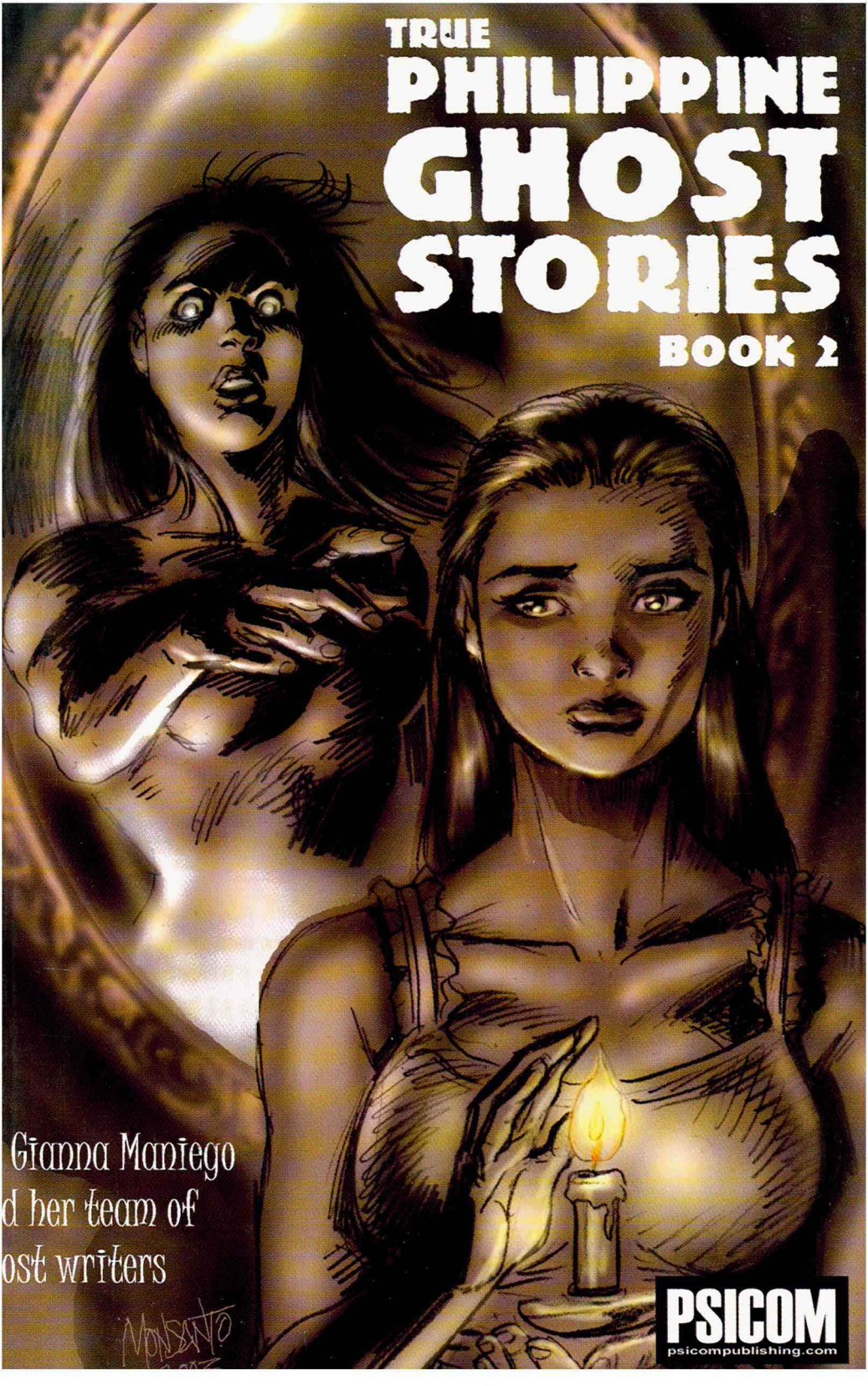
TRUE PHILIPPINE GHOST STORIES

BOOK 2



Gianna Maniego
d her team of
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TRUE PHILIPPINE GHOSTSTORIES BOOK II

By Gianna Maniego and Her Team of Ghost Writers

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First Printing 2003
Printed by PSICOM Publishing Inc.
Quezon City, Philippines

Cover by Gilbert Monsanto

Special thanks to Perspective Lifestyle Magazine, Pinoyexchange.com, and BuynCell.com.

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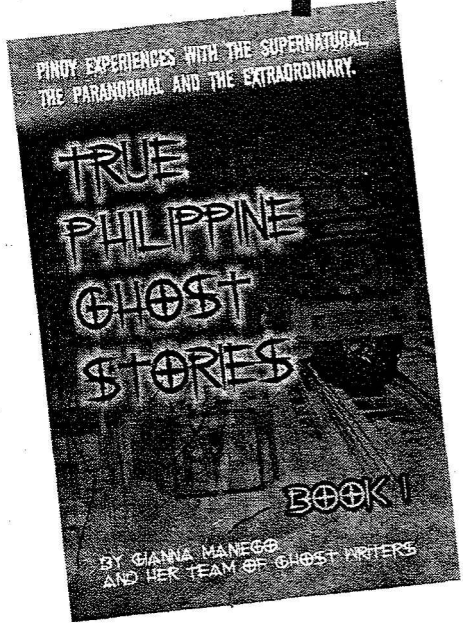

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FACT OR FAKE?

From the e-mail...

Hi! Just wanted to send you this photo taken this week at eastwood libis. 3 silang magkaibigan namasyal dun, may dala yung isa na celfon 7250 ata, yung may video & camera. Then nagpakuha silang 2 (girls) dun sa kasama nila. Picture taking lang. Then after that nakita nila sa screen ng celfon 7250 may kasama na sila sa photo nakahawak sa braso nung isang girl sa leftside unknowingly. Di nila na feel or nakita kasi dalawa lang talaga sila na nagpa picture dun sa isa nilang kasama. The girls were really shouting & shocked to see the picture taken after a minute. Remember nacapture ng video ang hindi nila nakita in actual. Grabe this is true kasi friend ng daugther ng boss ko ang involved dito. They immediately forwarded the picture message to my boss then dinala sa office. Yun pinakita sa amin last tuesday. I was really gulat kakatakot talaga grabe totoo eto. They are just magbarkada having gimik at libis that night then picture2 ayun may kasama pala sila all the while. We really need to pray for GOD'S PRESENCE ALL THE TIME especially sa gabi.....cely

The bathroom ghost

Jonathan Celeste

This story was told to me by my officemate. Marie (not her real name) has a gift — a third eye. As a clairvoyant, she has the ability to see ghosts and spirits, experience the paranormal, and communicate with the spirit world. It is both a gift and a curse.

But Marie has to live with it, because she was born with that ability. Marie's mother has the same gift. In her family, power runs stronger among the females than males.

One day Marie woke up to a blinding headache. She felt like someone was drilling inside her head. Her migraine was acting up again.

She decided not to go to work and get some rest instead. Safely ensconced in her bed, she slept the day away, never leaving her room the whole day. (Marie lived alone in a studio on the third floor of a condo unit.)

In the middle of the night, she woke up to answer the call of nature. Still half asleep, she headed for the bathroom. After finishing up, she padded her way back to her bed but her attention was caught by a slight movement on her left.

Seated on the sofa of her living room was an old woman wearing a white towel tied at the chest, like she just had shower! The old woman was drying her hair with another towel.

Marie stifled her shout of surprise. Creeping closer to the old woman, she peered at the figure seated on her settee. There was something familiar about her, Marie thought.

She was taken aback when she realized it was her favorite old aunt, the one who lived in Davao!

"How did she get in here?" Marie wondered. "Wow, was I that tired that I didn't hear her come in?"

What was she doing hereall the way from Davao, Marie thought, delighted yet at the same time bewildered. Her aunt was in her late 60s and she found it difficult to travel.

She was about to call out "Auntie, how are you?" when her aunt turned her head towards Marie. Their eyes crossed and then, something happened that really raised the hair on the back of Marie's neck: her aunt slowly disintegrated into thin air! She looked like she went up in smoke!

"OH MY LORD!" was all Marie could say.

Was that a premonition or a dream? Feeling a disturbing sense of foreboding that something wrong might have happened to her favorite aunt Marie ran to her room and immediately dialed her mom's number.

"Hello, Ma"

"Yes, Marie."

"You know what?"

"I know." Her mom sounded like she knew what Marie was going to say.

"I saw auntie right here in my pad! Something wrong must have happened to her! How is she? Did you talk to her recently? I don't know what to do!"

At that, Marie poured the whole story out to her Mom, who tried several times to interrupt.

When Marie finally finished relating her experience, her mom told her that her aunt passed away hours before their conversation. She had succumbed to complications brought by diabetes.

Marie broke down and cried. She hadn't seen her favorite aunt in the past five years! Now they'll never see each other again.

Marie put the phone down and cried all night till she fell asleep.

Due to her hectic schedule in the office, Marie wasn't able to attend her aunt's funeral but she offered prayers for her departed loved one.

Three days after the interment, something spooky happened again to Marie.

She arrived home from office at around 10 that evening. As she was opening her door, she saw three butterflies coming out of her room.

Marie knew that sometimes spirits take the form of butterflies and visit their living relatives. She took this as a significant sign.

The three bright brown large butterflies hovered near her head. Suddenly, she felt something cold. She felt the peculiar presence of someone else joining her in her pad.

This frightened her for she had a feeling the three butterflies were her aunt, her uncle and her dad.

Although she was used to spirits making their presence felt to her, she was scared of the idea that her loved ones, someone she knew, would be manifesting themselves to her.

She frantically grabbed the doorknob and stumbled into her pad. She wanted to run and hide under the covers of her bed.

As the butterflies neared her, smoke began forming out of

thin air. Slowly it began taking the shape of a woman.

BANG!!!

She kicked the door shut before the figure could fully materialize and locked it tight.

She then jumped straight into bed, skipping dinner and escaping another scary apparition. ❑

The Ghost on Dimasalang Street

Gerrilyn Cadiz

There is a very a thin line that separates the world of the living from that of the spirits. Many believe that in this age of tech nology, but we actually co-exist with them. I see them.

No, I am not trying to cash in on that current Bruce Willis blockbuster. But just like the boy Cole in the movie, I do not know why I see them or why they appear to me, they just do. And no, I am not mentally challenged. I am a stable person, with a pretty logical mind.

I was eight years old when I had my first ghostly experience. I saw my dead aunt cradling my baby brother in bed. I never told this to anybody for fear that no one would believe me. What are the chances of a grown up actually believing an eight-year-old? Besides, we've always been told that dead people really do appear to their living relatives. Even an older cousin claimed to have seen the spirit of our dead aunt.

The problem is, after that incident, I seem to be seeing more of them –spirits who walk around, passing right in front of me, oblivious of their surroundings (I guess).

I never really felt scared about these apparitions since they never really bothered with me. They were only fleeting images. Glimpses of people who are there but not real. Like, you're walking on the street, and then all of a sudden, someone crosses your path. There's that initial feeling of confusion, disorientation, and fascination. Then you move on.

But never did I imagine I would come face to face with a ghost so horrible, so angry, so disturbing and so beautiful.

It happened a year ago. We had just moved into this house on Dimasalang St., in Baclaran. It was a nice house. New, actually. The truth is, I wasn't expecting to see any of my "Gremlins" (as my close friends call these entities I see) there because, like I said, the house was newly constructed. It had only been vacant for a month before we moved in. And the house looked pretty normal. With its fresh green paint and light-blue grilled gate, it could pass for any house in any given neighborhood.

One night, I came home late. It was humid, so I decided to take a bath before retiring to bed. I remember wanting to open the windows, but decided against it at the last minute. I was in the middle of reading "All My Pretty Horses" when I finally fell asleep.

Until now, I couldn't put my finger on what exactly it was that broke my sleep that night. All I know is that it was so cold, I broke out in goose pimples all over. Before I even opened my eyes, I distinctly felt a presence with me in the room. It took me awhile to adjust my eyesight in the dark, but when I did, I saw an outline of a female form standing at the foot of my bed. Instinct told me it wasn't my mother. Nor was it human.

I remember closing my eyes, a silent prayer playing on my lips. And though fear ruled my whole being that night, I couldn't help being curious.

So I opened my eyes again. She was still there –her long, dark hair swaying from the breeze (or was it from the electric fan?), her beautiful face marred by the expression of pain and controlled hostility in her eyes.

I wanted to scream. I'd never felt so weak and helpless in my entire life. Thought escaped me, and I felt so weak, my limbs felt like they'd turned to jelly. I felt as if something was drilling at the base of my skull and my soul was desperately trying to escape from my body. This must be what naked fear feels like.

All this time, the entity simply stood there, watching me with fiery eyes that seemed to consume me. Then, suddenly, she vanished. The drilling stopped and my soul settled once again inside my body. I couldn't go back to bed after that. I buried myself under the bedcovers and waited for dawn to come.

I told my mother about it the following day, not fully expecting her to believe my story. To my surprise, she answered, " I saw it too".

Since then, the ghost appears from time to time. So much so that she has an added member of our household, like a boarder or something. However, she does not linger long enough to stare at me anymore. She just passes by. Now I've gotten so used to her that I am no longer as frightened as I felt that night –even if I see her passing through the bathroom walls while I'm taking a bath. ❑

whispers

By Judy May Geronimo

I used to be Daddy's little girl.

I was very close to him. We did everything together—went to the mall, to Church, to kiddie parties...

I hardly remember doing things with my mom, most of my early memories were tied up with my Dad.

You could say I was spoiled by my Dad. He usually gave me what I asked for, within reason.

"Daddy *bili mo ako ng* rubber shoes (Dad please buy me rubber shoes)" I would ask.

"*Sige anak, pumili ka lang* (Go ahead, choose what you want)," he would usually answer.

He would also do the same thing for my sister and brother, but my Dad and I shared a special bond.

All that changed when I was in second year high school. That year, my Dad suffered a mild stroke and he became an invalid.

In the beginning we had to hire a guy nurse to help us in taking care of him, because my Dad was a tall guy.

But because of what happened, my mom became the breadwinner in the family and we all had to tighten our belts. There were five of us in the family — my parents, my sister, my baby brother and I.

Pretty soon, money became too tight and eventually, we had to let go the services of the nurse. This meant we would have to take up the slack of taking care of my Dad, assisting him as he moved about in the house.

Trying to make it easier for us, he volunteered to sleep in our living room instead of the bedroom upstairs. He knew that we would have a hard time taking care of him because we were all girls (except for my kid brother) and he was so big.

This made life a little easier. But I missed spending time with him. So from then on, I would do my homework in our living room to keep him company and I would always feel sad at the end of the day whenever I had to leave him downstairs.

One day, I gave him a gift.

"Daddy *o, sa iyo ito. Binili ko yan para sa iyo* (Daddy this is yours. I bought it for you)."

It was a rosary that I had bought from school. I told him to put the rosary under his pillow so that he would not get scared and lonely should he awake in the middle of the night.

"*Salamat anak,*" my Dad said, then we hugged.

It took a while for him to recover because we did not have enough money to continue his therapy. So his health slowly deteriorated.

All of us took turns in checking up on him throughout the night.

One night, it was my turn to check up on him. I went downstairs half awake when I heard whispers coming from our garden.

"*Ano, kunin na natin mamaya yan* (So do you think it's time to fetch him later)?" said the first voice.

"*Wag muna, bantayan pa natin nang ilang gabi* (No, not yet. Let's watch over him for a few more nights)," said another voice.

"*Wala tayong madadala nyan* (But we have nothing to bring)," said a third voice

"*Mahirap din e, may bantay* (It's difficult because someone stands guard all the time)," said the first voice again.

I ran to the window, but I couldn't see anybody in the garden. I was so scared. I knew they were talking about my Dad but I didn't know what to do, or how to save him from the voices.

I hit the switch, flooding our living room with light. I ran to my Dad and hugged him tight.

