

# Episode 11: “The Lost Crossing”

November on the Kingston Peninsula meant frosted windows, early sunsets, and the slow, reluctant slide from Halloween chaos to Christmas cheer. But there was still something lingering in the air — not quite festive, not quite gone. The kind of feeling that made you keep the porch light on just a little longer than usual...

## Act I - Static

The power had gone out sometime before dawn.

Lisa noticed when her automatic coffee maker didn't beep and Alfie started howling at the microwave like it owed him money. She shuffled into the kitchen, wrapped in a cardigan that looked like it used to belong to a couch, and flicked the light switch a few times for good measure.

Nothing.

Casey came in rubbing her eyes. “Power's out all the way to Norton.”

Lisa grunted. “If this is because Amanda overloaded the deep fryer again, I swear—”

“It's not the fryer.”

It wasn't the weather, either. No wind, no storm. Just a crisp, still morning with fog rolling low across the river like breath on a mirror.

Out on the pub deck, Lisa stood with her coffee (handmade, old-school) and surveyed the river. The ferry ropes hung slack. No lights. No hum.

Aiden stepped outside behind her, wrapped in a plaid jacket two sizes too big. “Weird, huh? Usually they keep at least one ferry moving.”

Lisa frowned. “They don't float on vibes. Something's off.”

Alfie groaned, staring toward the water.

## Act II - The Ferry That Didn't Come

By noon, power still wasn't back, and locals had started trickling into the pub, half out of habit and half out of boredom. It wasn't unusual for the pub to fill up during outages — Glen had once called it “the Peninsula's backup generator.” Lisa made do with propane burners and battery lanterns, while Amanda and Casey argued over how to cook an omelette without pissing off the ancestors.

“Whisk first, then heat the pan!”

"You're a whisk!"

Trent showed up with Sydney and Nicole. Sydney clutched her weather journal and a folded paper marked "FIELD REPORT." Nicole had a tote bag full of snacks she claimed were "emergency rations."

"It's colder on the river than normal," Sydney said, serious. "Like, weird cold."

Lisa raised a brow. "You bring your little thermometer out again?"

"No," Sydney said. "I brought two."

Alfie grumbled near the wood stove, which Glen had just finished lighting. Jane appeared with Jolene, both bundled up in puffy coats, toting candles, and already halfway into a discussion about winter squash.

"The ferry's not running," Jolene said, dropping into a chair. "Whole line of cars stuck on the other side."

"They say the cables are fine," Jane added. "But something's wrong with the motors. Every time they try to move it, it shudders like it's hitting a wall."

Lisa's brows knit. "Mechanical?"

"Electrical," Glen chimed in, "but not the usual. My cousin works maintenance. Says the diagnostics are... screwy. Like the sensors can't even find the boat."

## **Act III - The Static Broadcast**

That's when John Struik walked in carrying a busted old radio wrapped in towels.

"Don't laugh," he said. "But this thing picked something up this morning. On a dead station."

He set the radio on the bar. Lisa rolled her eyes, but Aiden leaned in.

"Static?"

"Static," John confirmed. "But then... voices. Brief. Like they were underwater. Then it cut out."

Lisa sighed. "You know how this sounds, right?"

Sydney pulled her notebook closer. "Did it say anything?"

John looked at her thoughtfully. "Something like 'hold line' or 'do not cross.' But it was fuzzy."

From her usual corner, Maria sipped her tea. "November's thin," she said softly.

Everyone paused.

Lisa blinked. "Thin?"

"The air. The world. This is the time when things... slip through. Between now and winter, things don't always stay where they're supposed to."

Amanda made the sign of the cross with a spatula.

## **Act IV - The Walk Down**

By late afternoon, Sydney had assembled the core crew: Nicole, Natalie (in a cape and rain boots), and Aiden, who had volunteered purely because he "had nothing better to do and wanted to stretch his legs."

They took the long path down past the ferry landing — Lisa insisted she'd be watching from the deck, which gave her the best view and quickest access to coffee.

The fog thickened near the water. The ropes of the ferry were still, taut but lifeless.

Then they saw it — not the ferry, but another shape.

A boat. Small. Wooden. Half-sunk near the reeds. Not a ferry, but something older. Rough.

Sydney edged closer. "What the..."

On its side was a faint marking — the same spiral flame symbol from previous sightings.

Nicole backed up. "I don't like this."

Natalie stood her ground. "I command thee to reveal thy name!"

The fog moved.

And then, just once, they heard it — a bell. Faint. Metal against metal. Like a ferry horn, if it were underwater.

Aiden looked around. "Okay. That's enough nature for today."

They turned and walked back, the mist closing behind them.

## **Act V - Reflections**

Back at the pub, Lisa was waiting with hot drinks and blankets. Jolene helped Natalie peel off her wet socks. Sydney sat with her notebook, writing furiously.

Lisa looked over at Alfie. "He'd call us all ridiculous and pour himself a dram," she said softly, thinking of Nick. "But he'd want to know what the

kids found. He always had a soft spot for ghost stories... even if he pretended not to."

The lights flickered.

Everyone froze.

Then, slowly, the jukebox lit up on its own — no one had touched it. The old one, tucked near the corner.

A single song clicked on.

"Crossing Over" by The Rankin Family.

Lisa stared. "That song hasn't worked in years."

Glen crossed himself. Jane muttered something about "the thin air." Amanda dropped her spatula.

Sydney looked at the river.

"I don't think it was the ferry that failed," she whispered. "I think something didn't want it to come."

To be continued...