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Something Down the Stairs

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Andrea Steffes
Logan, Utah
November 28, 2018

“Something Down the Stairs” Occupational Folklore/Legend

Informant:

Andrea Steffes has been the general manager at Herm’s Inn for almost two years, having also worked there on and off as a server in years prior. Andrea grew up in the Midwest, but has spent most of the last decade in Cache Valley. She is not only my manager but also a good friend that I spend time with outside of work.

Context:

“Herman’s Inn,” as it was initially called, made its debut in the early 20th century, with the exact year and date unknown. Built and founded by Herman (“Herm”) and Elizabeth (“Lizzy”) Johnson along Canyon Road, Herm’s Inn was, at one point in time, quite literally one’s last chance to “gas up” before entering the mouth of Logan Canyon. Decades later, after over half a century of neglect, Herm’s was bought and restored by local businessman Jim Laub to revive the building and its glorious history. Reestablished in 2012, Herm’s Inn is now a popular breakfast and lunch destination for those who know how to find it. Despite its unassuming appearance and quiet location within a residential area, Herm’s holds a colorful history, including an underground whiskey operation during prohibition and age-old notions of the building being haunted.

Herm’s Inn is now home to a collection of old stories and legends that still circulate around Cache Valley today, not to mention a series of newly developed jokes, traditions, and numinous experiences among current employees.



*Herm’s Inn in its original state. Exact date unknown.
(Source: www.hermsinn.com/history)*



*Herm’s Inn today.
(Source: www.hermsinn.com/history)*

Herm’s opens for the day at 7am and closes at 2pm. Right as the last customers are leaving at the end of the work day, all the employees sit down together to eat lunch. This is normally the time when we sit and joke and tell stories to one another about work. It was during this break that I interviewed Andrea. Everyone had already gotten up to finish their closing work, however they

were still nearby when the interview took place. This item was collected right after Andrea's personal narrative of her own supernatural experience at Herm's. This was an extension of that conversation, wherein Andrea talks about her good friend Ken, who works with Heather, the owner of Herm's, and also comes in to the restaurant to clean and occasionally help with events.

The other item from this interview can be found under the following name: "The Black Figure." I also interviewed the owner of Herm's, Heather Santi, as well as other Herm's employees, which can all be found under the following titles: "The White Figure," "The Children See Ghosts," "Tired of Talking to Ghosts," "The Pantry Door," "Haunted Coffee Spoons," "The Heroin Spoon," "The Ghosts of Herm's Inn," and "The Moving Lockers."

Text:

So he [Ken] said that he was like, I think he was mopping in here [motioning with her hand to the front room of the restaurant where we were sitting], and he, where he could see, ya know how the door, there's like a reflection? He saw something walk downstairs while he was upstairs doing stuff, so through the window and then he thought he saw something in the same spot that I did too, which is interesting [makes odd noise, while shivering] [I ask what it looked like] He just said like a figure. He's not very [pause] he doesn't get into it, like how Heather [the owner] and I will be like, "Oh my God," ya know, "this happened and this happened." He kinda was, I don't know if it's because it freaks him out, or if [pause] he's just very nonchalant about it, like "yeah I think I saw something too" but I don't know what it is. [laughing] So, yeah.

Texture:

Andrea was evidently nervous, as she admitted herself, to be recorded and interviewed. She paused often, and also nearly overlapped her own words a few times. Despite this, however, we were in a very casual setting wherein we would normally discuss such matters, which I believe put her a little more at ease. It seemed throughout the interview that she believed everything she told me, but was hesitant to admit it; she seemed to want to explain everything away.

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