"NO!" I shouted at the voices I heard in the garden. "*Hindi niyo pwedeng kunin and* Daddy *ko! Hindi niyo siya makukuha sa amin. Mahal na mahal naming siya!* (No, you can't take my Daddy away from us because we love him so much.)"

My Dad was startled awake.

"*O bakit? Ano ba yang pinagsisisigaw mo diyan? Binangungot ka ba?* (What happened? What are your shouting about? Did you have a nightmare?)" my Dad asked, trying to shake his sleepiness away.

At that, the whispers subsided and eventually faded into the darkness.

As my Dad lay awake in our sofa. I rushed upstairs to wake up my mom, my sister and my brother.

I told them what I heard. They all grew scared as well. Who could the voices be?

"*Baka demonyo!* (They could be devils!)" my brother said in a

scared voice.

"Buti na lang may bantay daw si Daddy (It's a good thing Daddy had someone guarding him)!" I cried.

At first I thought the "bantay" the voices talked about was me. But then I realized they meant the rosary I had given my Dad.

From then on, we all decided to sleep in our living room with my Dad.

For a long time afterward, I pondered on who these voices were.

Then I remembered something my grandmother told me several years ago, when I was still a kid.

She said that when a person is on his or her deathbed, beings come to "fetch" his or her soul. Sometimes these are the spirits of dead relatives or family members.

But there are also bad spirits who would try to intercept these souls. According to my *lola*, these *manunundo* do nothing but wait for dying people to finally expire so they could get their souls and bring it to hell with them.

Could they have been these beings? ❑

Bloodstains in the comfort room

By Judy May Geronimo

A friend of mine told me this story of a tormented soul haunting the building where she works.

My friend works for the Daily Tribune. Her office occupies the 9th and the last floor of a building along T. Kalaw.

Several years ago, when they first moved into the said building, my friend and her fellow-employees were warned about working late in the building because of supposed strange and eerie goings-on particularly in the comfort room on their floor.

According to them, the elevator, a creaky old type that moved at a snail's pace, would often act up whenever someone was working late in the building, sometimes it would stop, but when the doors open, there would be no one there to get in. sometimes the light inside the vestibule would flicker on and off.

Sometimes there would be sounds of a woman sobbing and

crying for help. "*Tulungan niyo ako, maawa na kayo* (Please help me, have mercy on me)."

They also warned the newsmen that weird occurrences happen in the comfort room on the 9th floor, like faucets being turned on by themselves, etcetera.

At first, the newsmen shrugged off these tales as regular ghost stories associated with buildings. But several days later, they began experiencing strange things as well.

Many of them are needed until the newspaper is put to bed by 11 o'clock every night, so a lot of them stay in the office quite late.

As a result, many of them have experienced the weird occurrences in the building.

One day, the whole newsroom was shaken by a bloodcurdling scream coming from the comfort room. Dropping everything, everyone rushed over to the bathroom and there, one of the proofreaders stood speechless in front of the mirror. With a look of horror plastered on her face, the proofreader pointed silently to the mirror.

Blood was splattered all over the mirror!

All of a sudden the faucets began turning themselves on. Everybody fled the bathroom to the safety of the newsroom, where they hurriedly put the paper to bed so they could all go home.

After that, nobody wanted to go to the comfort room alone.

After a few weeks of that, the strange manifestations transferred to the offices. Swivel chairs would turn on their own, computers would switch on and off late at night, and late-night staffers would sometimes hear the clickety-clack of keyboards although no one was working on them.

Then they heard that one of the guards in the building actually resigned because he was spooked by an apparition. He claimed he saw the distorted and bloody face of a woman, while he was doing his rounds.

After months of fear, some of the employees contacted spirit

questors to help them get to the root of the weird sightings. But their editor-in-chief did not want to believe their ghost story and refused to cooperate.

"*Haynaku. Kalokohan lang yan* (That's nonsense). Just concentrate on your jobs," she said.

"*E ma'am para lang me* peace of mind *kami pag nagtatrabaho, lalo na sa gabi* (It's only for our own peace of mind, specially when we work late at night)," one of the proofreaders said.

So they proceeded with the session. The spirit questors called on the spirit of the woman whose bloody face spooked the guard into resigning.

After contacting the woman, they proceeded to probe what happened to her. According to the spirit questors, it was like watching everything on television or the silver screen. The woman gave a vivid scenario of what had transpired in the past.

The building was once a condominium. And among the occupants of the building was the woman and her husband.

The woman, a beautiful mestiza, was a battered wife. Her husband would slap her around and drag her across the floor for the slightest infraction of his rules. And he would keep hitting her until she was bruised and bloodied.

"Parang awa mo na, tama na (Please have mercy, stop already)," she would plead over and over again, to no avail.

It seemed as though her husband derived great pleasure from seeing her suffer.

One day, her husband came home and shouted for her to come out of the bedroom. When she came, he slapped her hard across the right cheek. The force of the blow pushed her to the ground.

"*Ano ba? Bakit mo ako sinampal* (What did you hit me for)?" the woman cried indignantly. Her husband didn't speak.

Instead, he dragged her from the living room to the comfort room by the hair until her scalp bled. There she was hit again and

again.

Finally, he slammed her head into the bath tub, splitting her skull wide open and killing her on the spot. Blood spurted all over the bathroom, on the walls, on the floor, on the bathtub, on the bathroom mirror...

The woman died not knowing why her husband was punishing her.

The questors asked the woman what they could do to alleviate her pain. She said she was looking for a Koran, the Islamic Bible.

The building has been renovated a long time ago. They were not sure where to look for a Koran, nor who to ask about it.

Because of this, her anguished soul continues to haunt the building, pleading with unsuspecting office workers to help her, and leaving bloodstains in the comfort room, etc.

As far as I know, she is there still. ❑

St. Elmo's Fire

By Jherry Barrinuevo

I love hamburgers! Ever since I was a kid these have been my favorite fast food. I used to eat two jumbo burgers every snack time during my elementary days. Now, I can eat up to five burgers in one sitting.

I can still remember that my friends and I had a favorite burger stand beside our school that we frequented during *merienda* (snack time). We would go there and eat all the burgers that we could afford after playing hide and seek or tag after school hours.

The burger stand not only sold hamburgers but also waffles and shakes, which were also my favorites. My favorite combination is burgers and mango shake. This is what I would always order at the burger stand.

But one day, something weird happened that almost killed my appetite for hamburger.

Before that, let me explain something.

Our school is an old school that dates back to World War II. According to the old timers, the school was once used as a barracks during the Japanese occupation. It is said that many executions were held in our school and a lot of Filipino soldiers were beheaded by the Japanese.

Because of this, there are lots of ghost stories in my school.

There are stories of *kapres* (half-human, half-horse supernatural beings) sitting under the tree during the daytime. Or sometimes stories of apparitions or ghostly manifestations. Some of the teachers have even reported seeing the head of a girl in the library windows early in the morning.

Sometimes, ghostly footsteps are heard along the corridors by those unfortunate enough to stay late in school.

Security guards also relate stories of chairs and tables flying inside a classroom during the night.

But for the most part, I was oblivious to these ghost stories. A skeptic, I usually didn't believe anything unless they happened to me personally. What preoccupied me back then was eating and playing. Even studies would have taken a backseat if it weren't for my Mom who would nag me to review my assignments. Oftentimes, we would not go home at once, but sit in the back of the school to review my lessons.

The back of the school is where the college department is located. There were only a few students enrolled at the time, so there were only a few people usually around in the afternoons and the place is quiet.

One day after my third quarter final examinations, my mom decided to treat me by letting me play the whole afternoon with my friends and giving me money to buy burgers afterwards.

I literally played till I dropped. Afterwards, tired and satisfied from my afternoon activity, my friend Danny and I headed toward our favorite burger stand to have *merienda*.

As we stood eating, I saw a flash of light coming from the back, as if someone was taking our pictures.

"*Ano yun* (What's that)?" I asked, curious.

"*Alin* (What)?" Danny asked.

Fascinated, I locked my gaze on the flashes of light. Brighter and brighter, the flashes seemed to be coming closer. A few inches from my face, it stopped and formed itself into a luminous shining ball of silver, the size of a coconut.

The ball was floating in midair!

The shining silver ball hovered for a while in front of me before flying up into the sky and disappearing instantly.

I glanced at my friend and noticed that he was also startled by what he just saw. We both stood shocked and speechless, our burgers half eaten..

"*Ale nakita niyo ba yung bolang silver* (Did you see the ball of silver)?" I asked

The vendor shook her head. "Wala naman akong nakita eh. Ano ba yun (I didn't see anything. What was it anyway)?"

She said maybe it was just a spark from one of the Meralco wires above us.

But we knew that what we saw was something out of the ordinary. It wasn't just a spark but a shining silver flying ball.

Later, when I graduated from college, I began to ponder in earnest about that weird incident.

I've told some of my psychic friends about it but even they can't explain it. They say it could have been an orb or some sort of St. Elmo's fire.

St. Elmo's Fire is a ball of fire that usually appears during the night. It is said that it symbolizes a dead soldier.

Could the shining silver ball I saw have been the soul of one of the soldiers executed during World War II?

I still don't know to this day. ❑

Makati Ghost Stories

This one has been going around for some time.An elderly doctor at the Makati Medical Center was riding the elevator going down to the lobby. Next to him is another patient. A bell sounds and the car door swings open. In front of the pair stands a young boy. The little boy asks: "Down?" The doctor looks up and down the young man and, with a slight crackling in his voice, answers: "No, this is going up." He then presses the button to close the elevator door and sends the car on its way.

The patient, confused, asks: "Why didn't you let him ride with us. This car is going down anyway." The doctor looks to the patient and says, "He was my patient a week ago. He died of leukemia."

There is a short silence. The patient then asks: "How do you know he died?" The doctor glances back and says, "Well, he has a blue band on his ankle. That means he's dead."

The patient sticks out her foot and asks the doctor: "Oh, you mean like the one I have?" ❑

So the story goes that at the Insular Life Building, which sits opposite the BPI building at the corner of Paseo and Ayala, has it's own share of ghoulies.

A man pulling in late hours left his office from the 9th floor around 3 in the morning. Taking the elevator down, the car stopped at the 7th floor. As the doors parted, a young woman's face peered into view: "Going up?" The man responded: "No, going down." She smiles and says, "Thank you." As the elevator closes, the man thinks to himself, "Wow, she's really pulling in the hours."

Upon alighting in the building lobby, curious, he walks over to the lobby guard and asks: "Who is the woman in the 7th floor? Why is she working so late? It's almost 3 in the morning." The guard, unsurprised, says, "There are no offices in the 7th floor — it's all vacant. You must have seen the daughter of the building's owner. She jumped from the 12th floor a long time ago. Sad, sad story. When she hit the 7th floor, she got decapitated."

The man's jaw drops. The guard continues: "Which is why you only see her head when she peers into the elevator." ❑

Food trip

By Gianna Maniego

"Watch out for that pothole!"

Claire clutched her husband's arm as the car they had rented lurched into a ditch. Mario tried to avoid it by swerving to the left, but the right rear wheel still hit the pothole.

"Tsk *mag ingat ka naman* (Be careful)," Claire chided her husband.

"Sorry, sorry," Mario apologized.

It was nearly noon and they were both cranky after chugging along for two hours along bad roads. The couple had rented a car upon arriving at the Bacolod airport. They were on their way to Claire's hometown in the hinterlands of Negros.

It was a combination business trip and family visit for the two. Claire was back to visit her relatives, who still lived in the old hometown, after almost 10 years' absence. She was there to introduce her

husband to her *Lola*.

Mario, on the other hand, was assigned to do an ocular inspection of his company's latest fastfood site. He worked for a food conglomerate that was currently expanding operations in the provinces. The Bacolod outlet is the company's first in the Visayas area.

Since Claire's hometown was far from the city proper, Mario needed a car to transport him to and fro in the next three days. So the couple decided it was more convenient to rent a car.

But now, faced with a long stretch of deserted road that was pockmarked with potholes, renting a car didn't seem like such a good idea.

"*Wala bang gasolinahan dito o kainan na pwedeng tigilan. Gutom na ako* (Isn't there any gasoline station around here, or restaurant where we can stop and rest for a while)?" Mario asked.

"*Oo nga, kailangan ko din mag*-CR. *Naku, hindi ko na ma*-recognize *yung ibang mga tindahan dito* (I know, I have to go to the restroom too. But I don't recognize any of the stores here anymore)," Claire answered, peering at the passing scenery.

"*Ayun* (Over there)!" she pointed to a cafeteria standing apart from the other houses. "That looks like a restaurant."

Mario pulled into the parking lot. As they got out of the car, Claire and Mario noticed there were a lot of vehicles in the lot. Some of them looked like vintage cars.

"*Naku baka puno* (Oh no, the place might be full)," Claire muttered.

Pushing the door open, the couple was taken by surprise to see the place nearly empty of customers. Only two or three of the 20 tables were occupied by one or two people who were eating quietly.

"*Magandang tanghali, tuloy po kayo* (Good afternoon, please come in)," a waitress met them at the door, ushered them to a table near the airconditioner, and handed them menus.

"*Ang specialty po namin ay bulalo, baka gusto niyong subukan*

(Our specialty is bulalo, you might like to try it)," the waitress smilingly suggested.

The couple agreed to try it. After taking their orders, the waitress relayed them through a swinging door.

Claire looked around. The restaurant was very spacious. It was decorated in the old Spanish style typical of most houses in Negros, with lace curtains framing big capiz windows and overhead rotating fans. The floor was of narra planks that were polished to a brilliant shine.

The tables were not made of formica or monobloc, like many of the modern restaurants, but of real wood, and covered with lace tabletops with vases of flowers on each.

"*Ang ganda naman nitong* restaurant *na ito. Bakit hindi ko maalala ito* (This is a fabulous restaurant. How come I don't remember this)?" Claire wondered.

When the food came, they both dug in.

"Wow, this is really good ha," Mario remarked as he helped himself to more rice and bulalo.

"*Oo nga*. Do you think we can get the recipe? I've never tasted bulalo this great before," Claire agreed in between mouthfuls.

When the waitress passed by, Claire tapped her on the shoulder and asked what's the secret of their recipe because she hadn't tasted food that delicious before.

The waitress only smiled and said, "The secret is in the ingredients."

"Hmmm...I wonder what they put. Must be some secret herb," Mario said, glancing at his watch. "*Aba, 4:30 na pala, tara na. Baka abutin tayo ng dilim sa daan. Malayo pa ba tayo* (Oh no, it's already 4:30, we have to get going if we want to reach your home before dark. Is it still far)?"

"No *naman*, it's just two towns away," Claire answered.

After paying the bill, which the waitress took a long time in

fetching, the couple hurriedly left the restaurant, promising to stop by the next time they were in the vicinity. They wondered briefly about the vehicles in the parking lot, but were in too much of a hurry to dwell on them.

They finally arrived at the house of Claire's grandparents just as dusk was falling. They were greeted by her Lola Ninay and other relatives who lived nearby.

"Why are all the lights on?" Claire asked.

"*Aynaku*, we were so worried about you. We were expecting you before lunch. What happened, did you lose your way?" her Tita Sally answered.

"No, we didn't get lost, *pero* we stopped by this restaurant along the highway and somehow we lost track of time," Mario explained.

"Which restaurant?" Lola Ninay asked.

"Two towns back, along the highway," Claire described the vicinity of the restaurant.

"There are no restaurants in that area. Is it newly built?" Claire's Tita Lucita asked.

"I don't think so, it's like an old Spanish house actually. With capiz windows and narra floors," Mario recalled.

Her Lola and titas exchanged worried glances.

"What is it? Is there something wrong?" Mario asked, beginning to get worried.

"Did you notice any cars in the parking lot?" they asked.

The couple nodded vigorously.

"As a matter of fact, we did! But when we got inside, there weren't that many customers!"

