THE PROTECTORS OF THE WOOD

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The Protectors of the Wood Podcast

The destruction of our planet is becoming real life.
Remember that everyone can make a difference and every action counts!

This podcast tells the story of misfit teenagers, struggling to band together and help our world through this crisis.

Episode #66: We're Not for Sale as of Today, We're Living, Living

Narrator: The sound of the band tuning up attracted the excited crowd to the back door. People pushed to get in line, had their tickets ready for Phoebe, and streamed into the coffee shop. Wyndaman arrived to speak to Terrence, and they stepped aside for a conference of the lawyers. It was all Phoebe could do to check the tickets and let people in one at a time. The line stalled whenever she had to turn ticketless people away. It was stressful to hold them back. Suddenly Nico appeared next to her.

Nico: Here comes the kid.

Narrator: Phoebe looked down at Nico.

Nico: Remember what I said? He's coming.

Narrator: Phoebe looked up, checked two tickets, and let the people pass. The next boy struggled to find his ticket, turning out his pockets. Phoebe saw someone approach from off the line and try to slip by on her right. She threw out her arm and caught him around the waist. In the jarring collision she heard the muffled clink of glass.

Phoebe: Hey!! Get in line. Where's your ticket?

Kid: I lost it.

Phoebe: So what's your name? I got the list here.

Narrator: The boy had straight black hair and a baby face partly hidden by a baseball cap. He seemed like a thirteen or fourteen year old, maybe fifteen at most. He wore an olive green army jacket with pockets, way too big for the skinny boy. Phoebe was thinking:

Phoebe: Look at the pain in his eyes…

Kid: I just want to talk to my friend. If I don't I'll get in trouble. I won't be two minutes.

Phoebe: Sorry. Can't let you.

Narrator: The boy glared in frustration and took one step away, and suddenly turned and darted back under Phoebe's arm. She grabbed his jacket as he went by. As he dragged her forward she grabbed him with her other hand around the knee. He went down, and as they scrambled up a small empty bottle of vodka fell out of one of his pockets. Phoebe pulled him up close.

Phoebe: I'd like to know who gave you that, and why.

Narrator: In a panic he looked wildly at the crowd around him and swung at Phoebe, hitting her hard, knuckles on the cheekbone, and flew off like a streak into the darkness. She staggered. The crowd swarmed around her.

Crowd: Hey, what happened? She's hurt! Go after him… etc.

Sound: all crowd noise, band has stopped tuning up.

Stephanie: All right everyone, just back up. Don't worry, Phoebe, I've got the door. Abby, take care of her. Eddy, get Sammy with a first aid kit.

Narrator: Phoebe felt Abby hold her around the waist and walk her into the women's room. A woman backed away from the sink. Phoebe looked in the mirror and saw the red welt on her cheek. The skin was split on the cheekbone and blood was trickling down her face. She washed and stopped the bleeding. Abby's face was next to her, and their eyes locked in the mirror. The intensity of that look was overwhelming.

Abby: (a hissing whisper): They're going to pay for this. And you're going to help me.

Narrator: Over the next fifteen minutes Phoebe was given a place of honor in an easy chair near the band, and all the attention she could handle. Sammy appeared with the first aid kit and applied ointment, closed the cut with butterfly strips and a bandage, and told her to go to the hospital for stitches.

Phoebe: No. I'm staying.

Sammy: You need stitches. I'll call 911, just watch me.

Chief Santiago: I'm already here! I'll drive her to the hospital after I get a statement.

Phoebe: Tell the band to start the concert! Stephanie, tell them to play!

Narrator: Penny rushed in, gave her a kiss on the forehead, and backed away. Terrence and Wyndaman showered her with apologies for leaving her alone.

Gilligan: You're hurt, Phoebe. Get the stitches, and take tomorrow off.

Phoebe: No.

Narrator: Out of the corner of her eye, Phoebe noticed Jerome Peabody leaning against a wall in the shadow. He stared at her with look of panic, a desperate man caught in a trap. He tore his eyes away and disappeared in the milling crowd. A rumor spread that the concert would be cancelled, but Stephanie announced the band, and after a brief tune up they began to play. (Opening guitar solo then Thunder Rolling? The Long Road? On a Day I See Comin? Heart in My Hand?) Phoebe requested a talk with Chief Santiago outside. The Chief steered her through the crowd, took names of witnesses to the fight, and pocketed the pint of vodka. Out on the lawn in the dark they set up two folding chairs. They sat in silence for a few minutes as Phoebe tried to calm her flood of thoughts and feelings.

Sound: Song in background

Chief Santiago: So… This is pleasant. A little cooler out here. I'm glad we've got a free moment.

Phoebe: There's an awful lot to say…

Narrator: Nico and Geo suddenly appeared next to them as if they had sprouted from the grass. In the shadowy darkness they resembled elves.

Nico: Ready to Report.

Narrator: He stood up straight and saluted. The chief was startled.

Chief Santiago: What the…?

Geo: (whispering) Maybe she's busy.

Nico: (strong comeback) Not too busy for what we got!

Phoebe: Nico and Geo, meet Daniel Santiago, Middletown's chief of police, known as the chief for short.

Nico: Hi, Chief. We met before, but no need to go into that.

Narrator: He turned to Phoebe.

Nico: We got business. Should we report here?

Phoebe: Yes. Give us all the details.

Narrator: Phoebe turned to the chief and whispered,

Phoebe: Scouts. The best.

Narrator: Nico paused to get the full attention of his audience.

