

EPISODE 44: You turn into me. Remember that.

[Hey guys. Happy post-Halloween. If you haven't listened to the Halloween collab on the feed, Nine to Midnight, you're missing out. It's 9 of the best indie horror podcasters sharing scary stories. It was a lot of fun to make and I hope you enjoy it. Speaking of enjoying things, if you like the show, you can support it on patreon at patreon.com/woe_begone. There's early episodes (when I get them done early), the Aliza Schultz podcast, Q&As, cat clips, director's commentary, and so much more. [Patreon.com/woe_begone](https://patreon.com/woe_begone). Many thanks to my 10 newest patrons: Bairon, Astrid, Mack McCure, Ariel Diaz, Theo, Seoung Kim, Jeremy Cloutier, Bertie Archer, Moths Teeth, and augustfairies for supporting this show. Enjoy.]

[WARNING: This episode contains a depiction of violence. Listener discretion is advised. It also contains loud noises, the timestamps of which will be at the bottom of the description.]

[INTRO THEME PLAYS.]

[We hear the sound of an elevator door dinging on arrival, the door opening and shutting, Mike pushing a button. There is a brief silence.]

Mike: I bet you're wondering why I called you here today.

[There is a stunned silence from Mikey as he gains recognition.]

Mike: That was a joke. Mikey, it's me. It's you.

Mikey: Yeah, I figured that out, believe it or not.

Mike: We're getting off on the next floor. [We hear another button press.] You're walking into a trap. We need to get out of here ASAP.

Mikey: I thought that CANNONBALL was...?

Mike: He caught wind that you were coming to Riga and there's a man with an eyepatch up there that will shoot you in the head the second the elevator door opens, so let's get off on this floor, shall we?

Mikey: I mean, you make a convincing point.

[The elevator dings and the doors open. Footsteps.]

Mike: Stairwell is to your left. We're going to go down to the first floor, out through the front entrance, and into the getaway car, which is a red Opel.

Mikey: I don't know what an Opel is.

Mike: Mikey, It is going to be the only car that is parked in front of this hotel so that doesn't matter. You can learn about eastern European car models later.

Mikey: Can and will, apparently. We look great, by the way. I dig the turtleneck. Usually when I see a future version of myself I look worse, but you—

Mike: We can have this conversation in the car maybe? You walk slower when you're talking and there's a Latvian assassin with a silenced pistol whose target didn't arrive on time and is now roaming the hotel looking—

Mikey: Yeah, yeah. You walk slower when you talk, too.

Mike: Okay, take a right, then a left, then straight forward through the lobby and out the door.

[We hear more footsteps and light ambient noise.]

Mikey: Revolving door. Fancy.

Michael [from far away]: Get in, dipshit!

Mikey: There's another one of us?

Mike: Someone's gotta drive the getaway car.

Mikey: Are there more?

Mike: That you need to know about? No.

Mikey: Any that I don't need to know about but that you would like to tell me about?

Mike: Well, you don't need to know.

Mikey: Aww.

[We hear car doors opening and closing and a car driving away.]

Michael: Hey, Mikey. Nice to meet you. The name's Michael. Around here they call me Mikhail. I see you've met my business partner, Mike.

Mike: He talks like that and he calls himself Michael, you'll get used to it. But it works out. I'm Mike and he's Michael and you're Mikey.

Mikey: And I have to be Mikey?

Michael: You're the youngest. I'm too damn old for people to be calling me Mikey. I'm leaning into the whole grizzled-old-man thing.

Mikey: Is that why you're smoking a pipe?

Michael: You're damn right it is, bub.

Mike: That's why he's playing badass dressup.

Michael: You're one to talk, pal. Mikey, do you think this asshole walks around the apartment all day in a turtleneck and chinos? He doesn't normally dress like that. He got a haircut this week just so he could look cool on our mission.

Mike: Mikey, do you think *this* asshole walks around the apartment with a shirt on most of the time?

Mikey: I'm not going to answer either of those.

Michael: Attaboy. On your right you'll see the Latvian National Library. You're not gonna get to see Old Town or the opera house or any of that on this trip, I'm afraid. But, hey, you got a chauffeur and a tour guide. That's something, right?

Mikey: So why am I here then?

Michael: 'Cause Ty apparently doesn't know his ass from a hole in the ground. Or he wanted some hired gun to toss your body in the Daugava River, take your pick.

Mikey: Mike, when do we start talking like that?

Mike: I don't know and I don't want to find out. He was like this when I found him. Or one of Ty's buddies wanted you gone. The Mike Walters project wasn't very popular with most of the higher-ups there. I think it ended up being Ty's pet project while the bosses thought that they had bigger fish to fry.