"*Susmaryosep. Muntikan na kayo. Mabuti na lang nakaalis kayo dun nang bago kumagat ang dilim.* (Good grief! You had a close call. It's a good thing you managed to leave before dark)," Tita Sally ex-

claimed.

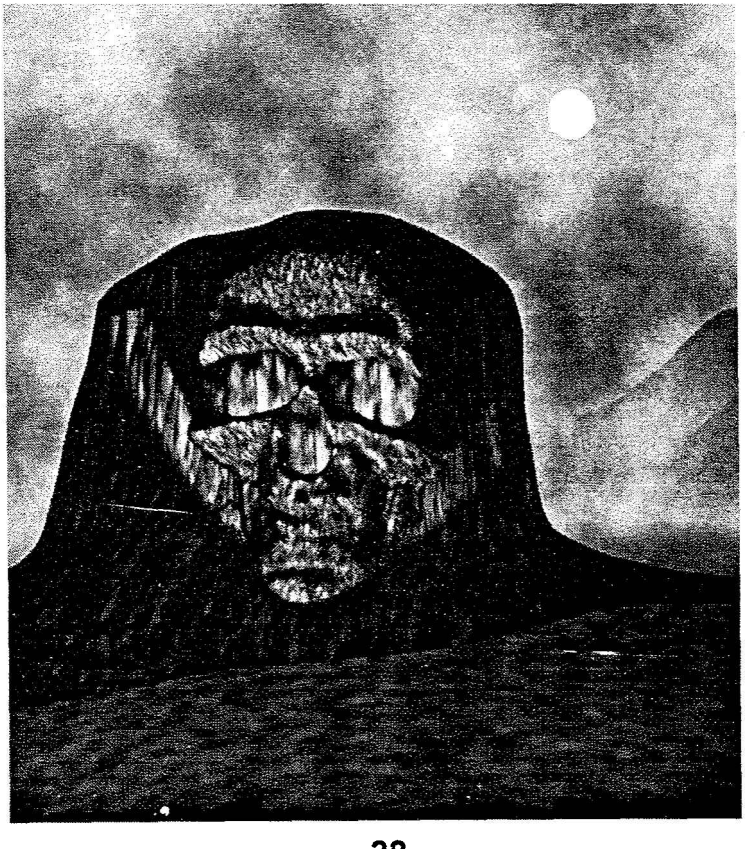
"Why???" Claire and Mario chimed.

Lola Ninay explained that there have been several mysterious disappearances throughout the years. Most of them were tourists or visitors from Manila who were not familiar with the area.

"According to the story, these visitors have been lured to stop by a restaurant. Those who fail to leave before darkness falls, never leave at all. That's why there are all those cars in the parking lot."

"But what happens to the customers?" Mario asked.

"It is said that the customers are killed and used as ingredients for their dishes, which are supposed to be really delicious," Tita Lucita said. ❑



ghost child in the house

By Judy May Geronimo

Three years ago, I decided it was time to leave the nest and become independent. I had been living with my mom and my brother before this. My older sister had already gotten married while my Dad passed away a few years back.

At the time, my younger brother was contemplating settling down and my Mom invited him and his future wife to stay in the house.

Taking this as my cue to establish my own household, I struck out on my own. Since then I have been renting studio-type apartments because they are cozy and easy to maintain. I still go back to our house every once in a while to visit.

I like living on my own because I'm queen of my mini kingdom and my time is my own. I could come and go as I please, I could decorate my place as fancy or as simply as I want, and I have my privacy. I learned to keep house, maintain a budget and be a real

independent woman.

Presently, I am staying at my fifth rented place.

But this story I'm about to tell you happened to me when I was still staying in my fourth apartment somewhere in Mayon, Quezon City.

It was a compound where two identical houses stood. The one is where my landlady and her husband, a daughter and a son lived. The other house was the one I rented out. For the first three months, I shared the house with my landlady's stepbrother. But he had to leave for the province. So I became the sole occupant of the house.

During my stay in the house, I grew quite close to my landlady's 10-year-old son. Bobby (not his real name) was a sweet kid. At that age, he already showed signs of being gay, which only added to his charm. He used to come and visit me whenever he got the chance: after school, when I came home from work, on my days off.

He was talkative and playful and would always ask me hundreds of questions. He was my constant companion during those times I was alone.

Bobby and I had grown so close that his parents no longer even mind whenever I brought him along with me to the office.

One time, as we were playing he told me that he had been losing some of his things, like his pencil case, cologne, toys and even his socks.

"*Sino kaya kumukuha nang mga gamit ko* (Who do you think has been getting my things)?" he asked me.

"*Baka naman na*-misplace *mo lang tapos hindi mo na maalala kung saan mo nilagay* (Couldn't you have misplaced them and forgotten where you left them)?" I answered.

"*Hindi Ate, talagang me kumukuha. Hindi ko naman winawala eh. Minsan kalalapag ko lang sa mesa pagbalik ko wala na* (No Ate, someone is really getting them. I haven't lost them. Sometimes, I had

just placed them on the table, then when I come back, the things are missing already)," he insisted.

He said he had a sneaking suspicion he knew who was taking his things.

"*Sino* (Who)?" I asked, curious.

At that, he looked at me directly and with conviction said: the child in their room.

I was taken by surprise by his answer. As far as I knew, there was no other kid in the compound.

Bothered by Bobby's revelation, I decided to get to the bottom of things. One day, during my day off, I chanced upon Bobby's mother.

This is my chance, I thought.

"Hi Ate Cel (not her real name). *Me kinukuwento sa akin si* Bobby *nung isang araw. Nawawalan daw siya ng mga gamit. Nahanap na po ba niya* (Bobby has been telling me the other day that he has been losing things. Has he found them)?" I ventured tentatively.

"*Naku yang batang iyan. Lagi ngang nawawalan ng gamit yan eh. Hindi pa nga niya nahahanap yung* pencil box *niya eh* (That boy, he keeps losing his things. I don't think he's found his pencil box yet)," Bobby's mother sighed in exasperation.

"*Eh ang sabi po niya, meron daw batang kumukuha ng mga gamit niya. Wala naman akong nakikitang ibang bata ditto sa atin. Sino po ba ibig niyang sabihin? O baka naman inimbento lang niya yun. Pero paniwalang paniwala siya* (He told me that a child is responsible for taking his missing things. I haven't heard of any other child in our compound, who is he referring to? Could this be a figment of his imagination? But he seems so convinced)," I said.

I thought Ate Cel would just laugh off this suggestion, but to my shock, she admitted that what her son told me was true! It was not just a fiction of his imagination.

Then she told me the whole story.

"Dating dati pa, nung bago bilhin ng mga magulang ko itong property na ito, me nakatayo ditong isang malaking bahay (A long time ago, before my parents bought the property, there used to be a big house)," she related.

According to the neighbors, that house was occupied by a couple and their only son. Being dedicated entrepreneurs, the parents were nearly always out of the house attending to their business. They hardly had time for their son. So they left their son with a babysitter who would leave as soon as the couple came home each night.

"Bukod sa kanilang pagpapabaya, mukhang binubugbog daw ng mag-asawa yung bata. Ang sabi ng katiwala, kinukulong daw ng ina yung bata sa itaas na kuwarto kapag naiingayan siya dun sa bata (Worse than their neglect of the child, it looked like the child was a battered kid. According to the babysitter, the mother would lock up the child in the attic whenever she was bothered by his crying)," Ate Cel continued.

One midnight, the couple was seen stealing away from the house in their car. They were bringing suitcases. They noticed though that the child was not with them.

The couple was never heard from again.

One week later, alerted by an unsavory smell coming from the house, *barangay* watchmen broke into the house.

What they found inside made their hair rise: the body of the missing child, already in a state of decomposition.

Authorities never found out whether the couple deliberately left the child alive in the attic, or if they hurriedly made their getaway because they found their son already dead.

A few years later, Ate Cel's parents bought the property and built the twin houses. Pretty soon however, strange things began to happen. They would lose things, hear whimpers in the night, or sometimes footsteps.

My landlady's parents sought the help of the parish priest to

have the property blessed, to no avail. They decided to leave the property to my landlady and migrate to the States.

Upon inheriting the property, Ate Cel, who was then starting her own family, sought the help of a spirit questor. It was then that my landlady was able to see with her own eyes the ghost of their house. She even talked to the boy child that occupied their house for a long time.

According to my landlady, during the session, the boy suddenly showed up. He was a handsome and chubby child, her son's age.

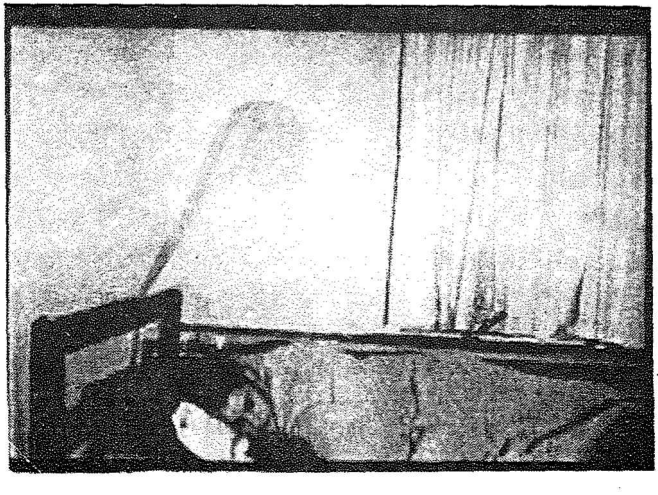
They asked him what he was doing in the house and why he was getting her son's things.

The child said that he just wanted to have a playmate because he was always alone. He also told them that he was still waiting for his mom and dad.

Even after the session with the spirit questor, the child remained in the house.

"He is not really a bad spirit and he does not hurt anyone. He's probably just lonely," said my landlady.

As far as I know, he's still there, waiting for his parents to come back for him. ❑



in memory of cherry

By Judy May Geronimo

I studied in an exclusive girls' school on Panay Avenue during my high school years.

A medium-sized school where the buildings stood close together, it stood in a quiet section of Quezon City, a block away, but parallel to, the bustling traffic of Quezon Avenue.

Everyday, we used to hold our flag ceremony in the quadrangle near the grade school department.

I used to come to school early in the morning and hang out with my friends before assembly. We used to sit in the benches near the quad so that we'd easily hear the bell when it rang.

I remember a concrete bench under one of the trees which bore an inscription that read: In memory of MARY CHERRY CHUA.

I'd always been fascinated with this bench, and at the same time wary.

Many of the students in my school were afraid of this bench. They said it was the haunt of malevolent spirits. Or at least a spirit who was crying out in pain.

According to witnesses, they sometimes hear the voice of someone crying as they pass by the spot. This is why some students would either cross to the other side of the quadrangle or go out of their way to avoid passing it.

Others claim anyone who sat in the bench becomes possessed by the malevolent spirit that guarded it. The pattern was the same all the time: the students who sat on the bench would suddenly burst into tears and then faint.

This happened to several elementary school girls.

After several such incidents, some parents began to think twice about enrolling their children in school.

One day, my friends decided to play truth or dare on the benches. I gamely joined in the fun.

Most of the dares were pretty simple. Stuff like go to the middle of the quad and sing the national anthem at the top of your lungs, or introduce yourself to the first 10 people who pass you by. Besides I wanted to know the juicy tidbits that would come out when my friends picked "truth."

Just then I realized it was my turn to pick "Truth or Dare."

Since I wasn't ready to divulge any secrets, I chose "dare."

"Okay," my friend Alice said. "I dare you to...hmmm..*naubos na ata* dare *natin* (I think we ran out of dares)."

"*Alam ko na, i*-dare *natin siyang umupo dun sa bench ni* Cherry (I know, let's dare her to sit on the bench of Cherry)!" another classmate, Marie, said.

"But what about the curse? *Baka mamaya ma*-possess *din siya* (She might get possessed)," said Alice.

"What could happen? It's broad daylight and there are a lot of us here," said another classmate.

So, I took up the dare. Marching bravely to the bench, I plopped myself on it. Many of my friends applauded. Others looked apprehensively to see whether anything would happen to me.

To give them a good scare, I pretended to faint. At that, my friends rushed over to me. It was only when I felt them bending over me that I opened my eyes and began to laugh.

"Fooled you!" I cried.

They all groaned in disgust.

A few days later, I stayed late in school to practice for a school play. It was almost dark by the time rehearsals ended and I really wanted to go home immediately.

There was hardly anyone left in the campus, just a few high school students.

As I was in a hurry to go to the gate and see if my ride was there, I didn't really notice where I was going.

I didn't know I was passing directly in front of Cherry's bench until I practically stumbled over it.

Just as I was about to turn away to go to the other side however, I heard a soft moan, like someone sobbing.

I paused, not sure what I heard.

Then I heard it again. This time it was louder.

Feeling goosebumps breaking out over my body, I ran like hell towards the gate! I dared not look back for fear I would see someone sitting on the bench!

The following day I told my friends and we decided to find out what really happened to Cherry.

Most of the teachers would not say anything when we asked them about the bench and Cherry, but finally one of the older teachers decided to grant our request and tell us the whole story:

Mary Cherry was a happy-go-lucky 12-year-old, one of the outstanding students in Grade Six.

She was bright, cheerful, and friendly. She was also very pretty. She had chinky eyes that nearly disappear whenever she smiles. She had a very fair complexion, nearly paper-white (maybe because she was of Chinese descent). She was slim and tall for her age.

She was a favorite of almost all the teachers.

One day, she didn't come to class. The teachers thought she was sick and in bed at home, so they didn't think this out of the ordinary. But later that afternoon, the parents of Cherry came to school.

Cherry didn't come home from school the previous day, they said. They thought she was sleeping over at a classmate's house, but she never called and they were worried.

After questioning all her classmates, the teachers and Cherry's parents found out that Cherry did not make any plans to sleepover at any of her friends.

The last that anyone saw of her was the previous day, right after dismissal, when she told some friends to go ahead because she was passing by her locker to pick up some books. They thought she'd gone straight home after that.

A school-wide search ensued. Her parents feared the worst.

After a two-hour search, they found her body behind some trees in the garden near the quadrangle. She was naked from the waist down. Her skirt was later found in some shrubs near the trees.

Her lower torso was bloodied, evidence that she was raped. Her hands were tied and a sock was stuffed inside her mouth, and her eyes were swollen shut. Her handkerchief was tied around her neck.

She was raped, tortured and strangled to death.

A few days later, her killer was found. A janitor who was previously fired by the school. He wanted to get back at the school for firing him and chose Cherry because she was really popular and her death would bring shame to the school.

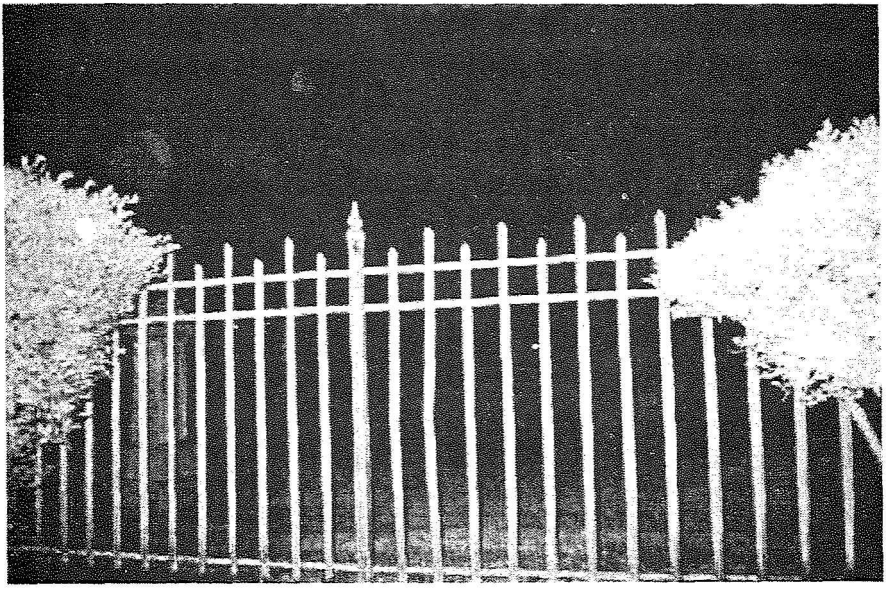
After she was buried, the school tried to make some sort of

amends by constructing a concrete bench in the spot where she was found, in memory of Mary Cherry Chua.

