Sporadic Phantoms Episode 3: The Allegation

(theme music plays)

ROBIN

Welcome to Sporadic Phantoms. My name is Robin.

STEVIE

I'm Stevie.

KYLE

And I'm Kyle.

ROBIN

We can't tell you our last names, out of fear of retaliation.

(music change)

In our last episode, we looked into attending an event held by The Sharing. We got in touch with one of their representatives, who very enthusiastically told me about their upcoming events, including an in person chapter meeting.

PAMELLA

(clip) We will be adding a whole bunch of openings for our chapter meeting this Saturday at noon!

ROBIN

Unfortunately, we were obligated to attend an inane speed dating zoom event first.

SPEED DATING MAN

(clip) See, you have to have an elevating IQ to fully understand it.

KYLE

Which wasn't really that big of a deal. And then we attended the chapter meeting that weekend, which started off with everyone going through some kind of supposed COVID detector.

MACHINE

(clip)

(scanning)

Not Detected.

STEVIE

We met some of The Sharing's leaders, including Hedrick Chapman.

CHAPMAN

(clip) We have much more to offer than what you're seeing here today. *Much* more.

STEVIE

I discovered that my niece, Maddy, and my sister, Nicole, were involved with The Sharing.

MADDY

(clip) I always come to The Sharing now. I have lots of friends here. My friend's dat runs the meetings.

KYLE

We also met Elizabeth Li, who is a kind hearted, down to earth person who teaches a series of workshops in The Sharing called Be You Now.

ELIZABETH

(clip) I'm pretty involved with The Sharing. I've been leading some workshops.

KYLE

Despite the questionable things we've encountered while investigating The Sharing, and despite my previous, hastily made assumptions, she appears to truly be a force of good within the organization.

ROBIN

I met a teenager named Jess who participated in the Be You Now session.

JESS

(clip) Be You Now and Elizabeth are helping me, you know, become who I'm truly meant to be.

ROBIN

I also got the whole thing recorded. And I don't think Elizabeth is all that nice.

ELIZABETH

(clip) Kill the birds too! Kill any creature you see!

STEVIE

Kyle over here spent some extra time with her, and was trying to sneak around the full members' meeting, weren't you, Kyle?

KYLE

Yeah, a plan of mine that failed due to my phone dying, and well, I'll tell you more in a minute. But, we all made it through the day just fine.

ROBIN

Sure, we're fine, and everything seemed just fine at the meeting, mostly. But I'm certain there's more to The Sharing than meets the eye. We have some things to talk about, guys.

KYLE

(clip) You know, maybe we should give the Sharing a chance.

(music stops)

ROBIN

So, the following conversation was recorded the day after we went to the Sharing meeting.

(music change)

STEVIE

Give the Sharing a chance? Hmm, what could have happened between say, 6 and 7pm that day that made you say *that*?

KYLE

I'm just saying. I had a *talk* with Elizabeth. And guys, she explained a lot to me about The Sharing. At least from her side of things. What she's doing with the Be You Now stuff... I can't see why it would be a bad thing. She really wants to help people.

ROBIN

Kyle, I'm sorry to say, but listening to what was going on in her workshop, we can't be so sure about that. I know you think Elizabeth is somehow different than other Sharing leaders, and that she's some kind of compassionate humanitarian. But... it might break your heart when you listen to the recording.

KYLE

You can't judge a person based on something you heard out of context, Robin. I realized that last night. Yeah, I'll listen to it. But Elizabeth's not the bad guy here.

STEVIE

Okay, you heard what Elizabeth was saying to that kid. Something about *killing birds*, right? I can see where your mind went with that. You seemed pretty upset before, Kyle. So what did she say that made you change your mind about her? What did she say about The Sharing? What even happened after we left?

(music change: mysterious music)

KYLE

Okay, so I had been going around the meeting trying to investigate what we might be overlooking. I was making lots of connections. That scanner they had us go through? That's not any kind of technology I've ever heard of, except it bears a striking resemblance to something having to do with a little company called Matcom. And you can't ignore how many times they kept emphasizing the hamburgers they were serving.

Something was up with that. Not sure what. Well, I'm still trying to figure out how everything fits together, but I know I'm getting somewhere.

