

Welcome to Spooktown- Caganer Christmas Special

Cast:

Ed Easton

Kath Hughes

[Welcome to Spooktown Theme Song with a Christmas Twist]

Ed: Pop a sleigh bell on baby! I squat over here, I'm not in the mix.

Kath: I just think just get up front, I think.

Ed: I'd love nothing more than to be up front but the caganer is always like hang around in the back. He's not squatting front and centre.

Kath: Well when I used to draw the scene as a kid he was always like next to the manger.

Ed: When I used to draw chickens they were as big as houses. Like when I used to draw as a kid it doesn't mean that I was right.

Kath: Oh no.

Ed: [Laughs]

Kath: Oh no [laughs].

Ed: Yeah. So I'm going to squat in the back.

Kath: OK.

Ed: I've got a fake poo for in case I can't proper poo.

Kath: It's a proper, don't treat it as like...

Ed: I'm just saying if I can't.

Kath: Yeah but you shouldn't treat it as an amateur production. Just treat it as you would if we were you know doing this on the West End or wherever.

Ed: Yeah, yeah. The Nativity on the West End, yeah.

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Kath: The Nativity on the West End.

Ed: Yeah.

Kath: So you'd shit there.

Ed: Yeah.

Kath: So shit here.

Ed: OK.

Kath: Respect the people of you know of Spooktown.

Ed: Of Catalan.

Kath: Of Catalan yeah.

Ed: OK.

Kath: I'm playing the baby Jesus.

Ed: Sweet, tight, yeah. You've been gunning for that for.

Kath: Waiting for my ass to be slapped.

Ed: Oh no [laughs].

Kath: [Laughs]

Ed: [Laughs] OK. Apart from that have you had any nightmares this week?

Kath: [Laughs] You know what? I had another sort of comedy related one where we were late for a gig again.

Ed: Yes.

Kath: And we had to buy a load of props embarrassingly because we can't be funny without props.

Ed: That happens all the night.

Kath: Yeah so this was a very real nightmare.

Ed: Mm.

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- Kath: But the sort of extra add-on of the nightmare was that every shop we went to was just the same for the shop. Like every shop.
- Ed: What?
- Kath: Oh brilliant there's a Boots there, so we get there and it was just the sign for Boots.
- Ed: But no shop?
- Kath: No shop. Just the sign for Boots.
- Ed: Oh.
- Kath: And the sign for whatever else we need to go.
- Ed: TK yeah.
- Kath: TK yeah. No shops. And we was running late for this gig and it wasn't a nice feeling.
- Ed: No it's horrible.
- Kath: I woke up in a panic.
- Ed: We're not gigged in fucking yonks as well, I don't why you're...
- Kath: Yeah I don't know why this is happening.
- Ed: Hmm.
- Kath: I don't want to get into my brain so.
- Ed: [Laughs] Just slap my ass and call it a day.
- Kath: [Laughs] How about you? Any nightmares this week?
- Ed: Yeah. Yeah a fucking massive one.
- Kath: Yeah?
- Ed: Yeah. You know my thing of like I want to be able to look up at my Christmas tree.

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Kath: Yeah.

Ed: It's got to be taller than me.

Kath: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ed: Which is fine when I was like three [laughs].

Kath: Yeah.

Ed: Now I'm 6'2" yeah.

Kath: Yeah, yeah.

Ed: But success every year so far and then this year I got one and I was looking up and it was perfect, it was really, really good but my partner was worried that it wasn't going to fit in. And I was like, 'Well I can just chop the bottom off'.

Kath: Mm-hmm.

Ed: 'And then it will fit in and it will be fine'. So chopped the bottom off.

Kath: Oh no, have you chopped too much off?

Ed: It's tiny yeah it's tiny.

Kath: You chopped too much off.

Ed: Yeah it's shit. Like I'm looking directly at it like it's up here. Like we're on the same page. Whereas I want to be like in awe of it, looking up like whoa my God. Whereas now I'm like looking across at it, like I'm trying to pull in a bar.

Kath: You could just always look at it on your knees.

Ed: That's the worst advice you've ever given me.

Kath: You're welcome [laughs].

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Ed: [Laughs] I suppose I could always just crawl around in my kitchen on my hands and knees. Then I'll be in awe of everything Kath.

Kath: [Laughs] Yeah you would. Yeah it would nice.

Ed: I hope you don't get your ass slapped.

Kath: [Laughs]

Ed: Yeah I said it.

Kath: You know what? Genuinely so do I. I didn't pick the role, the role just came to me.

Ed: I've got a funny story to tell you by the way.

Kath: Yeah?