A few weeks after the bench was built, strange things began happening. Students kept hearing someone sobbing whenever they passed by the bench. Then the "possession" stories began cropping up.

The sisters from our school offered prayers for the eternal rest of her soul, but it did not stop her soul from coming back and crying out to other students.

I haven't been to my school in a while, but I'm pretty sure Cherry's bench is still there. ❑



spirit of the glass

By Gianna Maniego

"*Ayoko*. I don't want to play. I'm scared!" Maita protested.

Maita wasn't usually a scaredy cat, but what her best friend was suggesting was just too dangerous, in her opinion.

Camilla wanted Maita to join some girls in class who were playing with the Ouija board that Steph brought to school that day.

It was early December, and the whole school was preparing for the Christmas pageant. Most of the sixth graders were participants in the pageant. Some were in the choir, some were acting as angels and shepherds. Regular classes were suspended and the whole week was devoted to rehearsals.

The only ones left in the classrooms were those who weren't included in the pageant. They were assigned to decorate the classrooms for the Christmas decorating contest

Maita and her classmates were in Room 36, the honors sec-

tion.

As usual, their resident artist had everything planned ahead of time so that now, there was nothing left to do but string up the rainbow-colored lights.

Bored, some of the girls began bringing games to school. Someone brought playing cards. Another brought a chess set. The braver ones brought Game Boys. Game Boys and cards were not allowed, but since the teachers were also busy with the pageant, Maita's classmates got away with it.

Pretty soon the classroom turned into a recreation center, with groups of students playing in various corners of the room.

The most popular game at the moment was the Ouija board.

About 10 girls had gathered around the rectangular-shaped board which was painted with the alphabet, numbers, the moon and

several stars. In the middle of the board were two circles. Inside one circle was the word YES, and in the other, the word NO.

The girls were listening in hushed silence to Steph, who was explaining the rules of the game.

"It's like Spirit of the Glass. You ask a spirit to join you and then ask it questions, like 'when will I get married?' or 'will I finish school?' Stuff like those. *Tapos, hihintayin mo yung sagot nung* spirit (And then wait if the spirit will answer you.)" she said.

"*Paano sila sasagot* (How will they answer)?" Celine asked skeptically.

"*Pag* yes, *pupunta ung* glass *dun sa bilog na me* yes. *Pag* no, *dun sa kabila. Pag hindi masasagot ng* yes or no, *ise*-spell out nung glass *yung* sagot (If the answer is Yes, the glass will move to the YES circle. If the answer is No, it will go to the other circle. But if the question cannot be answered by Yes or No, the glass will go to the alphabet or the numbers and spell out the answer). My *ate* once called the spirit of Jose Rizal. He was a lot of fun, he kept speaking in Spanish, so nobody understood most of what he said," Steph told her enthralled audience.

"*Ibig mong sabihin* (Do you mean to say), the spirits actually get inside that heart-shaped thingy and play the game with you? *Hindi ako naniniwala* (I don't believe that)! I don't believe in ghosts...or spirits!" said Arlene, one of the prettiest girls in class.

"It's just a game," Steph shrugged.

"Isn't that dangerous? What if *tayo ang i*-possess *nung* spirit (What if the spirit decides to possess one of us)?" Emily butted in.

"*Pwede naman nating paalisin yung* spirit. *Sige na. Ano naman ang mangyayari sa atin* (We can always tell the spirit to leave.Come on, what could happen to us)? We're in school. There's a lot of people around us. If anything happens, *e di tumakbo tayo* (we can always run away)! Besides, it's the middle of the day. Evil spirits don't usually attack during the day," Steph assured.

"Okay, I'm game!" said Lilibeth. She was always interested in

ghost stories and loved a good scare.

"Count us in!" sang Camille, from the other side of the room. Clamping a hand on Maita's arm, she literally dragged her best friend to where Steph and the others were waiting.

"Okay. Lilibeth, Camilla, Maita and me. That's four. I think we have enough players. Let's begin," said Steph, taking charge.

The four of them sat on the floor around the Ouija board, one on each side of it. Steph, being the only one who's played the game, was in front of the board. Maita, sitting directly opposite her on the other side, had to read the letters and numbers upside down.

On Steph's right sat Camille and on her left sat Lilibeth.

The rest of the girls gathered excitedly around the four.

"Wait! Who are we gonna call? *Gusto ko yung sikat* (I want someone famous)!" said Camille.

"Who do you want to call?" Maita asked, slowly getting into the spirit of the game.

"Hmmm....what about Elvis? You know, to see whether he really is dead or if he's still alive, as what the American tabloids say?" Camille suggested.

"Okay, we can try that," said Steph, and in a hushed voice, she slowly intoned "We call on the spirit of Elvis Presley. Please join us."

Gingerly, she placed her right index and middle fingers on the heart-shaped "glass" and gestured for the other three to do the same. When there were four sets of index and middle fingers touching the glass, she asked, "Spirit are you there?"

Nothing happened.

Steph asked again, this time louder. "Elvis are you with us?"

Still the glass remained unmoving.

"See! *Sabi ko senyo* fake *yan eh* (I told you that's a fake)!" cried Arlene, as the rest of the audience groaned in frustration.

"No it isn't!" Steph said indignantly. "Maybe, Elvis just isn't available. Let's call on someone else!"

"You know what, a cousin of mine told me she did something like this before in her neighbor's house. *Pero hindi sila gumamit ng board na ganyan. Gumamit lang sila ng isang malaking* sheet *ng* Manila paper, *tapos dinrowingan lang nga mga* letters, sun, moon, stars, *ganoon Tapos me* word *na* YES *chaka* NO *sa gitna.* (They didn't use a board like this though. They just used a big sheet of Manila paper and wrote on it, then they drew the sun, moon and stars and the words YES and NO in the middle). And they used a real glass, that they turned upside down," Lilibeth related.

"They called on any spirit to come in, and then this spirit came in. *Sabi nung* spirit *siya daw si* Albert, *isa siyang minor na* devil *na narinig yung tawag nung mga pinsan ko kaya sumali siya sa kanila* (The spirit said his name was Albert, and that he was just a minor devil who happened to be near my cousin and her friends when they called for any spirit and decided to join in).

"*Nung una matino siyang kausap* (At first he was very cooperative). He answered their questions and all. But later, he kept pushing the glass towards Monina, my cousin's neighbor. When they asked why, he said he liked Monina. Then all of a sudden, the glass would go to the letters "H" and "A". *Ganun lang, paulit ulit. Yun pala* he was laughing!" Lilibeth said.

"*Baka naman* someone was pushing the glass, you know playing a trick on them," Emily said.

"That's what my cousin thought. So she told everyone to let go of the glass. It still moved towards the letter "H"! They all shrieked and ran out of the room. After about 10 minutes, they came back and asked, 'Spirit are you still there?' They put their fingers on the glass and the glass moved to the YES and then it began moving *na naman* to the letter 'H'. They all shouted again and ran out of the room. One of them turned the glass right side up to 'release' the spirit of Albert. But every time they asked, 'Spirit are you there?' the glass would answer yes. It took them three hours to get rid of his spirit," Lilibeth

told her, by now, creeped out classmates.

"I don't believe you!" Celine sneered.

"I swear I'm telling the truth!" Lilibeth shouted.

"Sige nga, what if we call on Albert?" Steph challenged.

"NO!!"

"*Sige!! Sige!!* (Yes!! Yes!!)"

The "Yes" prevailed, so Steph, and the three girls gathered up their courage, closed their eyes, and called on Albert the devil.

"We call on the spirit of Albert the devil," Steph said in a voice that trembled slightly. She was scared but she didn't want anybody to think she was a scaredy cat. After all, she was the one who brought the Ouija board to school.

Maita, Camille, and Lilibeth slowly opened their eyes and one by one placed their index and middle fingers on the glass.

"Spirit are you there?" Steph asked.

The glass immediately moved to the YES circle.

"Tell us your name spirit," Steph commanded.

The glass inched its way to the letter A. The girls looked questioningly at each other. Were they actually able to call on the spirit of Albert?

Someone must be pushing the glass. Someone's playing a joke, Maita thought.

She peered closely at the glass. The fingers were barely touching it. She herself was only resting her fingers lightly on top of it.

The glass began moving to the other letters: L-B-E-R-T.

The glass spelled out the name of Albert.

They began asking the glass questions: Who are you? How old are you? How did you die? Where are you now?

The spirit answered obediently.

Albert, a drug addict.

Seventeen.

Shot in the head.

In H...E...

As the pointer moved towards the letter L, several girls shrieked.

"SHHHHH...do you want Miss to catch us?" Lilibeth shushed them angrily.

"Sorry," said Arlene sheepishly.

Then the girls started asking questions like 'Will I ever get a boyfriend?' and 'Will I make it to the honor roll this year?'

At first, Albert answered obediently and promptly. But later he became slow in answering. Like he was distracted by something.

During a lull in the questioning, the pointer moved toward Maita, then stopped midway and headed toward Arlene, who was on the right of Maita.

Curious, Lilibeth asked, "Anything wrong spirit?"

By now the whole class was crowding around the Ouija group and there was dead silence, except for the voices of the four who were asking questions.

The pointer immediately moved toward the letters H and A. It repeated this three times, like it was laughing.

Lilibeth asked again, "Spirit, why are you laughing?"

"Nothing," the pointer spelled out.

Then it pointed at Arlene again.

"*Hala* Arlene, I think it likes you!" someone said.

"Ohmygod!!" Arlene shouted, scrambling away from the circle. She fled to the other side of the room, trembling and almost in tears.

"Spirit, do you like anyone in the room?" Steph prodded.

The pointer answered, "Yes."

"Who do you like?" Camille couldn't stop herself from asking, even as she felt goosebumps rising along her forearms.

At first the pointer kept moving around the board, undecided. Then it stopped in front of Maita. Then it moved around again, seemingly in search of someone. The crowd around the group shifted and the pointer stopped in front of a gap in the crowd. When the girls looked to see who the spirit was pointing at, their hairs stood on end: the pointer was directly aimed at Arlene, who was cowering in the corner!

Some of the girls rushed protectively towards Arlene, who by then burst into tears.

"Send it away!" shouted Emily, as she hugged her sobbing classmate. "Tell Albert to leave! Now!"

So, Steph, Camille and Lilibeth turned back toward the board. Suddenly they noticed that Maita was sitting so still, her eyes staring sightlessly ahead. She looked like she was catatonic. Camille nudged her gently, but Maita remained in a trance.

"Maita! Are you okay? What's wrong?" all three girls asked.

Maita looked as if she didn't hear a thing.

All of a sudden, the pointer moved toward the letters H and A. Repeatedly. IT WAS LAUGHING!

By this time the whole class was totally creeped out, most of them pleaded with Steph and the others to send the malevolent spirit away.

Steph finally gathered up her courage and said, "Thank you very much spirit. You may leave now."

After about five minutes, she asked, "Spirit, are you there?"

The pointer moved!

It went to the letters H and A again. It was still there. And it was still laughing!

Suddenly somebody screamed!

"Arlene! Arlene! Wake up!" Emily cried, shaking Arlene's shoulder.

Arlene had fainted!

"Oh no! Maita!" shouted Camille.

Maita was slumped over the board. She too had fainted!

Panic erupted in class.

Camille and Lilibeth grabbed Maita around the shoulders and tried to shift her away from the board. Steph also rushed to the side of her friend, fanning her with a piece of paper.

The Ouija board lay abandoned.

After a minute or so, Arlene and Maita woke up.

"What happened?" said Maita.

"*Hinimatay ka, hindi mo ba alam* (You fainted, didn't you know)?" Camille said, her voice still panicked.

"I did? I don't remember. The last thing I remember is the pointer going around and around on the board and then I felt cold, like someone poured water down my back. What happened to Albert?" Maita asked.

Meanwhile, Arlene had shaken off her stupor and was talking animatedly.

"I felt something go through me. Like a cold wind. It felt like ice. Then I heard a male voice laughing. That's the last thing I remember," Arlene said.

.Steph looked over at the Ouija board. The pointer stood curiously in the middle of it, as if poised to answer a question.

Reluctantly, she went back and, putting her fingers on the pointer asked, "Spirit are you still there?"

The pointer remained blessedly still. Albert had finally left them alone.

Nobody tried to play with the ouija board after that. ❑

The carpenter

By Jonathan Celeste

If you think only old houses have a history of spooky stories, wait till you hear this one.

Cora and Ben (not their real names) felt it was time to build their dream house. So they chose a property in the Roxas district, in Quezon City.

Because they had planned it for a long time, the house was the realization of their dreams — it was spacious and complete with enough facilities. The living room, dining room and kitchen were on the ground floor. Three bedrooms (one for the masters, for their only child and a guest room) were situated on the second floor, and on the third floor, the family room and maid's quarter.

They planned to have the house finished before the 18th birthday of their daughter — a sort of coming-of-age present for her.

Cora recruited her neighbors from the Ilocos province to build

her home. They were all well-trained carpenters and trustworthy since they were her townmates. It was also the couple's way of helping their poor provincemates.

One of the carpenters was Toto (not his real name), a young man in his early twenties. He was hard working and skillful in the laying of tiles and grills. He would work till the wee hours of the night trying to finish his assigned task in one day. The other carpenters were all praises for Toto because he was responsible in remitting his weekly salary to his parents and younger siblings in the province.

It was nearly a year before the house was finally finished. Cora and Ben gave all of the carpenters bonuses. The couple gave an even bigger bonus to Toto who had proven dependable and very efficient. Toto, in return, was thankful to the couple

"*Kuya, Ate, maraming salamat po. Kung may masisira o ipapa-repair pa po kayo, magpasabi lang po kayo. Ako na po ang gagawa kahit walang bayad* (Thanks Kuya, Ate. If there is anything you need to have repaired, just send word and I will take care of it, free of charge)," said the grateful carpenter.

Soon enough the family moved into their dream house. They were very excited at spending their first night in their brand new home.

For several days and nights, they enjoyed their house in peace. One night the couple was awakened by a noise.

"Ting, ting, ting."

A ringing sound that seemed to be coming from the balcony of the masters' bedroom reached their ears.

But when they turned on the lights, the ringing stopped. Shrugging, they turned off the lights and went back to sleep.

"Tick, tick, tick."

This time, it was a ticking clicking sound, and it seemed to be coming from the bathroom. They listened very carefully.

"Tick, tick, tick."

There it was again.

They were sure they heard something, but when they opened the door of the bathroom, there was nothing there. They turned on the lights and checked the faucets to see if they had a leak. But there were no leaky faucets in the bathroom.

"Where is that sound coming from?" Cora wondered aloud.

"I don't know, let's just check in the morning," answered Ben. They went back to bed for the second time that night.

A few minutes later, the sounds began again. This time, both the ringing and the clicking sounds were heard again. Louder and more insistent.

This was getting irritating, the couple thought. They got up from bed for the third time and went to check the balcony and the adjacent bathroom.

"AAAAAHHHHHHHH!!!" Cora let out a horrified yell. Ben saw it, too.

A young man was hammering at the grills of their balcony! It was TOTO! Hanging in midair outside the balcony.

All of a sudden, Toto disappeared like smoke.

Ben hugged his wife and gave her a glass of water. When Cora had calmed down, Ben tried to act tough for her sake.

"Stay calm. Maybe it was just your imagination," Ben said. Pretending that he didn't see the apparition.