Anyway, I was going to catch up with Elizabeth after Be You Now ended. And I heard what I later learned was a totally out of context snippet of conversation. I got emotional. I needed to know what it was about. So I tried to find the full members meeting. The problem was, I had no idea where it would be. So I was looking all around the community center, and eventually I ran into Elizabeth again. She said she was looking for someone, her mentee, who was supposed to have a full member ceremony that night, but I guess they must have bailed at the last minute. And yeah, I was really upset, so I confronted her, but I feel bad about that now. I demanded to know what she was talking about earlier, and why she would ever mention (shudders) killing animals.

And I immediately saw I had made a huge mistake. I could see that she felt really bad, but it was because she saw how much distress my thoughts were causing me. So she explained to me that it wasn't literal. It was full members' related stuff that I can't understand yet. And I realized I had jumped to a conclusion I already had formed in my head. Like a self fulfilling prophecy. You know, I've been so focused on my theories about Dapsen, Matcom and the owls that I realized: I'm just looking for it everywhere. And though I'm probably not wrong... that's not the way to go about this. That's not the way to investigate! We have to be more open than that. Or else we're going to miss what's in plain sight. And sometimes, it turns out to be totally innocuous, or a red herring.

(music change)

STEVIE

Okay... so why do the full members have to talk in code?

ROBIN

Because they're in a cult.

KYLE

Robin, you don't know what The Sharing is about.

ROBIN

And now you do? You know all about it?

KYLE

Elizabeth and I actually just talked for a long time. She didn't end up going back to the full members' meeting. She told me that The Sharing is pushing against the capitalistic, patriarchal American individualism that is a major cause of our ingrained sense of isolation. And Be You Now is her way of promoting this on a personal and even somatic level. She wants to fight against the fear that divides us. So if you think about it, what she's doing is pretty radical and revolutionary. And she helped develop the whole course with the founder of The Sharing.

(music transition: mysterious music)

At the same time, well, I am trying to figure out why they have to speak in code. When Elizabeth was talking, I got the sense that there is some force within the organization trying to undermine what she's doing...and that they're being monitored. I'll give you one guess as to who's doing that.

STEVIE

Who, the billionaires? Peter Stinton?

KYLE

What Elizabeth and most of the Sharing members are trying to do has nothing to do with whatever the billionaires are up to. I don't think being suspicious of The Sharing members will get us too far. They're the little guys. If anything, we should try to *help* Elizabeth. Which means, we do need to go deeper into The Sharing. We just need to make sure we're using our heads.

(music change)

STEVIE

So you hung out.

KYLE

We had a conversation.

STEVIE

In the hallway of the community center?

KYLE

At her apartment. Why does it matter?

STEVIE

I'm just saying, don't let the first woman in The Sharing who gives you attention cloud your sharp investigative mind.

KYLE

Stevie, we just had a personal, heart to heart conversation. Like human beings tend to have occasionally. And, she's one of the most honest people I've ever met.

ROBIN

How can you tell?

KYLE

It's called emotional intelligence, Robin.

(music stops)

ROBIN

Okay, well, I'm going to play this recording. We don't need to listen to the whole hour and a half of it, but I'm going to play some snippets from it, and we'll talk about it. The first few minutes are just people lying on the floor and nothing's really going on yet. So I'll start from when Elizabeth first speaks.

(from the recording)

ELIZABETH

Okay. Start to open your eyes, if your eyes are closed. Bring yourself back into the space. Let's come to our circle.

(people yawning, moving)

Mmm. Take in the people around you. Don't be afraid to make eye contact.

(sounds of "mmm")

Welcome back.
How are we all doing?

(mmms)

Today I'd like to talk about...choice.
We think, being able to choose, that's what gives us freedom, right? Being able to do what we want. *Then* we'll be happy. *Then* we'll live our truth. And that is...such a limiting belief. What happens if our circumstances give us limited options? What if we can't control everything? And then we think, "why? Why can't I be who I want to be? Why can't I do what I want to do?" Should we throw in the towel and say, "well, I can't possibly find happiness"? And, "it must be because of how little money I'm making. It must be because of someone else. Must be where I live. I'm too busy. I'm too stressed. I'm hurting. Someone is hurting me. I'm a victim."
But there are no victims. There are no bad guys.

