

**Tales From The Wichita Skyline**

by

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PART ONE / THE DEAL

MAGGIE enters her attic late at night. She shines her flashlight around, uncovers a chair, and sits. A strange noise fills the room. Maggie speaks.

MAGGIE

Let's make one thing perfectly clear. I'm not usually one for believing in sprits, phantoms, or whatever it is you'd like to call yourselves nowadays. I'm too much of a realist to subscribe to that sort of thing. However, you my dear, you have literally left me no choice in the matter.

During the past week you have left strange, unsettling odors in my pantry. Rearranged my living room, twice. Incessantly slammed various doors and cabinets, which can get pretty annoying especially when one's trying to read, and most disrespectfully you have repetitively taken all of our family photographs off the mantle and stacked them into a neat, tidy, pile in front of the water closet. Now where I come from these are considered to be very dubious, unacceptable acts.

A strange noise is heard. Maggie is momentarily thrown.

You do realize that up until two weeks ago I didn't believe in you at all? It's true. You see I was holding on to the possibility that my husband was playing a little joke on me. This is a new house for us and all the tales we heard from the neighbors and real estate agents about it being haunted were... well just that. Tales. Until now. Now that my husband has been away on travel I have decided to invest some belief in all of this.

Huge noise. Maggie lets out a scream.

I assume by that you concur. So I guess you are probably wondering why I am wandering around in the attic at two in the morning? I don't particularly like this attic so I usually stay clear of it but it seems to be where you have decided to set up shop so I figured it would be the best place for us to have a discussion. Again, I find it a bit ridiculous trying to have a conversation with a ghost. It's my last resort.

My friend Susanna has pointed out to me that speaking to you should have been the *first* thing I should have done but I just couldn't bring

myself to do it. It's amazing what a week alone in an *unstable* house will do for one's stubbornness.

I suppose my first question to you is why haven't any of my other remedies worked? I mean I really put forth great effort into lots of different methods in trying to encourage you to leave but none of them have seemed to have an effect.

For example, I painted my front door red. I despise red! I placed mirrors facing out against the exterior walls of every room... but now when I think about it I guess those techniques would only work for *new* ghosts trying to *enter* a home. You are already here. Ah! But that doesn't explain the shoe trick! The shoe trick is supposed to be very reliable! I was told that I should place my shoes in front of my bed with each one facing a different direction.

She takes off her slippers and demonstrates.

See? That in theory should drive you crazy but look! Nothing!

(she looks down at her slippers)

You are also supposed to hate hazelnuts so I hung dozens and dozens of hazelnuts from strings at every doorway of the house but again, nothing! And how about the thing with the rice? You are *supposed* to be intrigued by piles of loose rice on the floor because you can't help counting each individual grain over and over again! Why aren't counting them? Seriously now what am I supposed to do with all those strings of nuts and bags of rice? Everyone knows just how much I hate waste!

Maggie begins to pace the attic shining her flashlight around.

You are an obstinate one Sophie. Oh, does that surprise you that I figured out who you are? I mean figured out who you *were*? I suppose I could be wrong but I don't think that I am. You see I did a little research this week at the town hall, very nice people there by the way just in case you ever decided to cause a disturbance there as well, and I found out some interesting details about your life and what went on in this house. Very interesting indeed. According to my research you are Sophie Walters. I'm right, aren't I? Aren't I?! What's the matter Sophie, cat got your tongue?