"How can that be?! I was not dreaming! I am sure you saw it, too!" Cora said indignantly.

"Maybe, but stay calm. It could have been a premonition. Something wrong might have happened to Toto," he said.

Finally, Cora and Ben settled down for bed. Fortunately, they were no longer bothered by sounds for the rest of the night.

The following morning, still groggy from lack of sleep, the couple got up. While they were having breakfast, the phone rang.

"Hello," said Cora.

"Hello, Cora. It's your aunt Anita."

"Oh, Auntie, why? What's the problem?"

"Uh, nothing, Just checking on you and Ben."

"Thanks, Auntie. So, how's life back there?"

"Well and good. Cora, do you remember Toto, your carpenter?", asked her aunt, but before Cora continued talking her aunt said: "I pity that young man. He was so responsible."

"Why? What happened to him?"

"Last night, while he was driving his tricycle, a speeding truck driven by a drunk driver hit him! My God, his head was crushed like a head of garlic! That truck driver should rot in jail! Toto didn't even make it to the hospital."

Immediately, Cora said good-bye and put down the phone. She told Ben about it. The couple was silent as they stared at each other.

On Sunday that week, they offered a mass for Toto's soul. They also asked the parish priest to bless their house.

Peace reigned in the household after that. ❑

THE ELEVATOR I

By Jherry Barrinuevo

Bad things happen to bad people.

A friend told me a spooky story about an unscrupulous doctor who worked in a private hospital in Metro Manila.

The doctor charged his patients depending on their social status. But no matter what the status, he always overcharged. He didn't discriminate whether his patients were rich or poor. He preyed on the rich and famous the same as he did the poor and less fortunate patients.

He would have gotten old and continued doing this, but for an encounter with the supernatural that changed him for life.

The doctor was a practicing physician for almost 15 years. He graduated from a famous medical school here in the Philippines and became one of the topnotchers when he took the board exam. His intelligence and expertise made him famous in the local medical scene

and earned him recognition as one of the best doctors in the country.

As a result of his fame and achievements, patients flocked to his clinics. Members of high society, politicians and celebrities went to him for treatment.

At the same time, some desperate patients sought his medical attention — patients who would spend all they had just to be treated or given a cure.

At the start of the doctor's career, he was fair to his patients and used all his talents to help his patients who were in dire need. He charged his patients honestly and sometimes gave discounts to the poor. But, this noble character changed when he realized he could earn much more money and live a king's life if he overcharged his patients.

He started overcharging his rich patients, who didn't care as long as the doctor treated them. His greed became atrocious when he started doing it even to the poor.

" If they can't afford my services they ought to suffer and die, as for me, money is what I need and I am gonna be rich."

As a result of his greed, many of those who couldn't afford his services died without undergoing treatment. Although he may have felt a twinge of guilt every so often, whenever he heard that a patient of his died, he remained unmoved and continued to feed his greed, sucking his patients' resources up to the last drop. But, one day, a weird thing happened.

The doctor was on one of his rounds. He rode the hospital's elevator to go up to his clinic. It was late in the afternoon and there were few people left in the hospital, so the doctor had the elevator all to himself.

He pushed the button for the sixth floor, where his clinic is located.

When it reached the second floor, the door opened, but to his surprise no one entered the elevator. He peered outside the elevator to check if anyone outside had pushed the second floor but-

ton, but no one was around.

When the elevator reached the third floor the same thing happened. This was likewise repeated when it reached the fourth.

By the time it reached the fifth level, the doctor was totally mystified.

The elevator door opened and still no one joined him in the elevator. Just as it was about to close however, the overloaded warning sounded.

The doctor nearly jumped from the shrill buzz of the warning button.

That's funny, he thought to himself. How can that buzzer sound when I'm the only one here?

All of a sudden he remembered long-forgotten ghost stories about the hospital that he didn't pay attention to. He could feel pinpricks of fear crawling up his spine.

When the elevator reached the sixth floor he nearly stumbled in his hurry to get out of it. He ran toward his clinic and tried to forget what happened.

Later, as he was examining one patient, his secretary told him that the father of one of his patients who had just died was outside. The family could not afford to pay the doctor's fees and so could no longer continue treatment.

The secretary said the father blamed the doctor for the death of his son.

"*Pabayaan mo siya, wala akong pakialam. Alam naman nila na malala na ang sakit ng anak nila di sila nag ipon ng pera* (Let him rant and shout, I don't care. They knew very well their son was seriously ill, why didn't they save money for it?," the doctor told his secretary.

As his secretary was about to inform the father that the doctor was busy with another patient and send him away, another parent, a father, barged in the clinic shouting that the doctor killed his teenage daughter.

"Had you treated my daughter and didn't ask for a high fee, she would be still be alive right now," the father said accusingly.

The doctor tried to elude the angry parents by telling his secretary he got an emergency call from another hospital.

So off the doctor went down the corridor. But as he neared the elevator, he remembered the earlier incident and vowed never to go into the elevator alone. So he waited till another passenger, a teenage girl, came along before boarding the elevator.

Sure enough the elevator began acting strange again. He pushed the button for 1st but was visibly upset when it went straight to the basement — where the morgue is located.

The door opened and the doctor saw a boy running towards the elevator. Recognizing the boy as one of his patients who just died — the same boy whose father was ranting in his clinic upstairs — he immediately pushed the button shutting the door.

The teenage girl saw what he did and asked the doctor why he didn't let the boy in.

He answered: "That boy is dead."

"How can you tell??" the girl persisted.

"Can't you see he has a red tag around his wrist? That's a sure sign that he's dead and marked for the morgue," the doctor exclaimed.

Oh you mean something like this?" the girl asked as she raised her wrist.

The doctor turned in time to see the girl shove her wrist in front of his face. The doctor turned deathly white as blood drained from his face.

The girl was his other dead patient!

That was the last thing that he remembered. He slumped down in a dead faint.

He was found by the hospital security guards lying alone inside the elevator.

The doctor realized that his sins were fast catching up with him. The overloaded elevator must have been filled with the spirits of all his patients who died from his neglect, just because they couldn't afford his fees!

Since then the doctor changed his ways and started treating his patients fairly. ❑

What are Aswangs (Asuwang or Manananggal)?

This is a strange breed of vampire unique to Philippines (Visayas, Bicol, Ilokano, Tagalog). The legend tells a story about a race of mostly women who shape shift at night and feed on their victim's blood and viscera. They particularly like the embryos of pregnant women. There are similar incarnations in Thailand and other parts of South East Asian countries.

Strengths: By day she looks like a normal woman. She can be unaffected by the sunlight unlike the typical nosferatu. She is not exactly a day walker, but she gains her supernatural powers as night approaches. She can easily disembowel and feed from victims with her long piercing tongue. Before midnight, she separates from her lower half and sprouts bat-like wings for night-time flight. Some say she can resemble a bat or a bird in full transformation. She can appear very charming and can transform you into a creature of the night by blowing down the back of your neck.

Weaknesses: Aswangs do not like vinegar, garlic or anything spicy. They immediately retreat at the strong odor. For this reason, most Philippine food is made of salty ingredients with generous amounts of vinegar and garlic. This will not kill them unless you discover the lowered severed half of an aswang and pour the elements down it's open side. This will prevent her from being able to reattach. When day breaks, she will die.

The Old Man under the Mango Tree

By Jonathan Celeste

In San Carlos City, Pangasinan, there's a century-old mango tree at the back of my grandparents' ancestral house.

My *Lola* used to say that that tree is even older than her. At that time, she was about 70 years old but still sprightly. *Lola* used to tell us a scary story about the old tree. We attentively listen to her as she relates it.

According to *Lola*, the reason the mango tree had lasted season after season, weathering storms, earthquakes and other disasters, is because a sentinel is guarding it: a wizened old man wearing white long-sleeved shirt, white pants, and a *salakot* (pointed hat).

My aunts and uncles claim they see this old man sitting at the foot of the tree every so often. Sometimes they see him at night or sometimes during the day, especially after an afternoon shower. He would sit at the foot of the tree as if waiting for something or some-

body. They never figured out what he was waiting for.

Some of my uncles believe the old man is guarding more than the mango tree. They believe that a pot of gold is buried beneath the tree.

"*Pag kayo ay nagustuhan nung matandang bantay, ibibigay nya sa inyo yung palayok ng ginto* (If the old man likes you, he may just give you the pot of gold he is guarding)," my *Lola* said. "*Pero, kelangan sumama kayo sa kanya o may kukunin syang buhay kapalit ng kayamanan* (But you will have to come along with him to his kingdom never to return again, or else take the life of someone else in exchange for the pot of gold he has given up)."

Then she would warn us against leaving the house and wandering off.

At first we thought it was just her way of keeping us close to the house in the afternoon while she was resting. She would often get mad at us whenever we would leave the house without asking permission or letting her know where we were going. More so, when we play under the shade of the big tree.

One afternoon, after a shower dampened our spirits, my cousins and I sneaked out from under the watchful eyes of our *Lola* as she was having her *siesta* (afternoon nap).

"*Ayan, makakalaro na tayo ng patintero* (Now we can play *patintero*)," my cousin Pam said while we tiptoed our way out of the house.

My other cousins couldn't agree more!

We had a good time that afternoon. Good thing we managed to return to the house before our *Lola* caught us.

As we were eating our *merienda* (afternoon snacks), I noticed that Pam was uncharacteristically quiet. Among the 10 cousins, she was usually the noisiest and the jolliest. I teased her about it, whispering "*Takot ka no? Baka malaman ni Lola na ikaw ang promotor* (You're scared aren't you? You're afraid *Lola* will find out you instigated our escape)?"

"*Hindi noh* (Of course not)!" she said indignantly. "*Iba lang pakiramdam ko. Para akong lalagnatin. Oy, wag mong sasabihin kay Lola. Magtatampo ako sa yo* (I just don't feel well, like I'm coming down with fever. Don't tell *Lola* okay? Otherwise I'll get mad at you)."

Being a partner in crime, I obliged.

A few hours later, when my other cousins and I were washing up before going to bed, I noticed Pam was just sitting in a corner. I thought she was just tired from playing all afternoon.

An hour after, we were called by *Lola*. Dinner was served. We had a good time. My cousins and I shared the task of washing the dishes in good humor. Still Pam was quiet. She barely touched her food. I didn't make a big fuss out of it.

We cleaned the dining table and put everything away. We passed the time exchanging jokes and stories while teasing each other. We were at the back of the house where we could see the old mango tree.

Suddenly, I felt a cold breeze of air coming from the direction of the tree. I knew that my cousins felt it, too. Trying to be brave, we ignored it. So we just told each other to call it a night. We went to bed thereafter.

At around midnight, just as I was about to take a leak, I saw Pam sleepwalking. She went down, passing through the kitchen and was trying to open the backdoor, like she wanted to go out. Once she raised her head, as if listening for something.

"*Hoy! Pam, saan ka pupunta* (Hey Pam, where are you going)?" I called to her. She appeared not to hear me and continued fiddling with the lock at the door.

Scared now, I ran up to awaken up my cousins, aunt and *Lola*. My aunt came down with me to the kitchen where Pam was still trying to open the door. She hurriedly blocked Pam and dragged her back to the living room.

Auntie slapped Pam in an effort to wake her up. Just then *Lola* approached us.

"*Namatanda siya* (She's been possessed)," my grandmother said.

At that, my uncle got his bolo and waved it in the air in front of Pam's face.

"*Lumayas ka masamang ispiritu! Demonyo ka* (Begone evil spirit! You are the Devil)!" my uncle yelled.

My aunt got a cup of salt and threw it in the air. Immediately after, my cousin woke up from her stupor and burst into tears.

Lola comforted Pam as she was crying. After a short Latin prayer, Pam was somewhat back to her self. She began crying and telling us what happened.

"*Tinatawag ako nung matanda sa ilalim ng mangga. Sabi nya ibibigay daw nya sa akin yung palayok na may lamang kayamanan. Pinapasama nya ko sa kanya* (The old man from the mango tree called to me. He said he would give me the pot of gold if I went with him)," Pam said as tears flowed from her eyes.

"*Ayan na nga ba sinasabi ko. Kasi, makulit kayo! Sinabi nang wag kayong pupunta sa ilalim ng mangga pag hapon, eh. Matigas talaga ulo nyo* (This is what I've been afraid of. See what happened? You are so hardheaded. I told you not to play under the mango tree in the afternoons)," *Lola* scolded us. "*Buti na lang naagapan, kung hindi wala na si Pam dito. Diyos ko, kelan ba kayo makikinig sa akin* (It's a good thing, we were able to save Pam, otherwise we could have lost her. My God, when will you ever listen to me)?"

We were all dumbfounded. The following morning, we went to church and *Lola* made an offering of food, drinks, native delicacies, cigar and *nganga* (betel nut) at the foot of the old mango tree. She offered payers, too.

Needless to say, my cousins and I never played under that tree again. ❑

The souleater

Lito Versoza

Halloween is upon us again and everywhere, stories abound about close encounters of the frightening kind. Just about everybody has a scary story to tell. What I am about to describe actually happened in a small fishing village in Eastern Samar.

It all started, ironically, when an old man lay dying on his bed and no one, not even the doctor, knew how long he would last. I know this because the old man was my grandfather, who fought stubbornly to stay alive, until the end.

My lolo, a lawyer, was a charitable man who helped poor people with their legal problems, so when my family set up a vigil many people came to pay their respects, including the local *manghihilot*, Aling Tansya.

Aling Tansya, according to barrio folklore, was rumored to have the power to see what ordinary people could not see. As she was about to ascend our steps towards the balcony, she noticed a

big black pig under the house. When she was greeted by my mother, she asked if we were keeping a pig underneath the house and was visibly alarmed when my mother told her we were not.

"Asuwang" she uttered in an audible whisper. At that, several able-bodied men leapt into action, scampering down the stairs to the *silong* to try and catch the animal. But when they got there, they found nothing, only an old buri hat belonging to newcomer to the village.

The newcomer had just arrived recently, coincidentally just as my lolo's condition took a turn for the worse, and set up residence near the perimeter of the barrio, in a forest beside the cemetery. Neither this man, nor his two teenage sons, talked to anybody in the village. They dressed in the same clothes they arrived in and emitted an indescribable stench.

One of the barrio women, Manang Tining, was the first to come across this strange family. She was on her way to the cemetery one afternoon and had decided to use a shortcut through a wooded area when she came upon a hut with no windows in the middle of a clearing. Deciding to investigate, she stepped closer and noticed an old man wearing an old buri hat perched on a bamboo bench, as well as two teenaged boys sitting by the door of the cottage.

"*Maupay* (Good Afternoon)! How long have you been here?" she greeted the strange trio. " My name is Tining, because they say my voice is tinny. What's yours?"

The old man hissed something unintelligible as he slowly tilted his chin. That was when she saw his eyes, which were shielded by the hat. They were bloody red! Un-nerved, Manang Tining quickly excused herself and went home post-haste, only later remembering the sound he made, like a lion's purr. Thus, the villager began calling him Mang Puroy, after that sound, but no one else made contact with the strange family. The villagers avoided them, thinking they were a family of *asuwangs*, or souleaters.

At any rate, the villagers had all but forgotten about Mang Puroy and his family by the time my grandfather lay on his deathbed.

At that point, it was simply a matter of time. My lolo's diabetes was already out of control and doctors said it was only a matter of days before his body's defenses caved in.

Speculation ran life among the village people that Mang Puroy had smelled ebbing life essence of my grandfather and came to pay his last respects –under the bed. For souleaters can smell the spirit of the weak, like the lingering smell of the ripe fruit. They feed on these souls, which sustains their existence for a hundred years.

The villagers' suspicions were apparently confirmed when they discovered the hat and decided to do something about it. They turned to the village *albularyo* for help.