(mmm)

We have to understand the difference between what to be responsible for, and what we need to allow to happen. The desire to be in control, most of the time, is what blocks you from *being you, now*.

(mmm)

If we allow our thoughts and emotions to be dictated by our circumstances, then we're trapped. But, every moment of the day, we get to choose how we think and feel.

PARTICIPANT 1

Ah…

Really. And isn't that so wonderful? Any feeling that comes: we don't block it, but we can choose to change it, we can choose how we think about it. *That's* where we find freedom. Freedom has nothing to do with being in control of our circumstances.

PARTICIPANT 2

Wow.

ELIZABETH

I want us all to think about this as we're doing our exercises today.

(recording stops)

(music change)

ROBIN

So...thoughts so far?

STEVIE

I guess what she's saying is if we aren't so easily frustrated about negative things in life, life will be easier.

KYLE

Yeah, making the best of what life gives you. When life gives you lemons and all that.

ROBIN

Yeah, maybe. But something she said rubs me the wrong way.

(plays back recording)

ELIZABETH

(clip) But there are no victims. There are no bad guys.

(recording stops)

ROBIN

Don’t you think that’s a weird thing to say?

STEVIE

In general, yeah. But is it something she’s saying to just get people to think like, “hey, I’m not stuck in life”?

ROBIN

To me it’s like...you can take that in a really harmful direction, you know? Are there no victims of crimes? Are there not people who do bad things? And she says it like it’s an absolute truth. But anyway, on a practical level, we can gather that “Be You Now” as a concept has to do with allowing things to happen, and not having so much aversion to them, right?

KYLE

Sounds like meditation or something.

ROBIN

Right, I get that.

(music stops)

But listen to this next part.

(recording plays)

ELIZABETH

Harold, what’s your experience right now being in this circle, with everyone giving their attention to you?

HAROLD

I'm noticing I'm feeling a little anxious. I can feel I'm perspiring a bit. But, it's exciting. I feel like I'm getting better about being seen by others. I feel this warmth from all of you right now, like I'm at home.

(mmm from participants)

ELIZABETH

What I'm noticing with you is that you seem to really want to get positive feelings from these sessions, and you come back and it's like, "let me get that fix again." Does that sound about right?

HAROLD

I'm not addicted to coming here, I swear! (laughs nervously) I really feel that this has made me more open, and it's impacting my life in so many ways...so far.

ELIZABETH

Can you tell us about what's been happening in your life since you started Be You Now, what differences you've noticed?

HAROLD

I've been noticing that I've been taking more risks lately. And I mean the good kind. I have been feeling like there's something welling up in me, and so, I just did it. I picked up my guitar, and I started recording again. I feel like all the work we've been doing here, it's been so great, it's really opened me up. I don't *have* to always feel so stressed about my 9 to 5. I can still be creative. My parents never accepted it. They were always so disappointed that I wanted to go to music school. But, I think I'm ready to get back into the open mics, and to get my music out there. I feel like I'm ready to just bare my soul in my music again, to be seen again, without hiding. To *be me now*, hehe.

PARTICIPANT

Mmhmm.

ELIZABETH

Mmm. So what I'm hearing from you is that there's this object in your life, this guitar, that you started to rely on again.

(mmm)

I'm hearing that it was something that you used to dedicate a lot of your time to. And it takes you to the past, like dwelling on a memory of that happiness you once felt. So can I ask, what if there was no guitar anymore? What if you were to leave it in the past?

HAROLD

I…would probably not have an outlet for my feelings. Probably feel more stressed and frustrated from my job.

ELIZABETH

So with this guitar...do you see how it's keeping you in an illusion? Do you see how your attachment is not allowing you to be present? It's like...you keep lying to yourself. I'm just curious if you realize that.

HAROLD

I'm...not sure what you mean.

