz: "Goddamn! Jackpot!"

Devon: Right? Right? I feel like that's when we start talking about our podcast to people, and they're just like, no fucking way. Here is the haunted house tour I went on when I visited this city. And then you just... Kindred spirits, man. Absolutely.

Liz: Yeah, that's what having a Bigfoot sticker on my wallet is like. I've never gotten - well, I won't say never. It's rare to get a boring response to how people feel about Bigfoot.

Devon: For sure.

Liz: People aren't usually tepid about that.

Devon: For sure.

Liz: So it's interesting.

Devon: We have a metal plaque that I got from, oh, gosh, the name of the shop just now escaped me. But they're really cool. But anyway, it's a beware of dog plaque, but it says "Beware of the ghosts."

Liz: Yeah, you sent me one.

Devon: I sent you one.

Liz: I have one on my wall.

Devon: It makes me incredibly happy. I have it out on the front-- right by the front door where you would have a "Beware of dog." And that is something that every single new person comes comments on. And not a single person has been like, "Oh, that's cool." But half of them have said, "Do you really have ghosts? Are there really ghosts in there?"

Liz: I'm gonna put mine outside, too!

Devon: Oh, man.

Liz: It's hard with the vinyl siding.

Devon: Today was really cute, because the guy goes, "Is that your last name?" And I was like, "Is what my last name?" And he goes, "Ghost." And I was like, "What, beware of the ghosts? This is like, beware of the Kelleys. No, baby boy. This is not..."

Liz: "You can't come in. We're ghosts." What?

Devon: Yeah, I love that. I'm going to change my last name to it immediately. Thank you for the thought, but that is the most random, wild first impression to that door plaque I have received.

Liz: But always good. Always good.

Devon: Always good. Yeah, like you said.

Liz: It reminds me of this ad that I've seen on Facebook for David Sedaris doing something. And I don't remember if it was about writing or whatever, but he said that he had a question that he always asked people because he always got an interesting response, which was, "When was the last time you touched a monkey?"

Liz: And he went into a story about a woman who her response was, "Why, can you smell it on me?" Dang, that conversation alone paid for every time you asked that question.

Devon: Absolutely, it did.

Liz: That's amazing.

Devon: Very much.

Liz: So I guess the moral of the story for me is that if you're having fun with something and you're being a good sport, like that woman who was like, "Good for them, I had a blast. I'm glad you solved it." Even the people who are like, "Hey, this was really fun. I could do with some closure. That would be nice. You don't owe me anything, but that would be nice." I feel for them, because I'm like, yeah, you know what? You engaged your mind. You made friends. You got out there. You did something creative and interesting. And I know that I personally should spend less time on the couch watching Youtube. And every minute that you spent dealing with this treasure hunt was engaging in your world in a way that not a lot of people have. So good for all the treasure hunters, I guess, is what I have to say and just sidestep all the stuff about the legality of the origins. Good for treasure hunting, good for seeking something and setting yourself to a task and letting your happy little monkey brain have a puzzle to play with.

Devon: Oh, that's... Absolutely.

Liz: Self care.

Devon: Self care, for sure. That is a way that I self care, looking for treasure, give your little monkey brain something to go find in the woods, and you are going to find so many wonderful things.

Liz: That's a really good note to end on, so I'm going to wrap us up if that's okay.

Devon: Oh, okay, please do.

Liz: All right, you can come find the treasures that we are at Twitter, Facebook.

Devon: Oh!

Liz: Yeah, I was waiting for you, actually.

Devon: Oh, my!

Liz: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We are on Ouijabroads.com as ever during this, what is it the thing they're always saying the emails? "In this unprecedented time."

Devon: "We're innovating and reimagining ways to reach out to you."

Liz: You may notice that sometimes you get an episode every two weeks and sometimes every three weeks. And I really appreciate you bearing with us for that. Particularly, I'd also want to thank the patrons for their support at this time, patreon.com/ouijabroads.

Devon: Yes.

Liz: I don't know. Do you have any episodes that you're thinking about doing? I don't know why I suddenly decided to throw that to you.

Devon: No, my goodness. Well, there is my lawyer buddy, James wants me to look into the \$10,000 rock. And he and I emailed some city officials to try to find a little bit more information and have not heard back from them. So, James, if you're listening, I haven't forgotten about it.

It's just that we might have to do the \$10,000 rock episode without big government telling me the answer to some questions that he and I had. Other than that, you know I am always looking for ways to introduce you to weird, wonderful animals that we share this Earth with.

Liz: That's right. That's right. The Gopher Corporation! What's it called?

Devon: A Gopher Corporation, like the Trans-Alaskan Gopher... Yeah, I can't remember and I'm not going to butcher it by guessing.

Liz: Right, because I said a thing and that's now sitting in the brain place where the actual thing is.

Devon: Where the actual thing is. Yes, so that's another one that I want to tell. What about you? What else are you thinking about?

Liz: I have been reading *Trying Home*, which is a book about the anarchist utopia in Puget Sound. And I think that's the main one that's on my radar now that we've got *Forrest* updated, because we've had a fair amount of treasure back to back. Yes, I think that's where I'm vibing. It's probably the next one or two for me will be about interesting historical people or communities or things like that.

Devon: Oh, surprise, surprise. Interesting historical people or communities, not like that is your wheelhouse, my darling. You are so good at it.

Liz: [laughs] I hope that you enjoyed this update. I hope that the next update I can bring you is on D. B. Cooper, or Raleigh Faulkner, or something, because apparently they're just-- they're wrapping up all the, all the plots. They ran out of episodes for whatever we're doing here. And everything's just kinda getting squared away.

Devon: Well, that, my darlings, means that you need to go out and create new content for us. And I'm not saying do something illegal or it's going to get your block knocked off, because, gosh, dang it, I can't afford it if you lawsuit me. But you could make some new fodder if the old stories get... What am I trying to say? Get solved, if the old stories get solved.

Liz: If too much gets solved, our weird levels will drop below appropriate meters.

Devon: Oh, my gosh.

Liz: Or our metrics, our target metric, so we really got to keep this in mind.

Devon: Yeah, please.

Liz: All right, well, folks, with that in mind, here's what I'm going to need you to do to keep our metrics up is you've got to live weird-

Devon: If you're going to do it, you've got to die weird.

Liz: And stay weird. Thank you for listening.

Devon: Thank you for listening.

Liz: That was fun.

Devon: Oh, that was so good.

[theme music fades in, plays to end]