Mang Idyo came on the second night of the vigil. After making a routine check of the whole area underneath the floor, he went up again carrying a pail full of sand. He poured a line of sand parallel to my lolo's bedroom door. Then he started again in the middle of the first line and drew another one leading to the main door, as if shooing something out the door. Outside the main door, he formed a circle with the sand, and then poured another mound in the center. He then asked for a knife and plunged it in the middle of the mound.

All of a sudden, everyone heard a loud guttural cry, not unlike that of a pig, but more hollow and sinister. Someone later claimed to have espied a figure, a pig, running away from the house. As it ran, it slowly transformed itself into a man, staggering as if hurting from a mortal wound.

The man looked very much like Mang Puro. My grandfather lapsed into a coma immediately after that.

The next day, Mang Puroy's sons were seen pulling a cart with a coffin and throwing hateful glances at our house. Before they could get far, the biggest of the two shouted *"Gaganti Kami"*.

Mang Idyo who was standing at the balcony at that time, said, "We've got to plan ahead". He called Uncle Sonny, the son of lolo, aside. Nobody heard what they talked about, but it was the last time Mang Idyo was seen alive.

Later that night, some neighbors reportedly heard a scuffle going on at Mang Idyo's house. When he didn't come out to feed his chickens the next day, his friend Mang Nano, went into the house to look for him. There he was horrified to see Mang Idyo dead from several claw-like slashes.

Two days later, my grandfather died in his sleep. We thought that was the end of the strange going-ons. We were wrong.

Two weeks later, my lolo's cousin, Mamay Rita, also passed away due to complications arising from her diabetes. We didn't find anything wrong with this at first. But as the body lay on the embalmer's table, blood suddenly spurted out of two holes found in her neck! Apparently, Mamay Rita had been left unattended when her husband went to fetch the priest.

Upon hearing this, Uncle Sonny immediately went to my grandfather's cabinet and retrieved something in a bag. Afterwards, he went to Mang Idyo's house and got something from there too. Then he went running in the direction of the wooded area near the cemetery. Hours later, he came back, blood all over his body, although he'd suffered no injury. Uncle Sonny wouldn't talk about his ordeal, but the curious who decided to check the forest reported seeing two scarecrows dressed like my lolo and Mang Idyo.

Later we learned from Aling Tansya that when Mang Idyo took Uncle Sonny beside lolo, he had asked my grandfather to join him battling the remaining *asuwangs* after their deaths. Uncle Sonny would force the confrontation by making two scarecrows facing east and west of the evil house. These scarecrows stored the sunlight into the night and burned the remaining *asuwang* as they turned into beasts at the witching hour.

After this, there were no more strange incidents in the village. ❑

The old woman

By Jherry Barrinuevo

Dreams are fascinating. Sometimes they serve as a warning of danger or a preview of what's to come. Sometimes they are inexplicable and weird.

There are those who say that dreams are a channel for spirits to communicate to those in the land of the living. This is the premise behind Freddy Krueger and the "Nightmare on Elm Street" series. But could it be possible that there is truth to this?

Can spirits use dreams to haunt us? Is it possible for a spirit to invade one's dreamland?

I remember something strange that happened to me a long time ago, during one of my visits to my father's province in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

It was summer and my cousins and I had nothing much to do except play in the sun all day. One day we decided to play by the

lake.

"*Tara, manghuli tayo ng isda* (Let's go and catch some fish)!" my cousin Ron (not his real name) said.

"*Sige sige! Tapos maglaro tayo, taguan chaka habulan, mahuli taya* (Yes, let's! Afterward, we can play hide and seek and tag)," my other cousin Jojo (not his real name) urged.

I was willing to go with whatever they agreed upon, as long as it involved fun and having a good time.

So we set off for the lakeshore. When we arrived, we started scavenging for small fishes that were washed ashore from the lake. There was only a few so we soon got tired of that activity.

"*Maglaro na lang tayo ng taguan* (Let's just play hide and seek)," Ron said. He volunteered to be the first "it."

My other cousins and I hurriedly looked for a nice place to hide. I pointed to a grove of bamboo trees. I was so surprised when my cousins vehemently protested.

"*Naku huwag diyan. Me nakatirang espirito ng matandang babae diyan at ayaw niyang me nanggugulo sa kanya* (That's not a good idea because a spirit of an old woman lives there and she hates it when people disturb her)," they chorused.

"*Huwag diyan may matandang nangugurot* (There's an old woman who pinches kids there)," Laura, my other cousin added.

I just laughed and told them these were just old wives' tales.

"Ha ha ha...*hindi totoo yan noh. Gusto niyo batuhin ko pa yan eh* (That's not true. If you want I'll even throw stones at it)," I taunted.

I hurled huge stones at the tree and called for the old woman to come out. Nobody showed up, and no one pinched us like what my cousins told me.

"*O tingnan niyo, wala naming lumabas eh. Hindi totoo yung storya niyo* (See I told you, no one appeared. That old woman story is a fake)," I teased them.

That night, my parents and I went back to Manila. We were all tired from the long trip and immediately went to bed when we got home. I immediately fell into a deep slumber.

But that night, my sleep was punctuated with disturbing dreams.

In my dreams I saw an angry looking old woman whom I had never seen before. She had wild hair that half covered her face, and her eyes were like flashing pinpoints of fire. She looked furious. She pointed accusingly at me.

At that point, I woke up in a cold sweat. When I realized, it was just a dream, I went back to sleep.

The old woman appeared again!

In this dream she was right beside my bed. And then I felt the bed move, like there was a strong earthquake.

I woke up again, disoriented.

I fell asleep for the third time. And for the third time, the old woman appeared. This time I heard her speak.

"*Ibalik mo ang mga kinuha mo sa akin* (Give back the things you took from me)!" she shouted at me.

I couldn't for the life of me remember what I took from her, or even remember who the old woman was.

Thrice she appeared in my dreams. Every time I fell asleep, she would reappear in my dreams. This happened throughout the night.

In the morning I woke up with a very high fever.

My fever lasted the whole day. My parents ordered me to rest, but I was afraid to close my eyes, for fear that I would see the old woman again.

Fortunately, the fever didn't last long and in a few days I had recovered and was back to my old self.

Later, when my cousins found out about it, they reminded me

about what I did at the lake.

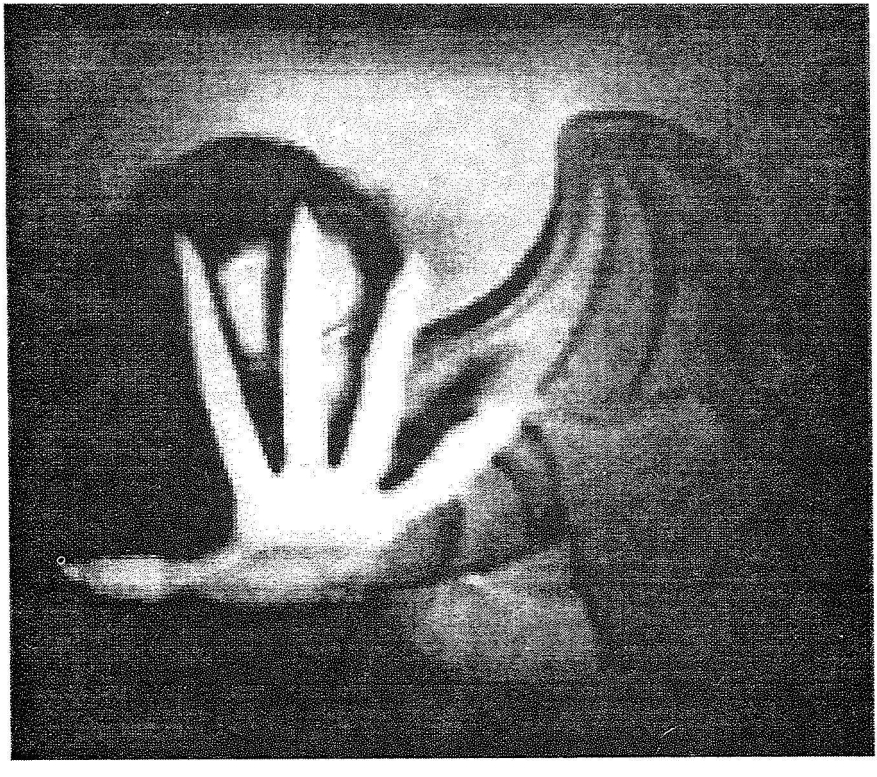
"*Hala ka, minulto ka ng matanda sa panaginip* (See what happened. The old woman haunted you in your dreams)," Paolo teased.

It was then I realized the gravity of my actions. From then on, I vowed never to take stories about the supernatural lightly.

Needless to say, I never went near the bamboo grove again.

Every time I would remember the old woman's face, I would have goose bumps.

A ghost who invaded my dreamland. ❑



school spooks

Anonymous

It is said that violence or tragedy leaves its imprint on a place. And sometimes, these imprints manifest themselves on unsuspecting individuals.

Manila, being a city ravaged by war, abounds with old buildings and edifices that have seen their share of violence and tragedy, among them, many of today's schools, colleges and universities.

Perhaps this is why a lot of these campuses tell of resident "specters" and ghostly manifestations, from faceless nuns to headless priests.

Are these apparitions real or are they the result of someone's overactive imagination? We don't know for sure. One thing we DO know is that these stories have endured the test of time and are as vividly told today as they were in the days of our parents and grandparents.

Following is a collection of scholarly spooks that have long haunted the halls of learning. Have any of you met them?

The lovelorn ghost

Students at the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology tell of a lovelorn spirit named Allen, who once took a fancy to a high school freshman girl several years ago.

Catherine (not the girl's real name) said she first noticed Allen outside, standing beside a Balete tree at the back of the high school building. After that she would always see him in that same spot every afternoon, watching her.

One day, she got curious and went up to the guy. She struck up a conversation with him.

"Who are you and why do you always stand here every afternoon?" Catherine asked.

At first Allen just looked at her. Then after some time, he spoke:

"You look so much like my dead girlfriend."

The answer creeped Catherine out and she ran from the guy, vowing never to go near the area again.

But days passed and she still kept seeing Allen standing beside the Balete tree. Finally she couldn't keep it to herself any longer. She told one of the teachers about it. She almost fainted when she learned the truth.

"Allen was a student here a few years ago. He and his girlfriend, Rina, were doing a chemistry project one day and an accident happened. Both died tragically," the teacher said.

"You mean they're BOTH dead? Then who was I talking to?" cried Catherine aghast.

"I don't know," the teacher shrugged.

"He said I looked like his girlfriend," Catherine spoke softly.

"Come to think of it," the teacher peered closely at Catherine, "you DO look a bit like Rina. You have the same hair and you both have deep-set eyes."

Spooked, Catherine began avoiding the area.

One late afternoon, Catherine was walking down the second floor corridor. She had to stay late in school for a project. Suddenly she heard an angry voice right behind her.

"*Bakit mo ako iniiwasan? May ginawa ba akong masama?* (Why have you been avoiding me? Did I do anything wrong?)"

Catherine turned around and screamed. It was Allen, and his eyes were blazing red with anger.

Dropping her books, she ran all the way home.

The next day, Catherine did not go to school. Her mother said she came home trembling and stuttering incoherently, and her temperature was very high.

Catherine never went back to school and last her classmates heard, she had transferred to a different school in the next town.

Meanwhile, nothing else was said of the lonely ghost by the Balete tree.

The dorm-mate

"She never left."

Occupants of PUP's Jasmin hostel have never seen their resident "ghost" and housekeepers would not give out the exact room number that she haunted.

But everyday, in the early mornings or late afternoons, those who pass by the haunted corridor would hear murmurs and cries that would make their hairs stand on end and impel them to run away

from the area.

According to one of the older housekeepers, the ghost is a female.

"She was studying for the nursing board. I don't know what happened, whether it was because she was broken hearted or she failed her exams, but one morning she was found dead inside her room. She had committed suicide."

Since then, the girl has been haunting the hostel.

Some of the occupants have reported seeing a woman in a nurse's uniform walking down the corridors late at night. Then, when she reaches the end of the corridor, she just disappears!

Some unfortunate souls who are forced to answer the call of nature during the night have been frightened out of their wits when they look in the mirror and see her bloody face right next to theirs.

Others report that they often hear someone knocking on their doors, but when they open them, they find no one outside, but feel a cold wind brushing against their cheeks. Older residents believe that the spirit comes in to "visit" during these times, so they advise not to open the door.

strange report

Staffers of the school paper at Trinity College have reported strange things that have been happening in their newsroom every time they do their press work.

During one of their all-nighters, one of the section editors decided to take a break and step out of the room. Across the corridor from him was a room that they also sometimes used to work in. Inside the room were a few chairs, tables and computers. The room was unoccupied now because everyone had gone home and only the section editors and the art director were there to supervise the layout.

Suddenly, he heard the tick-tack of the keyboards, as if someone was typing. Knowing that he was all alone, he decided to look if somebody was using the computer. He saw one of the computer screens was lit up.

He went over to it and was shocked to see the keyboard typing by itself! He was typing the name Jackie over and over again. The keyboard continued to tick-tack until the screen was filled with the name Jackie.

The section editor fled to the safety of his companions in the other room and told them what happened. The editors and art director immediately packed up and went home.

Another time, while the news editor was encoding his article, he heard someone say "hello" to him. When he looked up, a pretty girl dressed in old-fashioned clothes approaching him.

Thinking the girl was from the theater group, he waited for her to come up to him and state what her business was.

Just as she reached him, however, the girl disappeared.

Finally, one of the other section editors who had the third eye decided to have a talk with "Jackie" to find out what their resident ghost wanted.

Jackie later on revealed that her real name is Patricia. She said she liked hanging around the newsroom because it was once her favorite spot when she was alive. She said it used to be a park with a well and benches. She used to sit on the benches all day long and enjoy the peaceful atmosphere of the park.

Patricia (or Jackie), according to the editor, is a Spanish looking lady, with fair complexion, stands 5'5" and looks like a doll.

She still drops by the newsroom from time to time. Just to say hi.

kid stuff

This incident happened three years ago during a Days with the Lord retreat in Don Bosco Technical School in Mandaluyong.

The session had finished early and most of the facilitators headed off to their quarters for an early night's rest.

As they walked towards their quarters, one of the facilitators spoke up.

"*May ipapakilala ako sa inyo* (I want to introduce you to someone)," he said.

"*Sino* (Who)?" we asked.

He said, "*Ito si* Puti (This is Puti)" by way of introduction.

But the facilitators couldn't see anyone!

He then asked the others to raise their arms in front and it suddenly felt freezing cold.

Some of the facilitators immediately ran to their sleeping quarters.

The following day, they learned that those who stayed were able to talk to "Puti," a young and playful kid who was shot in the middle of an encounter during the war.

Puti continues to haunt the old corridors of Doña Cecilia and manifests himself through a white silhouette as described by the security guards who would often see him play at night.

Guess who came to the faculty lunch?

This happened a few years back in an unidentified school campus.

There was a college faculty luncheon and almost all the teachers attended.

As they were eating, some of the faculty noticed an old male college teacher eating alone in the corner. He looked a bit strange and was unusually quiet.

Those who knew the teacher wondered about this because the teacher was very popular, not only among his students but the faculty as well. Usually a friendly, chatty person, he often had a story or joke to tell.

One of the teachers called to him to come over and join their group, but he just gave them a blank stare. After a while, he just disappeared and nobody noticed him leave the room.

It was only later that the teachers found out that their colleague was already on his deathbed at exactly the same time that he was seen eating at the luncheon. A few hours after that, he expired. A few days later, as his desk was being cleaned out by his fellow teacher, the same teacher whjo invited him during the faculty luncheon, she was so shocked to find a note personally addressed to her, thanking her for everything.

The Doña Juana Rodriguez St. Project

Totel De Jesus

I first heard this true-to-life ghost from my professor who ran out of lessons to teach one sleepy afternoon.

It was about this saleslady - let's call her Mrs. Santos- during the 70's who was into direct-selling Tupperware products, something new in the kitchenware market at the time.