ELIZABETH

Harold, what I've been noticing with you in these sessions is that something seems to be really blocking you. You're saying all these things about your music, your guitar, your record...and when I'm receiving this from you, I find myself thinking, you don't need these *crutches*. That's not *you*, Harold. You can be so, so much more. I'm talking about *being you, now*. And you come to these sessions week after week, and it's like, I'm almost not sure what to say to you anymore. When I hear you talk about these little things that you're distracting yourself with, I notice that I feel frustrated, because I've worked so, so hard, and I've dedicated so much of my heart and energy and empathy into developing and working with this life changing methodology. I've dedicated so much of my life keeping Lore David Altman's vision alive in The Sharing. And you realize there are those who believe we shouldn't bother with any of this work, right? There are those who want to crush Be You Now, and just accept full members before they're ready for it.

But *this* is the way it *should* be done. Through effort. Through a gradual and beautiful transformation of the mind, towards a grateful acceptance of the responsibilities of full membership. Or else, The Sharing and all it stands for would be... cheapened. Inelegant.
But despite *all of this*, I'm still not being received by you. And I'm noticing that I feel...disappointed in you. And from what I'm noticing in the room right now, I think we're all feeling disappointed in you, am I right?

(participants mm, mmhmm, yeah)

ELIZABETH

But I'm going to choose to channel my disappointment towards teaching you. In The Sharing, we are working on being absolutely receptive to the other. No hiding. If you are choosing to hide yourself by forming attachments to *illusions* that are not *you*...well, that's your choice. But it means you aren't ready for what The Sharing can give you. So if you're going to keep going through life lying to yourself, we can just move on to someone else.

PARTICIPANT

I think you should apologize to Elizabeth, and to everyone.

HAROLD

I'm...sorry. I don't want to keep lying to myself.

ELIZABETH

So. Do you *really* need your music? Do you *need* to play your guitar?

HAROLD

...No. It's like I can't just be happy in my own skin.

ELIZABETH

You can choose to have happiness, totally removed from these attachments. If you use music as a crutch, you can see how you're trapping yourself, right?
I'm noticing some tears are coming, and I see your eyes are starting to avoid mine.
What's underneath that? Can you tell me what you're experiencing right now?

HAROLD

My mind is, like, I'm wrapping my mind around it, it's just-

ELIZABETH

-Try, "hearing you ask me that, I notice…"

HAROLD

Hearing you ask me that, I notice that part of me is kind of freaked out about accepting it. I keep cutting myself off from being my true self. That's my habit. But the thought of giving up music is scary.

ELIZABETH

Mmm. Just sit with that fear for a moment. I want you to reflect on this. This is something we can all reflect on. Thank you for your beautiful share, Harold.

HAROLD

Thank you. Thank you everyone.

(recording stops)

ROBIN

Okay, now do you see why this is so concerning?

(ambient music fades in)

KYLE

I...was right. I was right about her before.

STEVIE

That you can't trust her?

KYLE

No...that she must be part of a resistance group within The Sharing! She said there were some people who want to put an end to all the work she's doing.

STEVIE

If that's true, It's got to be the guys at the top trying to turn full membership into a pay-to-play deal instead of having to do all this personal development stuff.

ROBIN

So, okay, maybe that's happening. But do you not see what she's doing with this poor Harold person? I really don't understand how someone playing a guitar when they get home from work would pose a threat to being their "authentic self".
And okay, objectively, Elizabeth is really into whatever philosophy she's espousing.
It just sounds... manipulative. Like there are so many moments where she's making a 180 switch from being supportive to just tearing this guy apart.

KYLE

She's just being human, Robin. She got frustrated. I also really don't think she's literally saying Harold can *never* play his guitar again. Maybe him talking about music was just avoiding the real purpose of the exercise.

STEVIE

Which was…getting this guy to die inside a little bit?

ROBIN

Well, that's definitely what *happened*. But, I get what you're saying, Kyle. From what I'm understanding, the purpose of the exercise is supposedly to speak about what you're feeling in the present moment, in a kind of exchange with Elizabeth, and with the other people in the circle. Elizabeth asks questions to help the chosen person get closer to saying what they really feel. That's totally what the exercise *should* be about. I'm just saying that Elizabeth took it in a pretty extreme direction.