Ed: It's not funny, I don't know why I lied with that. I've got a story to tell you. So I went to you know the library.

Kath: Oh yeah.

Ed: And that fucking lunatic...

Kath: [Laughs] Yeah, yeah, yeah I know him.

Ed: Henry?

Kath: Henry, Henry? Yeah.

Ed: I was like 'I'd love to learn a little bit more about bloody Spooktown law if I may?'

Kath: Mm-hmm.

Ed: And he was like 'Well did you hear about that Christmas yonks ago?'

Kath: Yeah.

Ed: And I said 'No'. And he said 'Well here's a book'.

Kath: [Laughs] He's always doing that. He's always going 'Well here's a book'.

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Ed: [Clears throat] I've got a story to tell you.

Kath: Oh yeah?

Ed: Yeah. So do you know the library, have you ever been to the library?

Kath: I've never been in, I only sort of know it via you.

Ed: Right, right you should go. You can go on the computers there and stuff.

Kath: Can you?

Ed: Yeah it's not just books.

Kath: Can you?

Ed: Yeah it's not just books.

Kath: OK. That's so cool OK.

Ed: They've got a kid's corner. It doesn't matter. Went there, spoke to the library brarian?

Kath: Librarian yeah.

Ed: Spoke to the librarian Henry.

Kath: Yeah, how is he?

Ed: He's very Christmas-y.

Kath: Great.

Ed: Very Christmas-y. Um, hammered on eggnog.

Kath: Eww.

Ed: 8am.

Kath: Eww.

Ed: Very Christmas-y in a bad way.

Kath: Yeah.

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Ed: Yeah. Went in there. Went to the history section. Found the Christmas book of Christmas history of Spooktown.

Kath: Great.

Ed: The Christmas History of Spooktown.

Kath: Has to be done, yeah, yeah.

Ed: A History unabridged. And I found this brilliant story. Do you want me to read it out to you now?

Kath: Yeah I'd love it.

Ed: OK.

[Interim Music and atmospheric spooky background noises]

'twas the night before and hundreds of creatures were slithering and gambling and desperately trying to find shelter from the feeling of doom that had lightly placed its calloused hand over Spooktown.

Can you get off your phone?

Kath: I'm going to make notes.

Ed: On the fucking [laughs].

Kath: I'm going to make notes on the style that you're doing.

Ed: I've just started.

Kath: I know.

Ed: And you're already on your phone?

Kath: I literally opened my notes to make notes on your story.

Ed: You've got notes on now, after I caught you.

Kath: It was on notes. It was on notes. Do you know what I was doing? I was putting it on Airplane mode because I didn't want to disturb your story [laughs].

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Ed: Don't call it my story like it's my 'Oh you're little story'.

Kath: You're telling me a tale and I'm going to listen to it and I'm going to make notes. I just forgot my notebook.

Ed: OK, I'll put my phone on airplane mode as well.

Kath: I'm using technology.

Ed: 'twas the night before Christmas Kath and hundreds of creatures were slithering and gambling and desperately trying to find shelter from the feeling of doom that had lightly placed its calloused hand over Spooktown. Spooktown if you don't know, was the name given to the houses people found in a vile patch of mud that smelled like old newborn baby. Nobody knew who built them or why they were there or what they were made from. But people moved in anyway, during the great crossing at the beginning of history. They would hammer nails into the fleshy walls to put up coat hooks. They would attach handles to the to the tooth-like doors. Spooktown they say is the devil experiencing itself. Now, 'twas the night before Christmas, sure, but nobody in Spooktown knew that because Christ was nothing more than a twinkle in God's eye at the time, a soft jingle in his bells.

Kath: [Snorts]

Ed: Christmas was still a year off. Christmas eve was just the night before December the 25th, or December the 24th as they used to say. And while nobody knew about Christmas or Christ or hope or forgiveness, they knew about evil and dread and loss and vengeance. And in Spooktown that night there was a certain sense. A sense of something coming like acid reflux or when a dog barks before you hear the postman coming to attack you from behind. [Dog barking] The air was thick with anticipation and anxiety. And rightly so, something was on its way. A fury, a curse, an albatross around the neck of the world. In the centre of Spooktown there lurked an inn, full to the brim with patrons but a derelict playground in its

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silence. All ears pricked in their beds to the sound of hooves stumbling through the mud path that softly pulled apart the east part of town from the west, like meat from bone. The hooves approached the inn and stopped outside its front doors. There was a solitary knock that shook the windows in their frames. Shook the sanity in the minds of men... and women.