At the end of a demonstration she conducted in Laguna, a middle-aged gentleman, who looked like an important businessman –sort of like a Jaime Zobel de Ayala or a John Robert Sobrepeña – approached her.

The guy –let's call him Mr. Cruz –invited her to do another demonstration in a house along Doña Juana Rodriguez in New Manila, Quezon City.

Charmed by man's courtly demeanor, the saleslady accepted the invitation and went the following week to the address given. It

was at an old Hispanic mansion with century-old trees and an ancient garden surrounding it. It was a lazy Saturday mid-afternoon and very few vehicles were passing by in front of mansion.

In the front yard stood an old, balding man in a white undershirt, sweeping away the dead leaves. When he saw her, the old man, who was probably the caretaker, readily invited her inside.

The interior of the mansion exuded a certain Old World charm, something seen in period movies like *The Sound of Music or Gone with the Wind*. She was ushered into the sala and was told to wait for Mr. Cruz. Mrs. Santos proceeded to set out all the Tupperware items she had brought with her. By the time she had finished, Mr. Cruz still hadn't arrived. She decided to pass the time by reading some of the magazines. Oddly enough, she couldn't recognize any of the faces featured on the covers. Glancing at the dates, she saw that they were all dated in the 1930's.

Suddenly, she heard voices coming from upstairs –animated conversation, punctuated by laughter here and there. When she looked up, Mr. Cruz, together with several men and women similar to his age and bearing, were coming down the stairs.

Mr. Cruz introduced her to his friends who were all wearing grey suits. Some of the men were in grey coats and ties, some in grey barongs and pants –even their shoes and handkerchiefs were grey. The women were in grey skirts and long gowns. Mrs. Santos didn't pay particular attention to their attires, surmising that perhaps it was a gathering of an upper-class club or organization and such "uniforms" were required.

Mrs. Santos introduced the Tupperware products and everybody seemed excited and pledged to order some items. After her demonstration, someone turned on the turntable and played old tunes, probably Bing Crosby classics. Then someone brought out some food and wine and a party began. Mrs. Santos was invited to stay for the party. She declined, saying it was already getting dark, but did drink a little of the wine.

Mrs. Santos went home happy and tipsy that day. She stayed

the night with a 60-year old aunt who lived in Malate. Mrs. Santos told her aunt about her rich, elegant but weird clients. The aunt was surprised when she mentioned the names of Mr. Cruz and his friends. Apparently, her aunt knew them all by name and reputation. Yes they were all celebrities and elegantly rich! Some of them were famous artists, musicians and socialites. The only thing was, her aunt had watched and read about them during her college days, decades ago. As a matter of fact, these people had been dead for a long time. Many of them didn't survive the Second World War!

Mrs. Santos was too stunned to speak. To think that she even danced a tune or two with them and tasted some wine!

A few months after, Mrs. Santos decided to write about her experience and have it published in the Sunday edition of the *Daily Express*. It came out in the second week of December 1972.

When my professor read the article, he tried to find out the truth behind the story. He asked his students (at the time, he was teaching the high school students of San Beda College), to visit the mansion in New Manila with him –as a sort of adventure. So, together with a dozen of his students, my professor went to the house one Saturday morning.

To their surprise, an old man identical to that described in the *Express* story was there in the front yard, doing much the same thing that the old man in the story was doing –sweeping away dead leaves.

My professor made some pretext about needing to interview Mr. Cruz about old houses. The old man ushered them all inside, and there they found everything as described in the 70's article. Even the old magazines were there, bearing the same dates. The old man told them to wait as he climbed the long staircase to inform Mr. Cruz about the group.

What happened next? Well, the group didn't wait around to find out as they sped out of the mansion as fast as their feet could carry them.

When I asked the professor whether the story was true or

not, he dared me to find out for myself. He gave me the exact location of the house, which was some blocks away from the Broadway Centrum. So one Sunday morning, I decided to see for myself. Trudging up Doña Juana Rodriguez Street I noticed some old houses but saw no sign of the old man. Reporting back to my professor I suggested that after 20 years, somebody might have bought the property and turned it into one of those townhouse complexes. Probably, he said. He didn't care because after the horrifying incident he never went back there. Even at the height of traffic in the area, he always made it a point to avoid the street.

As for myself, I can only report this strange incident that happened after I visited the street: One Monday morning I checked out the National Library for old copies of the Sunday *Daily Express* magazine. To my surprise, I discovered that all the copies of the December 1972 issues were there –except for the issue that came out on the second week. The Librarian, who has been working there for decades, was also puzzled. Coincidence? Somehow. I think not. ❑

A Glimpse of The Unknown

Juan Paolo Garcia

Ghosts, Poltergeists, doppelgangers and demonic possessions are recurring themes in Hollywood movies. But these super natural phenomena have been scientifically documented. Are they reel or real? You decide.

Ghosts and Poltergeists

Distinguishing between ghost hauntings and poltergeists can be quite difficult since they share many similar characteristics, according to paranormal experts. These are, however, certain distinctions.

Hauntings are spirits of deceased people appearing frequently in certain places. Poltergeists (German for "noisy ghosts") may not be spirits at all. Some theories say they are mass forms of energy that a living person is unknowingly controlling. In some cases, extreme

poltergeist activity has been linked to demons. Hauntings are usually related to specific place or tragic way of death. Poltergeists, however, are usually linked directly to a specific person or object. Hauntings are appearances of ghost(s) in areas to the deceased before their deaths. Poltergeists can be triggered by a living person's trauma in any area, at any time.

Haunting activities are continuous over time, concentrated in the same area. Poltergeists build up over time to a climax, then start over. They can travel anywhere. Hauntings are not violent. Most poltergeists nearing the climax of their energy can become dangerous – inflicting both mental and physical terror in extreme cases.

Body Double

Doppelganger (German for "double goer") is described as the soul embodied, an astral projection, or aura –a double. Its sighting could foretell a person's imminent demise. According to an old Halloween belief, anyone who wants to know who will pass away in the coming year has only to stand vigil near the church door on April 24, the eve of the feast of St. Mark. At midnight, the doppelgangers of all who will die file in a solemn procession into the church. If a person sees his own doppelganger there. His death may not be that far off.

To this day, the fear of the doppelganger is still observed. In some countries, all the mirrors in a house where a death has just occurred are covered. It is thought that the doppelganger of anyone passing the glass could be projected into the mirror and carried off by the deceased t o the afterworld.

Evil Incarnate

Rarely, some person's experience a complete behavior takeover by a demonic entity. The entity may dominate the victim so the person becomes the demonic entity. This is perhaps the most fright-

ening and dangerous supernatural phenomenon facing man –true demonic possession.

With the advance of medical science, distinguishing between mental illnesses previously mistaken for diabolical interference (such as hysteria, multiple personality disorder, schizophrenia and other neuroses) and true demonic possession has become very difficult. Thus, the Catholic Church allows the rite of exorcism only if a case of true demonic possession is firmly established. Signs of true possession include:

- Superhuman strength, often accompanied by fits and convulsions
- Changes in personality
- Knowledge of the future or other secret information (clairvoyance)
- Ability to understand and converse in languages not previously known to the victim (glossolalia)
- Practice of lewd and obscene acts
- Horrible smells of bodily odor
- Distended stomachs
- Changes in the voice to a deep, rasping, menacing, guttural croak
- Automatic writing or levitation

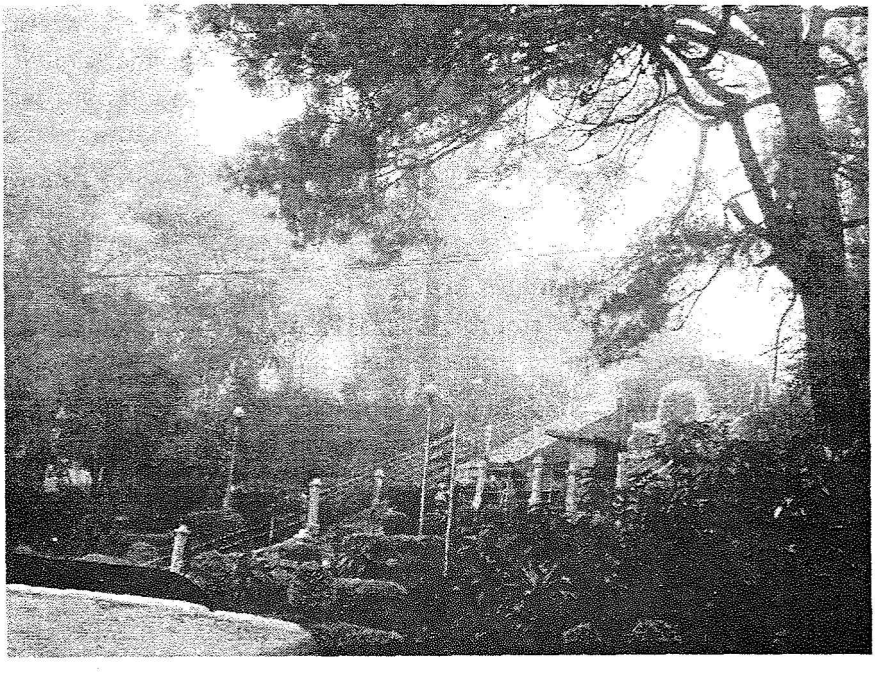
Exorcism is the formal rite, sanctioned by the Catholic Church, to drive out the Devil and his demons from possessed persons. Technically, exorcism (from *exousia*, Greek for oath) means putting the demon on oath or invoking a higher authority (Jesus Christ) to bind the entity in order to control it and command it to act contrary to its will.

Ideally, the exorcist must be a priest of good physical health, middle-aged, routinely going about his normal pastoral duties, and

usually not brilliant or engaged in teaching or research. He rarely works alone and is usually assisted by three other persons –a younger priest, a medical physician and a physically strong member of the victim's family. The exorcism site should have a definite connection between the demon and victim, like the victim's bedroom or house.

Before performing the rite, the priest-exorcist should make a good confession and be absolved of all sins, which the demon may try to use against him. During the exorcism, salt (representing purity) and wine (representing the blood of Christ) are present. The victim is to hold a crucifix while the exorcist uses holy water and relics (bones from saints), and recite Biblical scriptures and prayers. Experience shows that prayers said in Latin seem to be more effective.

The exorcist invokes the name of Jesus Christ, commands the demon to make itself known and leave the person in peace. When the spirit does so, the priest prays for Christ to help and protect the person. ❑



Favorite URBAN LEGENDS

Totel de Jesus

For Tony Perez or Jaime Lichauco, they are what you may call, wandering spirits in need of our help. With unfinished business that only the living persons can attend to. Or perhaps they just need our prayers. Whatever, they are those who scare us out of our wits and make us pray the rosary, or make us attend morning masses.

For the adventurous lot whose idea of fun is skydiving or driving drunk at midnight, these urban scary legends are sure one gothic rock-and-roll experience.

The most famous white lady

The Balete Drive's White Lady is one famous babe. After all, not every ghost has a movie made about her, not to mention a dozen

teleplays and comic stories. In fact, you could say, the White Lady is much like the Boogey Man, or the *mumu*, a figure parents and *yayas* often invoke to spook stubborn children into submission.

The most common story revolving around this apparition is about this lady dressed in glowing white often seen by motorists driving by the Balete Street in the wee hours of the morning. Sometimes, she hitches a ride, especially if the driver is all alone. Needless to say, motorists speed by like a Mad Max relic when they find themselves on this stretch of road at inopportune times of the night. That is, if they can't avoid the area altogether.

Tony Perez, the guru spirit questor, described her as a *deva* or a "tree spirit", a white mint-like glow usually seen under a big tree. This glow, Perez explains, is not to be afraid of but something to wonder about. Something to awaken the psychic abilities sleeping in one's subsconscious.

There were rumors one time that what the motorists saw on Balete Drive was only a hoax, made up by some showbiz personalities themselves who were living near the area at the time. Some sort of artistic trip. Yes the drivers did see a lady dressed in white, waving or staring at them in the dead of night. And rumor has it that the lady who played the part was no other than popular actress Nida Blanca.

Oh man, if that were true, the make-up artist was really good.

The uninvited actor

The theater group PETA (Philippine Educational Theater Association) is used to staging its play at the Rajah Sulayman Theater in Fort Santiago, inside the Intramuros. Despite the history attached to the place, the actors were never bothered by any supernatural occurances –save for one solitary incident.

In one of their evening performances, during a crucial scene, the actors were visited by an unidentified entity in a black cassock,

sort of like a medieval priest. The specter casually walked from one side of the stage to the other side, like he was part of the scene. But the scene only required three actors, and obviously there were one too many onstage at the moment. The director of the play, character actor Soxy Topacio, stood stupefied, wondering what was going on. The audience, however, didn't react, believing the phantom was part of the play. And so did the actors who thought it was just one of those miscues.

It was only when the figure vanished into thin air that the actors screamed in realization and fear. One of them even jumped from the stage right into the audience. Obviously, that ended the night's presentation.

Considering the history attached to the site, however, this incident should not come as a great surprise. The Rajah Sulayman Theater was built over a burial site of martyred Filipinos during the Spanish regime. The nearby ruins were once prison cells and torture chambers where many of our ancestors died. In addition, the big white cross atop the nearby dungeon was erected in memory of the thousands of Filipinos –illustrados, peninsulares, indios- who were buried alive in the last days of the Japanese occupation, after American warplanes battered the Walled City with bombs.

Although the theater had been blessed and even though PETA still holds major productions there, the specter of the uninvited actors lingers in everyone's memory.

The sprinter in North superhighway

If there is one category in the olympics that Filipinos could win, besides boxing, it's the running contests. Legends like Lydia de Vega, Elma Muros, Navalta and others have already brought hope to our battered pride. And this urban legend could give them a run for their money.

Many motorists who had been to the North Expressway, especially at night have had strange experiences. Many accidents have

happened there in the past and even up to now because of the lack of road lights and warning signs set up along the highway. As such, the area is already steeped in history.

A friend of mine who once suffered from a broken heart –his girl ran away with someone who looked like Hugh Grant from behind –used to drive along long, lonely roads at night, in order to forget his pain. On one midnight drunken drive, he found himself traversing North Superhighway, at 90 kilometers per hour. Keeping him company on the road were 10-wheelers and a few passenger jeepneys.

However, later he reached one stretch when he found himself all alone on the road. As there were no more trucks and jeepneys, he speeded up. Zooming like a lightning, he accelerated to 120 kph.

Then suddenly, he sensed something bearing down on his right, outside the glass window. There was no figure in the side mirror, but the corner of his eyes told him there was something, floating or flying beside his car. He thought it was just one of those hazy figures you see when you're drunk and driving fast. Or probably one of the reflected lights of some vehicle far behind.

He took a deep breath and finally looked sideways. And there he was –the sneering face of a man with blood on his forehead, staring at him just beside the car's window. The figure seemed to be running steadily with him.

My terrified friend jerked his gaze away from the apparition and looked straight ahead at the road, which coincidentally, was slowly turning right. Now all awake, he stepped off the gas and shifted to a lower gear. He looked again and the bloody, sneering face was still there! At this he shouted in fright and immediately stepped on the brakes.

This saved his life, for he narrowly missed plowing into a truck stuck by the roadside.

He continued driving then, though at a much slower pace and kept his gaze steadily on the road ahead. When he dared to look again, the face wasn't there anymore.

My friend reached Bulacan and waited till morning before coming back to Manila.

He found out later that there was a vehicular accident and the truck he almost collided with was crushed in front. He passed by the wreck on his way back to the city, but he didn't bother to stop and check for the faces of the casualties being brought out of the truck. One might look familiar. ❑

A Filipino Glossary of the Supernatural

Agimat - Mystical stone which give the bearer various magical powers. The agimat must always be carried as a pendant, or inside the mouth or pocket.

Aswang - Also Asuwang. The Filipino version of a vampire. The aswang is a normal human by day, but by night, the aswang may choose to be a vampire or a wolf or some viscious animal, or a western style vampire ala-Dracula to devour its prey.