Michael: The good news is that big dog Michael Walters is here to bail ya out. It's actually a godsend that they sent you on this suicide mission, you know. If you never ended up on the botched trip to Riga, you never would have made it out of that complex.

Mikey: Wait... does that mean that the two of you busting me out?

Mike: That's the plan.

Mikey: And CANNONBALL?

Mike: Caught wind of the plan and made a run for it. Don't know what he heard or how.

Michael: And he ran right into the loving arms of me and Mike here. So whatever he heard, he didn't hear about *our* plan.

Mikey: You killed CANNONBALL?

Michael: No, we were waiting on you to do the honors.

Mike: What he means is: WOE.BEGONE can be finicky and we aren't interested in taking any chances. If Michael and I mess up, there is a distinct possibility that we stop existing. Our futures collapse into you and we all end up in the Daugava River together.

Mikey: So, I have to do it?

Michael: I don't want to get blood on my nice clothes and you're the worst dressed, so I think it should be you.

Mike: Not to mention the youngest, so you gotta do whatever we say.

Mikey: You have him? Like he's tied up somewhere?

Mike: It's sort of poetic, isn't it? He's back at the apartment waiting for us.

Michael: Like shooting fish in a barrel. Or, more accurately, like slitting the throat of a man who is hogtied and bound to a beam in our apartment.

Mikey: Wait, so I can just kill him? I don't have to do any ridiculous WOE.BEGONE nonsense? What about the stuff that I did to make myself seem like Donny Evans? All of the stuff that the Flinchites do to mask my identity.

Mike: We don't know. We think there is a high likelihood that when the Flinchites said that they were "protecting your identity" and making you seem like Donny Evans, they were actually doing... nothing. We think it is possible that WOE.BEGONE didn't care at all if you were Mikey Walters or Donny Evans or Beyonce. You said that you were Donny Evans and so they sent stuff to Donny's house to fuck with you. But I don't think that they really care or know about you. I don't think that a Red Sox hat is going to fool anyone with the sort of technology that WOE.BEGONE has. It can't be

Ryan running things. I can't confirm his death but there is no way that is him. He would have shut you down as soon as he figured out that it was you. The Arbiters don't care about CANNONBALL or Ryan or any of that stuff so they let you play the game because why not? [Without pause] Michael, make a left up here and start making some frequent turns, we're being followed.

Michael: I'm on it, boss.

Mikey: We're being followed?

Michael: Yeah that guy in the beat up white van is definitely going wherever we're going and I don't remember giving him the keys to the apartment.

Mike: Goddammit, take the pipe out of your mouth, I can't understand you.

Michael: I'm drivin', I need both my hands! [More clearly.] We're being followed.

Mikey: Arbiters?

Michael: Iunno. Probably. They're still a big problem if that's what you're asking.

Mike: Or Flinchites. They're not too happy with us right now, either.

Mikey: I guess that means that the plot to lure the Arbiters into a trap inside of O.V.E.R. didn't work out.

Michael: You're damn right it didn't. They lied to us, landed Edgar in the fuckin' hospital, and got fuck-all for their troubles besides a couple dead boots. Serves 'em right if you ask me.

Mikey: Is Edgar here in Riga?

Mike: [Laughs.] God, no. We're here on business and it's a dangerous business. Hence the van that's following us right now. Edgar is safe, he is not here. You don't need to worry your pretty little head about him.

Michael: Speaking of worrying, guys, our company doesn't wanna get lost. I'm officially opening the floor for any suggestions that you all might have for what to do.

Mikey: Umm... call the police and say someone's following us?

Mike: Mikey. We have an American hogtied in our living room. Now is not the time to involveLatvian. law enforcement.

Mikey: I don't know! Drive around until he gets bored or runs out of gas, then.

Michael: Well he doesn't look too bored so far and we've got... well, actually, I don't know how much gas we have because the meter is broken but if I were to guess... like a 16th of a tank left? If I were gambling, I'd put money on us running out first. Mike, any ideas?

Mike: You really don't think you can lose him?

Michael: He's doing a really good job of staying with us, so I wouldn't count on it.

Mike: Then I don't know what to tell you. I think we've mentioned all of the options.

Michael [confidently]: That's not all of the options.

Mike: Meaning?

Michael: Look at it this way: This gentleman is clearly dead set on meeting with us this afternoon. I say if he wants to speak with us, we give him what he is asking for.

Mikey: You can't be serious. Mike, you work with this guy? He can't even keep the voice up the whole time.

Mike: I am this guy, which is even worse if you think about it.

