

Secret Family Recipes

Emily McClain





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SECRET FAMILY RECIPES

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CAST

IRENE: Dead woman in her 50s.

MADAM CHRISTIE: Psychic of indeterminate age.

SUZANNE: Irene's sister. Mid-50s.

Place

The Reading Room of Madam Christie's Psychic Assistance business.

Time

The Present.

SECRET FAMILY RECIPES

Setting: Madam Christie's Reading Room. A round table covered with a neatly pressed tablecloth holds decks of tarot cards, a small crystal ball, and essential oil diffuser. Two chairs on either side of the table.

At Rise: Madam Christie enters carrying two cups of tea on a small tray. She sets the tray down and checks her watch, making a "countdown" motion as she waits for the knock she knows is coming. Suzanne knocks on the door offstage.

CHRISTIE: Hello! Please, come in! Welcome, welcome.

(Suzanne enters. She is nicely dressed, a little preppy. Not the sort of person who normally seeks the help of a psychic. She enters, a little unsure of what to do.)

SUZANNE: Um... Hello? I'm looking for... Madam Christie? Is that-- are you...?

CHRISTIE: Yes, I'm Madam Christie. *(Suzanne sits, holding her purse in her lap)*

SUZANNE: Well... This is... different than what I was expecting.

CHRISTIE: Really? What were you expecting?

SUZANNE: Oh you know...Dim lights, patchouli incense burning so your eyes water, tapestries and pillows everywhere...

CHRISTIE: Well... I have a diffuser...but it's mostly for my sinuses. The heat in this place makes the air so dry! I don't have patchouli though...sorry. How about peppermint?

SUZANNE: No, that's really ok.

CHRISTIE: Just trying to meet expectations.

SUZANNE: I'm fine.

CHRISTIE: Ok. *(pause)* So... How can I help you today?

SUZANNE: I feel a little... Well, look, I've tried everything else and... I mean, I don't normally do things...like this...but I really need to talk to her—

CHRISTIE: You want to contact someone on the other side?

SUZANNE: Yes! Yes! My sister, Irene.

CHRISTIE: I see. And how long ago did she pass?

SUZANNE: Two years ago. Cancer.

CHRISTIE: I'm sorry.

SUZANNE: (briskly) Yeah, it was sad. So, is that something you think you can do? Reach out to her... spirit? Soul? I'm not familiar with the proper nomenclature, sorry.

CHRISTIE: It's not an unusual request. Family members often wish to speak to the recently deceased.

SUZANNE: Wonderful! Oh, Madam Christie, you have no idea how much it will mean to me—ok, how does it work? Can we do it now?

CHRISTIE: (*bemused*) I have another appointment in a few minutes, but if you would like to try to see? The spirit realm is particularly active right now so I cannot guarantee we will be able to locate her but—

SUZANNE: I really need to talk to her for a few minutes. I promise I'll make it quick. Please.

CHRISTIE: All right. What is her full name?

SUZANNE: Her name is Irene. Irene Elizabeth Blanton.

CHRISTIE: All right. And... do you happen to have anything of your sister's? A possession that was hers when she was alive?

SUZANNE: (*rummages in her purse*) Um... let's see... well... I think this pen might have been from her house...

(She produces a cheap Bic pen from the depths of her purse. Christie reaches out and takes the pen, holding it in her hand and closing her eyes. She may hum or rock back and forth as she “summons” to the spirit realm. Suzanne watches intently)

SUZANNE: Well? Are you getting anything?

CHRISTIE: *(without opening her eyes)* Please! I need silence to concentrate my energies. *(pause)* Spirits of the quiet realm! I seek Irene Elizabeth Blanton! *(pause, to Suzanne)* They’re looking for her. *(pause)* Irene... Irene Blanton! *(pause)* No... It’s not Nicky. Her sister wishes to speak to her. *(pause)* Her sister?

SUZANNE: Her only sister! It’s me! Irene, it’s Suzanne! She knows it’s me. She’s just being stubborn.

CHRISTIE: *(standing, working her psychic energies up as she waves the pen around)* Spirits of the Quiet Realm! Please ask Irene Blanton to join us! Her sister has a great need to speak with her!

(The lights dim and brighten a few times. Suzanne looks around suddenly nervous. Christie opens her eyes. a few moments of silence and Christie shrugs, going to hand the pen back to Suzanne. Suddenly there is a loud clap of thunder and Irene enters, sulking. She is dressed in a simple grey dress.)

IRENE: Two years I wait for someone to come visit and it’s not my husband? It’s my SISTER?!?

CHRISTIE & SUZANNE: AHHHHH!

CHRISTIE: Oh my god!

SUZANNE: Irene! It’s you! It’s really you! God, you look...you look good!

IRENE: Yeah. Dying of cancer really does wonders for your figure.

CHRISTIE: I... I’ve never had someone materialize...physically. This is—wow, I don’t—

IRENE: Yes, yes, it’s amazing. I was in the middle of something so if we could just *(snapping her fingers)* move this along. What do you want, Suzanne?

SUZANNE: You know what I want.

IRENE: (*laughing*) You called me back from the dead for that? This is beyond petty, even for you.

SUZANNE: I've looked everywhere! I went through every drawer, every box in your pack-rat hovel! Where is it?

IRENE: I know. I watched you for a while.

SUZANNE: I bet you did.

CHRISTIE: I'm—I'm sorry, if I could just step in for a second—

SUZANNE: Not now. I need to find that book, Irene. This is serious. Please.

IRENE: Mother left it to me. If she had wanted you to have it, she would have made that clear.

SUZANNE: You're both dead! Neither one of you need it now!

CHRISTIE: If I could just step in for a moment—

IRENE: (*overlapping*) She didn't think you were good enough to handle it! She told me!

SUZANNE: That's a lie!

IRENE: (*grinning*) Ok, you're right. I haven't seen Mom over here since I died.

SUZANNE: Wait- (*to Christie*) What does that mean?

CHRISTIE: Um... Who can say?

IRENE: Nothing good, that's what that means.

SUZANNE: Irene, please. Just tell me where the book is. Where did you put it?

IRENE: I just don't think you're ready. It's a big responsibility.

CHRISTIE: What book are you talking about?

IRENE: I thought you were psychic.

CHRISTIE: I am! I just... don't like to use my energy for those types of questions...

SUZANNE & IRENE: Huh.

IRENE: My sister wants our family recipe book. It's been in our family for generations. Passed down from mother to eldest daughter for over 100 years. It's a treasured collection—

SUZANNE: And my sister hid it somewhere before she died! Now it's gone!

IRENE: I didn't have any children. No one to pass it on to anyway.

SUZANNE: What about me? Why couldn't you leave it to me?

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!