Nico: Well… we were watching the watchers, keeping track of all of them, when we noticed the tall new watcher move over to the white van, and look through the fence.

Chief Santiago: The watchers?

Nico: Men watching the coffee shop. They been there since it was light. Five of them, now six. They moved back when you came out, but some of them are still there.

Chief Santiago: I see. Very interesting.

Nico: We kept an eye on him, the tall, thin one who gave the kid the bag. After the kid punched you the tall man started cursing, and then knocked on the window of the van.

Narrator: Nico tossed his head to indicate the van past the hole in the fence.

Nico: A guy in uniform stepped out onto the street and they started talking.

Chief Santiago: What kind of uniform?

Nico: Like brownish gray with stiff hats like Parks Police, but light colored.

Chief Santiago: I see. Go on.

Nico: They started arguing…

Chief Santiago: Go on, what did they say?

Narrator: The chief was on the edge of his seat.

Nico: The tall guy wanted them to stop the concert, empty the place, and search for something. He was like this:

Narrator: Nico stood up tall and lowered his voice.

Nico: I told the governor I want action! Do you hear me, Bloward, action! There's crimes being committed in there! Crimes! And what are you doing, Bloward? Nothing! I'll have a word with the governor…

Narrator: Geo laughed. The chief and Phoebe looked at each other and both mouthed the word, *Morphy.*

Nico: So the other guy stands there nice and cool and says, 'That's *Captain* Bloward to you. And I have my orders. My boss will want to know all about that assault we just witnessed.

Phoebe: Whoa!

Narrator: She slapped Nico's hand.

Nico: So the tall guy says, 'I know what your orders are. Follow them all, or I'll have you fired. Do you hear me? Fired!' Then the policeman said, 'I'll close in as people leave, and search the place afterward. You'll find the girl. We got the place surrounded.

Narrator: They paused for a moment, and heard the end of a song, and cheers and applause. Then a roll of thunder tolled in the distance, and the band tore into another song. (Thunder Rolling)

Phoebe: So what do we do now, Chief?

Chief Santiago: You boys deserve a medal, but that will have to wait. Right now we've got to use our advantages. We have two lawyers at the back door, and I'm going to tell them what to expect. I'm sure a van of those state police are in front as well. I'm going to get that Evansville reporter of the scene. I don't know what this business with the girl is about, but I'll see that a lawyer stands with any girl those intruders say a word to, both in front and in back. Those lawyers will cover this area until it's all over, if I have to pay them myself. Now let's get moving.

Narrator: The Chief stood up and shook hands with the boys.

Chief Santiago: You two boys watch the concert now, and let me handle this. But you've been a big help. I'll remember you, and find a proper way to thank you.

Narrator: He gave the boys a little bow of respect, and accompanied Phoebe back to the back door, and whispered,

Chief Santiago: Well, you saved my skin. That incident ties their hands. Now I'm doing my proper job, and they can't do anything about it. Public opinion will be on our side. I can't wait to tell Wilcox.

Phoebe: I wish the Mayor were here.

Chief Santiago: It's too controversial. And by the way, this conversation never happened. Let's go, we've got things to do.
Narrator: He climbed the steps and began whispering to Terrence and Wyndaman. Phoebe was thinking:

Phoebe: So much for driving me to the hospital.

Narrator: She took a moment to lean against the back of the coffee shop and ponder the situation. It seemed that most everything was now taken care of by a pretty strong group. The Chief, Sammy, Terrence, Wyndaman, Luis, Gilligan, Stephanie's reporter uncle, they were all on the case. She, Phoebe, could relax. But her thoughts drifted back to Abby's fierce look in the bathroom mirror.

Phoebe: What was it Abby said? 'they're going to pay for this, and you're going to help me'. Hmm… that's my job now. But what does Abby have in mind?

Narrator: Phoebe leaned against the wall and let the time go by… Her head swam. The wound had begun to throb.

Phoebe: I should have been icing it, but it doesn't matter. Whatever Abby has planned, I'll be with her. That's my commitment, my fate, and I'm on the way, come what may. Everything is at stake, and I'll have my chance to be someone, and make a difference. 'This is your time,' the Green Man said.

Narrator: Something attracted her attention. She noticed that the music had stopped, and wondered if the concert was over.

Phoebe: Yes! There, in the shadows! Those are men… moving… three, four, five men in those gray-looking uniforms, in a semi-circle… the music, it's started again, I know that tune, it's Jeremy singing, the cowbell, the anthem, they closed the last concert with this song….

Living

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A E
Something's happening I can see
F#- D
Didn't used to feel like this to be me
A E A E
I'm living, living
A E
No use to put me back on a shelf
F# - D
I can move all by myself
A E A E
I'm living, living

CHORUS
D E
Ready set, Let's go!
A D
It's happening right here my friend now don't you know
B- D E

D E
We are coming down the line
A D
Whenever that may be well, we are right on time
B- D E
We are something you just gotta see

A E
You don't wanna buy this toy Jack
F#- D

You just might want your money back
A E A E
We're living, living

A E

F#- D
Got a life to live and we're on our way
A E A E
We're living, living
D E
Ready, set, Let's go!

A D
It's happening right here my friend, Now don't you know
B- D E
It's really, really something just to be
D E
We are coming down the line
A D
Whenever that may be well we are right on time
B- D E
We are something you just gotta see
A E
Where we come from we don't know
F#- D
Just join in and here we go

A E A E A E A E A
We're living, living, living! Living!