Dwende - Also duwende. An elf. A Dwende is normally a jolly, slim, short and mischievous creature of the forest. Its magical powers can be used for good or evil.

Engkanto - The term engkanto is used to denote a magic spell, or an entity that could cast such a spell.

Kapre - A Kapre is a hairy creature of the night which smokes cigars and stays in the treetops. It is capable of vile acts from stealing babies to mutilating adults.

Kisapmata - A blink of an eye.

Manananggal - A vampire which can divide itself by its waist. The body has bat-like wings which can detach from the waist, allowing the upper half to find its human victims, while the lower half remains immobile. The manananananggal is a normal person by day, but can become a blood-thirsty creature by night, with demonic facial features and ferocious-looking fangs.

Nuno - Normally a "Nuno sa Punso", or "a dwarf in an anthill". The dwarf is normally foul-tempered and stocky, and would cast spells and curses on children who peek, touch or disturb their anthill. However, there are good dwarfs, or mababait na nuno.

Sirena - A mermaid.

Tikbalang - A creature that is half-horse, half human. Contrasted with the four-legged Centaur with a human head and a horse's body, the Tikbalang is two-legged creature with a horse's head and legs, and human arms and body.

And From The Internet

From zerocool at www.buyncell.com

We saw a ghost din sa crown peak. We stayed in a two-connecting rooms, yung cr nasa gitna. We were drinking in one room (the one with TV) the outside door in the other room is locked, pero open yung connecting door sa room so kita namin yung kabilang room. It was past midnight nang may bigla ba naman naglakad na babaeng naka-black sa kabilang room. natanggal lahat ng lasing namin, tapos wala ng naglakas-loob na matulog sa kabilang room that night. ...it was very dark ng biglang tumigil sasakyan namin sa tagaytay, tapos may babae from nowhere na tumawid sa harap namin.

Bumili ng antic na grand fathers clock ang tita ko. Everytime na mag bell tuwing 3 am, may naririnig na silang naglalakad sa sala, chains at nababasag na gamit. There was this time na we tried to sleep infront of the clock. Natulog akong maaga before 3 am para hindi ko na ma-experience ang multo. Pero at exactly 3 am, narinig ko na yung "dong! dong! dong!" Tapos naging maingay sa place may malamig na hanging, parang hinihipan ako sa paa ko, tapos umakyat sa legs, tapos sa arms, mayamaya nasa face ko na. Ginising ko yung mga cousins ko, yung pala gising na sila and they are experiencing it too. Ngayon, they turned off the clock, wala ng multo... may switch ang multo?!?

Nag-outing kaming magpi-pinsan sa Matabungkay. Nag-swimming kami sa isang resort, 3 sasakyan kaming naka-convoy ng pabalik na kami sa cottage namin. Along the way, sa isang dark area, we saw a lady na naka-hubad sa tabi ng road. Her arms was stretched out, parang naka-crucify. Since most of us ay lalake, nag-slow down ang sasakyan to check her out... from feet up. Pagkita mo sa face niya para gusot na gusot ang face niya (worst than mukhasim), tapos she was saying ""one-way! one-way!" in a very high tone. Yung maid na kasama namin was terrified and said na aswang daw yon, which was

later confirmed din by the staffs sa resort. Binigyan nila kami ng asin at bawang.

From endymionn at www.pinoyexchange.com

It all started when I was in third year high school. We had a camping in Bato Bato Springs Resort in Laguna. The campsite was located at the edge of the compound, at the slopes of Mt. Makiling so we're basically isolated from everyone.

First Night, dinner time. Siyempre kanya-kanya ng kain. Nagsama-sama kaming magkaka-klase dun sa isang pavilion. Pinagkwekwentuhan namin yung experience nung isang group that evening (di ko na maalala yung kwento) tapos several yards from us, parang merong lalaki na palapit sa amin. Tapos inaya nung isa kong classmate yung guy kumain. Pagkasabi na pagkasabi niya ng *"Pre, kain ka na"* Bigla na lang nawala yung lalaki out of thin air. Napatahimik kami lahat.

Final day, uwian na. Dahil nagkaroon ng problem yung service namin, naiwan yung last batch sa resort. Imagine, mga around 50 na lang kaming naiwan tapos walang katao-tao dun sa compound. By that time, andami-dami ng kwento tungkol sa mga kababalaghang nangyayari sa area. They kept on talking about a black figure among the trees. Evening, tumawag ako sa may gatehouse para sabihin na mala-late ako ng uwi. Eh ang layo-layo ng base command mula roon, tapos konti lang yung ilaw paakyat. To keep me sane (at para hindi rin ako tayuan ng balahibo). I kept on singing *Magic Knight Rayearth's* opening theme while walking. Buti na lang merong second year na nasa unahan ko, pero malayo. Halfway between base command and the guard house, meron isang awkward looking tree sa may daan.

Nung una kong tingin eh wala namang kakaiba dun sa puno, pero nung second time kong pagmasdan, ta[n]gina may makikita ka talaga na black figure na nakatayo sa unahan nung puno. Korteng tao siya, kasi mas maitim siya kesa sa gabi. I kept my cool, pero nung nasa tapat niya ako, ramdam na ramdam ko na nakatingin siya sa akin. Nung medyo nakalayo na ako, biglang tumakbo yung kasabay ko sa unahan, kaya tumakbo na rin ako.

From toyger at www.buyncell.com

Some years back, an old house was remodelled and opened as Jazz Rhythms Cebu.. Along the side road you take from Lahug up to Escario..The walls were replaced with dark brown glass from ceiling to floor .It was quite a popular place and was a favorite dig of many for some time...then its popularity waned and fewer and fewer people came...then we noticed that the glass panel on the SE corner had big cracks..few days later the maintenance people taped the cracks (probably to prevent the glass from falling apart) with masking tape....the tape served to highlight the form of the crack!! The cracks on the glass panel formed the outline of a pregnant woman hanging on a rope....few days later the whole panel was replaced with a brand new one..the same shape crack appeared on the replacement panel !!.... we'd pass by practically every day so we saw the glass panels again replaced , the panel on either side also cracked into the same crack outline....this went on for many weeks, until even the SE corner panel had cracked the same shape,,,at one point 3 or 4 panels all had the same shape crack from top of panel to bottom...they started covering the glass panels with plywood to hide the cracks..

Story is one of the previous occupants of the house was a young woman who got pregnant and committed suicide and hanged herself in the house when jilted by her lover... and she found the club too noisy she decided to again lay claim on the old house...Jazz Rhythms later closed .

From Dunedain at www.pinoyexchange.com

We just graduated from college in 1988. Me and the gang decided to take that much needed vacation to Sariyaya, Quezon and just chill at the beach for the next couple of days. None of use owns a car so we decided to take a bus. When we got to the outskirts of the town, we stayed at a known checkpoint (which is basically a restaurant owned by one of my bud's parents) for buses where people can eat and use the toilets. Around midnight, some of us gathered chairs to form a "bed" where one can easily toss a sleeping bag while some decided to but their sleeping bags on tables. Just before we retired, the *boy* (or watchman, or *bantay*) told us: *Kapag may naririnig*

kayong ingay sa bubong, 'wag n'yo buksan ang bintana tsaka pintuan". Around 3:00AM, a few of us heard somewhat a scratching noise on the roof. My initial thoughts was *Aswang*(?), or maybe just an Owl (since it's logical that rats or mouse could be hanging around the roof of a restaurant). *"Pare, naririnig mo ba yun? Ano kaya yun?"*. I think I replied: *"Malay ko. Gusto mo buksan ang bintana?"*. Who knows? All of a sudden, one of the guys threw a shoe to the ceiling and the scratching noise went away. Sweating? For sure. But it wasn't the fear factor (maybe a little bit), it was just bloody hot since all of the windows and doors are bared. We left for the beach that morning around 5:30AM, and the rest of the trip went well.

From blue_blooded at www.pinoyexchange.com

There's this lady who was 6 months pregnant and lives in Quezon with her husband and brother-in-law. Her hubby works in Manila and comes home only every weekend. One Friday night, she fell asleep while waiting for him to come home. Around 2a.m., she woke up hearing someone walking toward the bed she laid on. Thinking it was her hubby, she decided to give him the cold-shoulder and pretended to be asleep coz he didn't even wake her up to apologize for being home so late. Next, she felt him lie down on the bed. She ignored him. She was not going to talk to him. She didn't even open her eyes. After a few seconds, she felt him put his arm across her shoulder. She thought her hubby was drunk coz his arm was unnaturally heavy. That did it. She opened her eyes and saw... The leg of a horse.

From Ping at www.pinoyexchange.com

This happened sa College school ko before sa dlsu-csb...

Well, evening class ko 8-9 pm. Then usually pag ganoong time ala na masyadong students and pati yung mga ibang staffs umuwi na...!!! Tapos noong isang gabi na, we're having class, nagulat kaming lahat ng napasigaw yung isa namin classmate na nakatingin sa likod malapit sa door... E di lahat naman kami napatingin kung san siya nakatingin... We're all shocked, imbis na mapatakbo kami, natulala

lang kami.... There's a girl dressed in black, long hair, natatakpan yung face ng hair nya... then she walked papuntang blackboard tapos tumagos sya sa blackboard.... yikes! pagtagos sa blackboard, nagsigawan kami at tumakbo, pati yung teacher namin napatakbo din sa takot...

Then, the story started spreading... the school just said na rumors lang para di matakot yung ibang students... but it actually happened.... m there... kitang-kita ko... 20 students kami and 1 teacher na nakakita.... yikes!

There's this story from UST, the old med building.

May doctor sa anatomy dept, working late in the night. Yung young prof daw na yun, mainitin yung ulo, madaling magalit. So when he dropped his ballpen near the covered stretcher of a corpse, sinipa lang nya palayo then bent down to pick up his ballpen. When he was about to look back up, he saw very pale legs standing malapit don sa ballpen. To his horror, there was the corpse standing in front of him, glaring with lifeless eyes that don't seem to see anything..

Siyempre tumakbo palabas yung prof. When the security came to check what the prof was screaming about, they found his desk in disarray, all his ballpens broken in half... and the corpse still in his stretcher, but with the cover torn to shreds. The UST night-shift security report said overworked na siguro yung prof, and he resigned a week later.

Then there's another version that says when the prof looked up after picking his ballpen, nothing happened and he went home. Pero upon changing his clothes sa bahay, there was the corpse in his closet, with a frozen smile. Without a sane excuse how the corpse got in his home, the prof was fired for stealing a cadaver.

The scariest part of this version is, some people who hear this story afterwards see the corpse in their own closets, for a split-second...

ST. PAUL COLLEGE - Q.C.

You will be shocked to know that there are no mirrors in some of the comfort rooms in the campus. It is for the reason that an anonymous lady appears in the mirror unexpectedly and really scares the students. It has been said that one student committed suicide in that comfort room.

Haunted Places in the Philippines as compiled at http://theshadowlands.net/places/philippines.htm

Baguio City - Teacher's Camp - It is believed that this was once a battlefield of the native citizens there. Ghosts of native warriors, as well as spirits that are still restless, are reportedly seen there.

Corregidor - Hospital Ruins, and bunkers - Sounds of activities can be heard within the area of the hospital ruins, which were destroyed during WW2, sounds such as footsteps, and rumblings of normal hospital activities. Around the bunker area, sounds of ghostly moans can be heard, assorted noises as well.

Diliman Teacher's Village - Claret School qc - Many stories were spread since 97 the first was the high school student who jumped from the 5th floor to the ground that appears when the area is silent and the 2nd is the headless priest. That school is said to be an old cemetery.

Espana - Manila - University of Santo Tomas - Ghosts and wailing voices are heard from the 3rd and 2nd floors of UST Main Building. Since this is the oldest building in the oldest Catholic university in the Philippines, it is undoubted that some Spanish friars and Filipino souls were tormented and killed in this place.

Iloilo City - Central Philippine University (CPU) - Football Field - A female ghost is said to be seen jogging on the tracks early in the morning. She is said to join you while you are jogging and strikes up a conversation and will disappear after she passes a certain spot. Several students, teachers, and the school president have reported jogging with her.

Iloilo City - Central Philippine University (CPU) - Ruby Hall - A school janitor as well as students and teachers have reported that while passing by the building at night after it is locked down, one classrooms lights would always be turned on while everything else is shut off. They have reported some strange creatures running around the classroom. This is one of the most haunted halls in the university. This is a medical hall and it houses several cadavers for the use of the med. students. From cold spots and moving furniture, to sometimes

being pushed or tripped while walking.

Quezon City - Balete Drive - Balete Drive is a residential area famous for the apparition of a white lady. It is told that there was a teenage girl who was raped by a cab driver in the 50s in that area. It is possible that the lady of Balete is seeking revenge. Never walk alone at night in eerie Balete Drive.

Quezon City - Miriam College - on the 2nd floor ladies comfort room of the caritas building a nun haunts the bathroom and is said to peak over the stall while girls are using the bathroom. A face can be seen when you look above the door, but there are no feet when you look below the door. **CSC** - there was also this "manananggal" that lives there. It used to be a student that was hit by a car inside the campus. Rumors are that every school fair, someone faints.

University of the Philippines Diliman - Ghosts sightings at the College of Education, College of Science Library, Palma Hall, College of Mass Communication, UP Main Library.

Asian Institute of Management - A Professor died of a heart attack a few years ago in one of lecture rooms on the third floor of the main building. There are voices; shadows and cold spots can be felt in that specific room where the professor died. His car remains in the faculty parking area even until now.

International School Manila (Former Campus) - Fine Arts Theatre - One of the high school students was acting as the stage manager for the Community Play. The theatre was already uncomfortable for her when it was dark, but one night, on her way out, she was leaving through the front doors of the auditorium, something she couldn't see followed her up the aisle. Very aggressive, very menacing and very scary. She ran out the door just in time as they slammed shut behind her. Suffice it to say, she never stayed in the theater alone again.

Manila - De La Salle University - A chapel located on the 2nd floor of the De La Salle University -main Building is haunted by several ghosts said to be the victims of a mass killing during World War

II. They start haunting the place when evening has crept in and the area is already silent. Sightings of headless monks and screams of people are being heard there during rainy nights.

Manila Film Center - When the construction of Film Center at the Cultural Center of the Philippines complex was rushed in the early 1980s for a film fest, the ceiling scaffolding collapsed killing several workmen who fell to the orchestra below. Rather than halt construction to rescue survivors and retrieve the bodies of dead workmen, cement was poured into the orchestra, entombing the fallen workmen. Some of them were buried alive in the orchestra. Various ghostly activities were reported on the site including mysterious sounds, voices and poltergeist activity. In the late 1990s a group called the Spirit Questors began to make visits to the film center in an attempt to contact and appease the souls of the workmen who were killed in the building. Some of these spirits claimed to have moved on but a few allegedly remain.

Ozone Disco - Once there was a disco there and it caught on fire people tried to get out but people were pushing and panicking so no one got out. Some people hear disco music in their houses at night and see faint people dancing and no one can explain how.

Rizal Park area - Near the Rizal Park in Manila has the angry spirits of dead Japanese soldiers in the ruins of a building outside of the park. Many Japanese soldiers died in the building when it was blasted. Reports of a cold presence and menacing feelings.

Muntinlupa - San Jose Village - An overgrown black bird with powerful wings can be heard circling the village whenever there's a pregnant woman. It's wings are so powerful that you'll sometimes feel like its windy but only on the place where you're standing at.

Muntinlupa - San Jose Village - St. Bernadette St. - From 12 midnight onwards, a lot of tricycle drivers have already encountered the white lady who loves to get a free ride. More often, this lady would be sitting beside the driver. Other times, a red lady is said to roam around the area following people who dread to walk this haunted street at night. ❑

True Philippine Ghost Stories Book 2

ISBN: 971-8995-90-0