Michael: In fact, I am going to hang a right here. I know for a fact that the road turns into a dirt road surrounded by trees here in a couple miles. We can get some privacy and talk about whatever is on this fellow's mind. And if he wants to resort to fisticuff, so be it. Nothing we can't handle. Hold onto something, folks. These rural roads can get quite turbulent.

[Fade out, transition.]

Michael: Here should be fine. You two wait here. I will see what he wants and then we can discuss together. Sound good?

Mikey: You're actually gonna get out of the car?

Michael: Why the hell not? I'm feeling spirited today.

[We hear the door open and close.]

Michael [muffled by car]: Hey!

[We hear a silenced pistol.]

Mikey: Holy fuck. Holy fuck. Did you know that he was going to do that?

Mike: I had a suspicion. He's been known to escalate.

Mikey: No shit. Fuck. It happened so fast.

[The door opens. Michael speaks from outside the car into the car.]

Michael: See there, Mikey Boy? That's what you would look like if Mike and I hadn't intercepted you today at the hotel. Remember, I said he'd get what was asking for.

[The other two are quiet.]

Michael: I don't know what you two are being all quiet about. Someone was going down and I decided for us that it was going to be that guy. You don't tail someone like that if you have good intentions. You're gonna learn to actually shoot one day, by the way, Mikey. You couldn't hit the broadside of a barn at O.V.E.R.

Mikey: Uhh...

Michael: Now, come on. I didn't want to get my clothes bloody today but sometimes you don't always get what you want, I mean that guy sure didn't. Help me get this fucker in the trunk, Mikey. Mike, get in his car and drive it into the forest, way off the road, and then walk back. See, he even left it running. How kind of him. We should be ready to go by the time you get back.

[Footsteps. Mike driving the car off.]

Mikey [sheepish]: Is... he an Arbiter or a Flinchite?

Michael: Iunno. It's not like they have a badge. Looks like he did have a gun, though. Dumbfuck wasn't expecting me to come out guns drawn, apparently. [Sighs] Oh well. We were already going to need to dispose of one body today. What's another corpse among friends, huh? Here, grab his legs. We'll just throw him in the trunk. It's not far to the apartment. We won't get caught.

[We hear both grunt and then the trunk shutting.]

Michael: That'll do 'er. [Taps trunk of car.] We are good to go, bub.

Mikey [sheepish]: If you say so.

Michael: Well if it isn't Mr. Never Seen A Corpse Before. Cmon now, I know you have. Buck up, pal. It's about to be your turn.

Mikey: I don't have to like it.

Michael: No, liking it makes it a lot easier, actually. If I had been worried about killing him we'd probably all be dead or captured. You know this, man. Name one time where getting upset about killing somebody made things turn out *better* for you. You can't. I know because I can't. You turn into me, remember that.

Mikey: Whatever.

Michael: That's the spirit.

Mikey: Why are you like this?

Michael: Who's to say I am, pal? Maybe I'm just doing what I have to to get through this mission.

Mikey: God I hope so.

[Transition, driving.]

Mikey: So, I've got some questions before I get there.

Michael: Shoot.

Mikey: Yeah, that's the question. Earlier you said that you wanted me to... slit CANNONBALL's throat? You have a gun, with a silencer even. Why wouldn't I just use that?

Michael: Got 2 guns now after that little escapade. You can pop 'im in the head if you want. Just figured that you wouldn't want to. Being scared of guns and all that.

Mikey: I'm not scared of guns.

Mike and 3: Bullshit. You're scared of guns.

Mikey: Fine. But I'm not that scared of guns. I respect them.

Mike: You can do whatever you want.

Michael: There's a baseball bat in my bedroom, just saying.

Mike: That might be better. No blood.

Michael: Slower maybe. Think you can handle that Baby Mikey?

Mikey: I don't think it will bother me. I hate him a lot.

Mike: We remember.

Mikey: Also don't fucking call me Baby Mikey. We're the same goddamn person.

Michael: Save it for CANNONBALL, pal.

Mikey: Alright, question 2. I'm free from the compound after this? Really and truly free?

Mike: As far as we know. You should be good to go. You're still useful to them but not nearly as useful as before you completed the challenges. They'll come after you, but not with the force of the whole organization. At least, that's how it was. Things could be different now. No guarantees of safety. Mike and Michael Walters cannot be held liable for any damages. You signed the contract. We'll talk more after the deed is done.

Mikey: Gotcha.

Mike: We'll talk more about that after you have the last challenge under your belt.

Mikey: It doesn't seem real, yet. It feels like something is going to swoop in at the last second and stop us.