Kath: [Chuckles]

Ed: Old Yosser the in-keep, drunk on homebrew and loneliness stumbled to the entrance and opened it. There is no room, the inn is full. Spooktown is full. Out in the darkness Yosser saw the outline of a woman mounted upon a skeletal thin beast of burden draped in a ragged old cloak. And a tired old blind man, filthy rag wrapped around his eyes, leading the stinking brute to shelter. That's about the horse not the woman.

Kath: [Snorts]

Ed: From far out past the travellers, gurgling up from ancient barrows and carried aloft by the smell of an open mouth came one word. 'Room' Any patron of the inn who was listening out, vomited into their mouths at the sound of the voice. Those who had turned their backs and fallen into a restless sleep silently wept and had horrific nightmares about huge mental birds full of people falling from the sky. And bell end shaped clouds killing millions.

Kath: [Laughs] Made a note of that.

Ed: [Laughs] Yosser who had aged ten years in a second at hearing the word, stumbled and grabbed onto a chair for balance. We have a pigsty out back but there is no room here, I'm sleeping in the bar in a chair otherwise I would have given you my room. The blind man bowed his head an inch and led the creature around the back to the pigsty. Yosser, aching and full of dread followed. Perhaps they would require some water or bedding. Neither of which he could supply but it's good to appear helpful.

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The rain pouring down from limbo had a made a pool of the pigsty floor, two sad pigs half drowned in the mud tried to move out of the way of the dark steed as it entered the sty. Once the sty was occupied Yosser looked to the sky above and there was a strange absence of stars. A huge black circle, darker than night. As endless as space. Staring into it was like staring into the black eye of a snake that was devouring you. Yosser would have stayed there until he died if he hadn't heard another knock at the inns door. [Bang] At the entrance of the inn, stood three cloaked and hooded figures. They were impossible to look at. They shivered like they were trying to be in two places at once. Two red points of light shone out from under each hood with the intensity of intelligence and antlers stabbed out from under them like tusks. In such a manner that made it feel like they had grown violently overnight. Yosser clearly heard the word baby [Baby, baby, baby] ring out three times from the figures. But the word was made up of the sound of babies crying. He led them to the pigsty too. Mind separating from body. The three phasing creatures offered their hands at the door to the pigsty. Far below the dark circle had blacked out the sky. One held the black fetid oil. The second a collection of decaying teeth. And the fourth hand crumbled into the third, the gift of flesh. Is that a...

Kath: Yeah.

Ed: Yeah OK.

Kath: It's really great.

Ed: The blind man greeted them. The facade of a cordial host, grotesque imitation bowing and smiling and hurrying through. He then looked at Yosser through the fabric around his blind eyes, he looked at him and beckoned him in. Inside the woman was still on the horse. And as the room filled with occupants, the horse began to rise on its hind legs, slowly, not like a horse rearing, more like a woman bracing herself. The rider slid

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forward toward the head of the creature and the fabrics fell aside. It's not a woman on a horse but one whole creature. Two legs and two arms instead of four legs. A horse-like head. And a second head on the end of a massive leather and bone sticking out its back. The mouth of a second head, the woman's head Yosser couldn't help but think, was splitting open too wide and something was coming out of it as the creature's body undulated. The three new visitors were oscillating more wildly than before. Oscillating with joy and greed. The creature was rippling, forcing the thing out of the worm writhing on its back. Out of its mouth a human baby silent, pink. It landed softly in a manger, rolling like a chicken's egg. The abominable creature collapsed in on itself an empty costume used up. The three visitors turned to the blind man and shook his hand. They leave happy. The blind man turned to Yosser bowing. As he stood back to attention he let out a terrifying scream as his chest burst open and a demonic creature stepped out like a businessman squeezing through the tube doors in rush hour London. Cloven hooves slipped on the mud pool. Dark red skin surrounded dark red eyes. And above the horns a bright burning ring of fire. The angel picked up the baby and slapped its ass. The baby started crying as it was handed to Yosser. [Crying baby] 'Practice for next year' whispered the angel. 'You can have this one'.

[Interim Music]

Yeah.

Kath: That was great.

Ed: That was that one.

Kath: That's great.

Ed: A little practise of the birth of baby Jesus.

Kath: Yeah really good.

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[Interim Music]

Ed: What do you think?

Kath: I loved it.

Ed: Did you?

Kath: Yeah and it kind of makes sense actually.

Ed: What?

Kath: Just that that happened in Spooktown I guess.

Ed: Oh yeah well fair yeah.

Kath: It makes loads of sense. It really stacks up.

Ed: [Laughs] So you don't have any thoughts on it?

Kath: Let's see, let's see what my.

Ed: My thoughts are always, who wrote it?

Kath: Who wrote it?