KYLE

But she's right. Harold started talking about how he was feeling, but then he went off into a tangent about something else. It sounds like he's desperate to have Be You Now work

for him, and he wants to cut corners and not actually do any of the work of really speaking from the present moment.. And Elizabeth wants to keep her workshop's integrity. Just because Harold got a little worked up at the end doesn't mean Elizabeth is trying to "tear him apart". And there's more between the lines, guys. I'm telling you, we need to find out what Elizabeth means about the people who want to stop Be You Now.

STEVIE

I don't really know what to think. There is for sure something to what she's frustrated about, when it comes to us getting a clue where to look next. But I also get that what she's doing with Harold here sounds extreme. She sounded kind of mean, to be honest. Sorry Kyle, but she did. But I *also* get that she's saying these things based on philosophies that we haven't researched at all. So who knows if we aren't just being ignorant? Do we have enough context to make any judgment here?

ROBIN

To me, what she's really doing here goes beyond needing to know all of the details of some philosophy. Stevie, maybe this next clip will help you make up your mind. Maybe you'll both get what I mean.

(music stops)

But, before we listen, I'm obligated to say: Sporadic Phantoms will resume after these messages.

(drum beats, music, throat singing)

VO

This summer:
Experience the wonder.

(elephant trumpets)

The thrills.

(rollercoaster screams)

As you embark on an adventure of a lifetime at Santa Barbara county's hottest family fun destination: The Gardens.

(gibbon sounds)

Don't miss our *wild* new safari experience.

(jungle animal noise montage)

(lion roars)

And learn how The Gardens is helping with conservation efforts from our animal experts.

(music change: exciting action/sci-fi)

And introducing: Z-Space 2000: California's third tallest virtual reality rollercoaster. Strap on your Oculus VR headset and get ready to travel at hyper speed through the endless void of anti-space.

(whoosh!)

KID

Awesome!!

VO

It may seem empty at first, but, whoa! Watch out for those floating masses of flesh!

(tsew!)

And what else will you find out there?

(pew pew pew pew!)

KID

Whoa, aliens!? Even more awesome!

(music lulls)

VO

And even *more* awesome when you realize it's only you, children, who stand any chance at resisting them. The only thing you have to lose is your innocence... humanity, sanity, moral compass, and possibly everyone you know and love.

(pause)

KID

Wait...how is that awesome?

(epic sci fi music)

VO

Because... Z-space! Whatever questions you have, they can probably be answered with: Z-Space... 2000!

And don't forget to bring along a can of Coca Cola classic to save big off your season pass now at The Gardens.
The adventure awaits!

(music ends)

ROBIN

Welcome back to Sporadic Phantoms. Personally, I think visiting an amusement park in the middle of a pandemic is not the wisest choice to make, even if they do temperature checks at the door. But anyway.

Here is the last part of the Be You Now workshop. And listeners, this part may be a little disturbing.

(recording plays)

ELIZABETH

Everyone, let's come back to the present moment...
We're going to play a game.
Find a partner.

(participants walk in the room)

Let's take a deep, full breath all together.

(they all take a breath together)

Take in your partner in front of you. Allow yourself to be seen by your partner. How does it feel to be seen?

(mmm)

This is a very simple game. Partner A is going to tell partner B something about themselves. And partner B will give a number, one through five, for how vulnerable and open they feel partner A's reveal was. And after a while, we switch roles.

PARTICIPANT A

Maria: A: Sometimes I steal some of my roommate's coffee creamer.

PARTICIPANT B

One.

PARTICIPANT C

I'm afraid of talking to women.

PARTICIPANT D

Uh…two?

PARTICIPANT E

My wife left me and I want her to have full custody of our kids.

PARTICIPANT F

Three.

PARTICIPANT G

I don't understand anything about football.

PARTICIPANT H

Mm, two.

(they start overlapping/talking simultaneously- things like:)

I feel like a bad mother.

Three.

I told my boyfriend his manuscript was good when I secretly hated it.

I've been stealing office supplies from work for years.

One.

I let my roommate's plant die because I think it's hideous.

One.

I told my daughter the cat ran away, but I ran it over with my car.

I cheated on my boyfriend of 10 years with his brother.

Three.

I had my wedding on a Thursday specifically so most of my family couldn't make it.

Three.