Mike: Something's gotta happen sometime. If not now, when? We'll talk more about what happens after when after actually arrives. I don't want to split your focus.

Mikey: Fair enough. One final question.

Michael: Good. We're coming up home sweet home in no time flat.

Mikey: Both of you said something about a "dog of a river"? What does that mean?

Mike: Daugava. It's the name of the river that runs through Riga. Mumbles here didn't enunciate. Hasn't enunciated a single thing all day, if you've noticed.

Michael: Enunciate my boot up your ass. How's that for grizzled old man talk?

Mikey: Frustrating and annoying.

Michael: We're here, boys.

Mikey: Oh wow! Looks like shit.

Mike: We can't afford any better. Saving you has not been a very lucrative business venture. Plus, you haven't seen the inside yet.

Michael: Worse.

Mike: We're getting rid of the big loud eyesore in the living room today, so you could say that renovations are underway. Are you ready to do this? Really ready?

Mikey: I don't know. It's weird. I mean, on one hand--

Mike: That was rhetorical. It doesn't matter. It's time. You have to do this. Now.

Mikey: [sighs] You're right. Let's do this.

[Transition: Interior of apartment. CANNONBALL is howling, muffled.]

Mike: So, welcome to our humble little abode. It's not much, but it's ours. Make yourself at home, don't mind the mess. It's always just a little bit messy.

Mikey: Yeah, I bet it is. Cold, too.

Mike: It's literally Latvia. Do you know anything about Latvia other than that it is cold? It's like the one thing about Latvia.

Mikey: Yeah. I know things about Latvia. There's a national... library... or something?

Mike: That's cheating. Michael told you about that.

Mikey: No, you asked me if I knew anything about Latvia. It's probably pronounced "LAHT-via," by the way. You said "do you know anything about Latvia" and then I said the thing that I knew. That's not cheating. Michael, back me up here.

Michael: Not cheating. This asshole is gonna yell the whole time we're here, though, so maybe we can get a move on. Cold as balls too and there's heat in the car so maybe just kill this dude and we can get the show on the road.

Mike: Plus, there's a corpse in the car already so we're going to have to do logistics to get everything packed and ready. Maybe we should be quick.

Mikey: Respectfully. I'm the one who's doing the fourth challenge. I'm the one who is playing WOE.BEGONE. So maybe I'm the one who should be in control of how long this takes? Sorry, I don't mean to get testy but... I guess I did. You guys can sit back and relax for a minute or whatever, but I have to kill someone. Don't get me wrong, I

hate this fucker, but killing someone has a permanent and destructive effect on the world... and my soul. Gimme a minute.

Mike: Your soul!? Mikey, since when? Your soul is so blackened it might as well be outer space. Killing him is the equivalent of pissing in an ocean of piss.

Mikey: Whatever, man. I have the leverage here. I'm the one who has to do it. You have to listen to me. I am the one who has to do it, okay?

Mike: We're the fuckers who has to help you and you're only making it harder to get the job done!

Michael: Both of you scoff a whole lot, anyone ever told you that?

Mikey: There is no job unless I do the deed, so I have to do the deed.

Mike: "Do the deed"? We're already back to euphemisms? You've gotta kill this fucker.

Mikey: It's not like I'm refusing to do it, even. Like, why are we even yelling at each other? Just give me a fuckin' break! [Whimpers.]

Michael: I think you're both embarrassing. Nobody listening to me? That's fine.

Mike: Then fucking do it then.

Mikey: Give me a break.

Mike: And you get your fuckin' hands off of me.

[Mikey groans.]

Michael: ...Y'all remember that we're killing... CANNONBALL... right?

Mikey: Why does the 40 year old version of me that I met in Latvia have a fucking southern accent? [Sobbing.]

Mike: It's probably pronounced LAHT-via.

Michael: I think we'd all feel better if we got this show on the road.

Mike: He's gonna have to shoot him, Michael. I mean, look at him. He's not slitting any throats tonight.

Michael: Just as well. We'll give him that gun we got off the other guy. Make it look like they killed each other, maybe.

Mike: No one's gonna be able to figure out what happened. He teleported here and CANNONBALL might have teleported here. We don't even know. Any investigation will turn up nothing, I'm sure.

Michael: Don't hurt to fabricate a good story, though. Mikey boy, I'm so sorry, but we gotta start doing this. I am freezing cold. It's only going to get harder the longer we stand here. You gotta do this, and you *gotta* do this. This is what you came to Riga to do. It's time to do it. That is if I don't flip out and kill this man who somehow has the lung capacity to never stop screaming. It's only getting more difficult and colder and just fuckin' do it man.

Mike: He's right, Mikey.

Michael: Here, take it.

