

= Tome of the Unknown =

Tome of the Unknown , the full title of which is Tome of the Unknown : Harvest Melody , is a 2013 animated short film created by Patrick McHale . In the film , Wirt ( Elijah Wood ) , his brother Gregory ( Collin Dean ) , and Beatrice , a bluebird , head to the big city in search of an arcane book of all known things , meeting a vegetable man along the way .

Originally imagined as a three @-@ season television show , Cartoon Network asked for it to be a feature film . During production , the miniseries format that eventually became that for Over the Garden Wall was decided on . The film serves as the inspiration and pilot for the aforementioned miniseries , which premiered in 2014 . The network , whose animation studio produced the film , also served as distributor . Released in 2013 to multiple film festivals , Tome of the Unknown has received several accolades .

= = Plot synopsis = =

In a large forest simply called the " Unknown , " Wirt ( Elijah Wood ) and his brother Gregory ( Collin Dean ) walk with Beatrice ( Natasha Leggero ; later voiced by Melanie Lynskey in the miniseries ) , a bluebird who has gained the ability to speak . The three are on their way to the big city , in search of a book titled The Tome of the Unknown , which ? according to legend ? contains every forgotten thing . When their legs tire , Greg suggests they ride a goose , but Wirt doubts they could find one big enough to carry them , thus Greg wanders off and discovers a car that is made from vegetables , which both fascinates and confuses Wirt . The car 's owner , John Crops ( C. W. Stoneking ) , is likewise a vegetable humanoid . Crops wallows over his loneliness , wishing like the others to go the metropolitan area . Wirt offers , in exchange for Crops letting them keep the car , to drive Crops to the city , where he can hopefully find a soulmate .

A murder of giant crows attacks the vegetable car during the drive , forcing Wirt to veer off into a cornfield and crash into a scarecrow pole , which scares off the crows . Crops then reveals that they have arrived at the " big city , " which turns out to be an old @-@ fashioned small farm community in the middle of the cornfield . While Wirt and Beatrice try to repair the car , Greg wanders off with Crops and they explore the city 's gazebo garden party . Crops then bumps into a woman made of cabbage . Crops apologizes and there 's a sudden announcement that the party 's scheduled entertainment has been cancelled . Greg tells Crops that he could fill in for the party with his guitar and singing abilities , and the woman finds herself flattered after learning that Crops is a musician . Back at the car , Wirt , who can 't figure out how to fix the vehicle as all it is to him is a cluster of vegetables , and Beatrice , who recommends that all he had to do was turn the crank on the car 's front bumper to start the engine , knock over the scarecrow as they leave with the car working . This summons the giant crows , as well as giant turkeys , who terrorize the city and its vegetable inhabitants . Wirt and Beatrice drive up and pick up Greg , while Crops continues to woo the woman with his music , unaware of the chaos around him , even as a crow attacks one of the members of the band he 's performing with and as Wirt tries to get his attention . As Wirt , Greg , and Beatrice attempt to escape without Crops , they are set upon by the giant animals , who start to devour the vegetable car . As Wirt tries to fend them off , Greg suddenly jumps out of the car unnoticed . Suddenly , they hear Greg 's screams from the cornfield . The screams continue , until Wirt and Beatrice finally find Greg in the cornfield , unharmed and yelling with joy as he had finally found a goose big enough for them to ride . The city becomes peaceful once more , as Greg 's screams had scared the birds off forever , and John Crops goes back to his countryside home with his soulmate , the cabbage woman . Wirt , Gregory , Beatrice , and their new companion Goose , continue to travel onwards , deeper and deeper , into the Unknown .

= = Production = =

Tome of the Unknown is a short film directed by Patrick McHale , who also wrote and storyboarded it . Not long after he graduated college , McHale pitched the idea for the film , among other concepts

, to Cartoon Network . At the time , the network was considering the creation of a department for feature films , though this never came to fruition . McHale was asked if it was possible to adapt the idea for Tome of the Unknown to feature length . This proved unsuccessful as he felt it needed to be episodic , laying out plans for a full television series consisting of three seasons .

After working as a creative director and a writer for Adventure Time ? another Cartoon Network production ? on top of a new house and the birth of his child , the network again gave McHale an opportunity to pitch an idea . Having worked in animation for other people as well as on the short animated works of his own , but with nothing for him to call a " professional " piece , McHale did not anticipate the network to have it go further than the short . During production , reformatting the film to a miniseries and not as a traditional television adaptation was proposed by McHale and the network , tongue @-@ in @-@ cheek . Following its release , they both found the format more than suitable . Retitled as Over the Garden Wall , the miniseries was announced in May 2014 . Nick Cross , who worked as a background painter with layout designer Chris Tsirgiotis on Tome of the Unknown , was hired as the art director for the series .

= = Release and reception = =

Cartoon Network released Tome of the Unknown to several film festivals starting in 2013 , including the 20th anniversary of the Austin Film Festival on October 24 , 2013 , and the International Children 's Film Festival at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in May 2014 . At the Ottawa International Animation Festival , the film won an honorable mention as one of the best short animations for children on September 21 , 2013 . A Bruce Corwin Award for animation was given to the film at the 29th annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival in February 2014 , where it was screened in the previous month . Regarding its screening in Boston , Ethan Gilsdorf of The Boston Globe called the film marked by the presence of connections by celebrities , particularly Wood , while noting McHale for his work on Adventure Time .

The film saw digital distribution as part of the DVD release of the miniseries on September 8 , 2015 . The network previously released the film on their official website in May 2015 . Róbert Kovács @-@ Cohner of the Hungarian IGN gave it a high recommendation , calling the story beautiful as it occurs over the backgrounds . For their work on these backgrounds , Cross and Tsirgiotis earned juried Emmy Awards , as part of the 67th Primetime Creative Arts Emmy Awards .

= = External films = =

Official website

Tome of the Unknown at the Internet Movie Database