Ed: Like who's the perspective from?

Kath: Yeah. Yeah who was the fly on the wall there?

Ed: Is it Yosser?

Kath: I don't know. I don't get that vibe from Yosser.

Ed: Yosser is the name of a goat we had when I was growing up.

Kath: You had a goat?

Ed: Yeah. I think it was before I was alive.

Kath: So you didn't have a goat?

Ed: Fuck off. Your family had a goat.

Kath: The family had a goat?

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- Ed: Yeah it must have been because my brother had friends and that and you don't have friends at three right?
- Kath: I don't know. I don't remember being three.
- Ed: Anyway it died obviously [laughs].
- Kath: [Laughs] It's three years old.
- Ed: [Laughs] It's still alive.
- Kath: It would be like 40 now.
- Ed: Yeah.
- Kath: Yeah Jesus Christ, let's talk about that instead. No I really liked it, it defo stacks up.
- Ed: Great. So I mean I suppose it's already in Spooktown law isn't it? Because it's in the library. So we don't have to really worry about it. And there's no one to kill.
- Kath: Yeah these library tales I'm just assuming this is totally already Spooktown law so.
- Ed: Yeah.
- Kath: We can't really question it. Just sort of blindly believe it.
- Ed: Happy days, yeah.
- Kath: You read it really nicely.
- Ed: Thanks it felt like I got a bit bored about halfway through. But hopefully we'll be able to spruce it up in the edit.
- Kath: [Laughs]
- Ed: Put some bells on it. Put some sleigh bells on it so it's like oh yeah it is Christmas.
- Kath: [Laughs] Yeah.
- Ed: Pop a sleigh bell on it baby!
- Kath: [Laughs]

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Ed: Great well I'm going to pop a squat over here. I worry that if people listen to this, they're going to think I've made this pooping man in the nativity up when it's actually a thing called the caganer from Barcelona/Catalonia area. I'm just very worried that if somebody is listing to this they'll be like that poop stuff is insane. It's not insane it's tradition.

Kath: Yeah.

Ed: And the tradition is not insane.

Kath: If it's a tradition it's not insane and they can just look it up.

Ed: Nobody's Googling while they're listening to this. It's too dense [laughs].

Kath: [Laughs]

Ed: You've got to concentrate 100%.

Kath: I think a lot of people are on their phones when they're listening to this Ed.

Ed: Trying to turn it off. Why is this on?

Kath: Why?

Ed: Oh God it's like that U2 album.

Kath: U2 album [laughs].

Ed: [Laughs]

Kath: Right OK well I'm going to sort of try and fit into the manger. It's weird they've made it baby size.

Ed: Baby sized manger yeah.

Kath: And they've been like 'Can you play the Baby Jesus?' and like sure. Give me a proper bed. But no.

Ed: Sorry about that.

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Kath: It's all right, I'm just going to sort of try and wedge.

Ed: No I'm really sorry, I'm the one that sourced the manger.

Kath: Oh for...

Ed: Yeah.

Kath: All right well yeah you should be sorry then .

Ed: Yeah I'm very.

Kath: Is it weird if I just lay beside it? Will anyone question that?

Ed: Yeah but maybe it will be that fun thing where everyone is like, and the way she lay next to the manger.

Kath: Yeah, yeah, yeah, they'll be like...

Ed: That's capitalism or whatever.

Kath: ...why did they make that decision?

Ed: Yeah.

Kath: Yeah great OK I'm just going to do that then. Just going to plank next to it.

Ed: OK. God do you remember planking?

Kath: Yeah it was a think for a bit wasn't it? Not the exercise the actual planking.

Ed: Yeah.

Kath: Yeah plank punking.

Ed: The further we get from the 2000s the more we're like oh boy.

Kath: [Laughs] Oh wow what a wild ride.

Ed: I thought pop punk was like the weirdest thing to come out of it. No, no, no. Planking parkour.

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Kath: Yeah.

Ed: Parkour taken seriously, crazy.

Kath: Yeah oh my God.

Ed: Crazy. Crazy.

Kath: Yeah well the audience are going to start coming in so we should probably. Do you want to get in the corner?

Ed: Yeah.

Kath: Great. I'm just going to lie down here.

Ed: Merry Christmas.

Kath: Did we sell any tickets?

Ed: Oh [laughs] No.

Kath: This is just for us then.

Ed: Call it a tech run, call it a tech run.

Kath: Tech run, yeah.

Ed: The end. Merry Christmas one and all.

Kath: Merry Christmas [laughs] I'm so sorry.

[Welcome to Spooktown Theme Music- with a Christmas Twist]

[End of Podcast]