I blew my $600 stimulus check at the casino.

I still claim unemployment benefits even though I started work again.

Ah, two.

One.

I moved abroad so I wouldn't be harassed by my grandmother.

Two.

I think you are extremely attractive.

Three?

ELIZABETH

Everyone stop, look over here at Jess. Jess, keep going.
Let's make a circle around her.

JESS

I…don't know if my poetry is any good.

PARTICIPANT

One.

ELIZABETH

Too easy, Jess.

JESS

I shoplifted from Hot Topic.

ELIZABETH

Now everybody in the circle, respond with a number together.

EVERYONE

One.

ELIZABETH

That's right. Just a one. Go deeper, Jess.

JESS

I...

ELIZABETH

Come on. What's blocking you?

JESS

I...I don't know...I…

ELIZABETH

Look at her body language. Look at her tension. Jess, you're closed off. You're collapsing your neck. You're disengaged. Stand upright. Stop gripping. Let *go.*

JESS

I...I don't want to go home after this.

EVERYONE

Two.

JESS

My family doesn't accept me.

EVERYONE

Three.

ELIZABETH

Is that it?

JESS

I'm scared that I'll never leave my hometown and I'll just rot there after high school.

EVERYONE

Three.

ELIZABETH

You'll never get out of there. You'll never make it to full member. You'll fail. Your parents are right about you.

JESS

I hate my parents.

EVERYONE

Three.

ELIZABETH

You're not brave enough.

JESS

I..I just want to run away forever.

EVERYONE

Three.

ELIZABETH

Are you just going to keep hiding like a scared little girl? Is that who you want to be? Blah blah blah, give us something *real*, Jess. Ooh, you're *so* sad. You have *such* a hard life. No one believes you. You're hiding from us. *Stop blocking.*

JESS

It's kind of depressing, but growing up in my family, I don't really have a lot of choices. But I try and tell myself over and over that some day, some day soon, I can leave, and I make those choices, I can have them. But I feel like something inside of me is dying, and I don't know how much longer I can wait until I turn 18, or if I can, and then just go. It might already be too late.

(crying) I feel like I'm suffocating. I want to be someone else, I just can't get over how much pain I'm feeling, I don't want to hurt anymore, I want a new family, I want to be loved.

(cries)

ELIZABETH

Lay down. I'm going to hold onto your skull now. Relax. Skull heavy in my hands. That's it. Be with what you feel now. Let it come. Don't tense. Release your grip. You're here with us. We have you. You're okay.

Gather closer everyone.

Nothing outside of you is in your control, Jess...but you can choose how you feel and think about any circumstance. So notice how you're feeling, and let's see if you can make a choice right now.

(Jess cries and has an emotional experience that becomes laughter)

Mmm.

Five. There you are!

(participants mmm)

See, everyone? Sometimes we have to go through the darkness to get to the light.

See, we think we have to have such a big say in our lives. That we need to be in control of our circumstances. But when we release that belief, we experience true happiness. Because we won't be hiding ourselves anymore.

Jess, when you become a full member of The Sharing, there are no more secrets. There's just you, and the other. You will reveal your deepest self to the other, all the time. At the end of this journey, Jess, someone is going to know you very deeply. A deeper relationship than I have with you as your mentor, Jess. And it's the most beautiful, profound *Sharing* to experience. You will be part of something greater. Then, the *real* work will begin.

(recording stops)

(ambient music)

STEVIE

...Okay, it's a cult.

KYLE

Guys, it might sound weird to you, but I know plenty of people who are into this kind of stuff. It's not that unusual to me. I've done similar things before, with different groups of people.

STEVIE

Uh, cult.

ROBIN

Cult.

KYLE

Just because you judge something as weird doesn't automatically make it a cult.

ROBIN

Okay, but why is she so unnecessarily harsh with these people? It's like she tells them that no one is a victim so she can just try to use their personal insecurities to trigger them. Don't you think that's manipulative?

KYLE

You can't just coddle people all the time, Robin. She's just working with them. Hell, if I took that workshop and she didn't push me, I would want my money back.