[Sound of a pistol cocking.]

Mikey: I know. I know this the challenge and why I came here and I have to do it. For Edgar. I'll do it so I can see Edgar again. I thought it would be... a lot easier.

Mike: Here, this will make you feel better: this man fucking kidnapped us, Mikey. He kept us for 4 months, remember that? Remember when he made us cut our arm off? It was that guy. He tortured us for funsies and he won't stop yelling so you should just fucking kill him, man. Just complete the fourth challenge and get it over with and then it's over. The WOE.BEGONE challenges are over again, don't you want that? Remember when we went back and helped ourselves complete the fourth challenge last time? That's sort of what we're doing for you now. But remember how you said to us that WOE.BEGONE had completely destroyed you and you wished that you had done the brave thing and just fucking died? Remember that? You wanted to be over so bad and you have to want to be over so bad now so could you please do it!

Mikey: I'm going to do it. I just have to do it on my own time, okay? I'm almost ready.
[Deep breath.]

Mikey: CANNONBALL. Topher Evans. You destroyed my life in a way you will never be able to fully comprehend. I have experienced pain and humiliation and loss on a scale only made possible by a technology that makes those concepts unlimited in their scopes. You are on the forefront of a more radical way to inflict suffering on the world. It truly transcends what I believed to be possible. I always feel like I am going to die or that I have been cursed to live forever by the consent of my participation in WOE.BEGONE, pitched radically from one side to the other often and without grace, feeling the bone-chilling ascent and descent every single time. You are the reason

that I shamble across this Earth, immortal dead man walking. I am going to kill you and you are going to die and I am going to have to cope with the terror that comes from knowing that won't be the end of things-- not for me and my suffering, but horrifyingly potentially not yours as well. You made a game where the stakes are life and death and games have conclusions. You made a game where the stakes are life and death, and games have conclusions. I can only hope that I can stop playing before the same thing happens to me. Goodbye, Topher. Good luck staying dead. We both need it.

[Gunshot. There is a long pause before anyone dares speak.]

Mikey: Wow, man.

Michael: Did you... write that speech?

Mikey: It's all I ever think about. [Pause.] So are we gonna move the body or what?

Mike: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, man. Umm... let's... go. It's time to go.

Michael: Now he's the one that needs time. I can't feel my fuckin' toes, man.

Mike: Yeah, yeah. Me and Michael will get him. Michael, if you'll get his legs, I'll get his head and we'll move him.

Mikey: [Sigh.] I did it. I did the 4th challenge. It's over. I don't have to kill anyone anymore.

Mike: I bet it's a big relief.

Mikey: And you're gonna send me home, right? Right after this, you're gonna send me home?

Mike: That's the plan. We just gotta get you there. We have an idea, it's just that it might not work perfectly. We don't have the WOE.BEGONE technology. We can't just send you where we want to. We're gonna figure it out, okay?

Mikey: Okay, if that's what you say, then that's what we're doing.

Michael: You gotta a long life ahead of you. Just look at me.

Mikey: I know. It just feels like the end of the world right now.

Mike: Okay, well, we did it, so let's go ahead and get this taken care of. Mikey, if you would grab the door--

[Loud time travel sounds happen.]

Mike: What the actual fuck, man? What the fuck?

Michael: To be clear, that wasn't the plan? You weren't secretly holding out on me that you could do that? We were going to smuggle him home, right?

Mike: Yeah, I can't do that. You can't do that. [Laughs.] I don't know what happened. We did the mission, though. Some things worked out.

Michael: Do you... think... he thought that was my actual voice?

Mike: Maybe not at the very end but for almost the whole time [laughing] yeah, I think he did. What was it supposed to be? You said "grizzled old man."

Michael: [Laughing.] Ok, so it was half Raylan Givens and half Senor Cartgage. Oh, man. But acting like a tough guy fucking saved our lives, dude. If I had been acting normal, we would have just died in that car. Neither of you said anything but I was shaking so hard when I did that. Oh my god.

Mike: Yeah. I guess our next mission is to figure out who the fuck that was and what they wanted. Did they know we were doing the 4th challenge? Did they know that Mikey was here? What was that? Very unexpected. And you bust out of the car like you were Butch fucking Cassidy, what was that? How did you do that?

Michael: 'Cause I'm smooth as butter, partner. [Laughs.] Man, I wish he hadn't teleported away. It's so much easier to hide a body with 3 people instead of 2. Fuck, there's 2 of them, too. I almost forgot. Okay, you set him down and get the door and we'll get this done already.

Mike: Yeah, I'm on it. Let's do that. What a day.

[Door closes.]

[End theme plays.]