ROBIN

What is with all her changes in personality? One minute she's like a serene yoga teacher, the next minute she's like a dictator. Jess is a teenage girl. What is Elizabeth saying to her, really? Why is she telling Jess that she has to totally "accept the other" and that she has no actual choice, and that she will have a "deep relationship with someone" once she's a full member? And Kyle, The Sharing isn't charging any money for these Be You Now workshops. So tell me, what *does* the Sharing want, if it's not money? What would the Sharing want with a vulnerable teenage girl being conditioned to accept whatever happens to her? What are they preparing her for? What is Elizabeth *grooming* her for?

KYLE

...Grooming her? Are you serious?

ROBIN

I'm dead serious about this, Kyle.

KYLE

That's it. Stop.

(music stops)

(moves away from his mic)

Stop this. This isn't going in the podcast.

STEVIE

Kyle, calm down, Jesus.

KYLE

I will not calm down! Delete this segment. It's not going in. We're not putting it in the episode.

ROBIN

God, you are so ridiculously defensive about somebody you barely know! Someone who is in a *leadership position* in the organization that we are INVESTIGATING! For possible corruption! What is up with you?

(music tense and pulsing)

KYLE

Elizabeth would never, EVER be part of something like that. I can't believe you would even suggest that. Robin, you weren't supposed to record this at all. This is people sharing vulnerable things about themselves in the safe space Elizabeth created for them. And you just went and violated that. How dare you! You can't just make a completely unfounded, ridiculous accusation and call it investigating. I really can't believe you right now.

ROBIN

Oh don't try to get all "ethical" about this. You were going to record the full members' meeting without their consent. Too bad Elizabeth stopped you from doing your job. Too bad your "phone died". Yeah, right. Too bad you care about California spotted owls more than human beings. Too bad all you *really* care about is getting laid.

KYLE

What, are you jealous?

STEVIE

Come on guys, can we drop it? Robin, we can't make an accusation like that without proof. But Kyle, yeah, it *does* sound weird and messed up. That's why we have to really *think* about this. Can we not let our emotions get the best of us here?

ROBIN

I'm not even accusing. Maybe it's an allegation. But I'm just trying not to be naive about this. This *could be* dangerous.

KYLE

If you weren't being naive, you'd realize that Elizabeth has *nothing* to do with the conspiracy in The Sharing. In fact, you're just demonizing her workshop because you realize you'd be too afraid to ever be vulnerable enough for it.

(music fades out)

Ok, I'm done with this nonsense. I'm leaving.

STEVIE

Wait, leaving the investigation?

KYLE

No! ...I'll see you later.

(he walks to door)
(door slams)

(pause)

ROBIN

Listeners, as you can tell, I didn't delete that segment. Kyle doesn't realize that I've edited it into this episode. Well, he'll realize once he hears it. So, he'll be pissed off. But you know what? I don't care.

(theme song plays)

So that concludes episode three of Sporadic Phantoms: The Allegation. Tune in next month for episode four.

Don't forget to check out our patreon, just to cover these fancy mics we got, and our website, sporadic phantoms dot com. But especially, email us with any information you have about the Sharing or anyone we've mentioned to sporadicphantoms@gmail.com

(music change)

Special thanks to: K.A. Applegate, Julie Becker, Zoe Michelle Bradshaw, Ian Buck, Mark Gallagher, Belinda Ju, Lisa Lang, Amber Mastrobattista, Dan Mueller, Marcus Myge, Max Pacheco, Maria Phillis, Robin Robbins, Abbey Savoie, Taylor Schmidt, Lilly Varnadoe, and Jessica Whitehall.

We have in fact already recorded some other segments that were intended to be part of this episode. So there have been a couple of new developments. But we'll have to save that for next time. I have taken it upon myself to re-edit and release this episode as you have heard it, because I *couldn't* just let this slide. Even if it might make Kyle look bad in the process. But Stevie, you'll forgive me, right? And you know, if we're just going to have to follow different leads, that's fine.

(music fades into theme music)

And ok, I don't want our disagreements to jeopardize our work. I don't know what's going on in Kyle's head right now, and I don't know what's going to happen moving forward. But we're not giving up so easily. Because this is looking more and more like a dangerous cult. And our investigation might be able to save a lot of people from falling prey to it.
Yeah, even you.