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Edited By Reginald Ting

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Our heartful thanks to all the readers who submitted their stories.

Most names of the characters in the stories found in this book have been changed to protect their real identities.

If you have any ghost stories, feel free to share them with us.*
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Damned Store

by John Paul A. Deveza

❖ ❖ ❖

The story I'm about to tell you happened about a year ago when I was part of the kitchen crew at an old restaurant on Timog Avenue. At night, I could feel that someone was watching me, or someone would whisper in my ear even though nobody was around. Even in the comfort room, customers would complain of being watched and the scent of lighted candles filled the area. If you sat in the center cubicle of the women's CR, you could feel a strong presence hanging above it.

We were preparing cake orders for the Christmas season one December. We have this old walk-in Chee-Puck chiller to house the large cakes. When the delivery van came by at around one in the morning, I went inside the chiller to check the temperature. As I opened the door, I saw something that made me go pale and my hair stood on end.

Lying inside was a balding man in his late 20's. In his right hand was a wooden cross. He held a knife in his left. I stood there speechless and unable to move. I closed my eyes, hoping the apparition would disappear. When I opened my eyes, the man was looking at me! I stood there petrified. The man extended the bloody arm holding the knife and pointed it towards me. I screamed and ran.

The delivery guy calmed me down. My crewmate (who had been working there for fifteen years) told me I had just seen Roland.

Roland was the guard on duty and part of his job was to check on the cakes. One night he went inside one of the walk-in chillers to check its temperature when he absent-mindedly closed the door, lock-

ing himself inside. The chiller could only be opened from the outside, and it was impossible for him to get out. He banged and kicked at the door, to no avail.

He was only found the next day when the delivery van driver and the manager came to check on the chiller. The police said Roland died of freezing. Some have said that as he struggled for air inside, he cut his wrists to quicken his death, hence his bloody hand.

Since then, no one dared to check on the cakes alone, especially at night. Most of us have seen Roland's ghost, even after the store had been blessed.

Letty

by Charina S. Blaza

❖ ❖ ❖

When my *Lola* Yolanda was twenty-four, she had a friend from Quezon named Leticia Gimpes. Leticia hanged herself in 1955.

Leticia, or Letty, was friendly and she always had many companions. Every time there was an occasion in the barrio, she would be there dancing, eating, drinking, and even cuddling with some men.

But as much as she was friendly with other people, she was the opposite at home.

"Cassava? Again?" she complained to her mother.

"Sorry, *anak*, this is all we can afford," *Aling* Tali, her mother, said.

"Where's *Tatay*?" Letty asked.

"He's gone, *anak*. He went back to his wife in Sariaya," her mother said tearfully.

"Bwiset! 'lang 'ya ka talaga!" Letty screamed as she left the house.

Letty never returned to her house, leaving her mother and her younger sister to fend for themselves.

For the next three years, *Aling* Tali did not eat or sleep well. She was always worried about Letty's fate. She eventually got sick, and her neighbors brought her to the hospital. Lina, Letty's sister, took over her mother's job as a "chick vendor."

One day, Lina noticed a familiar face in a tabloid newspaper. It was her sister, Letty. She had become an actress in Manila.

When *Aling* Tali got better, she went back to work. She and Lina

sold chicks by the roadside to earn enough money to get to Manila.

Upon their arrival in Manila, they discovered that Letty was in Valenzuela, acting in a street play. They went there and watched the evening show. Afterwards, they approached their beloved Letty.

"Who are you? Go away!" Letty cried upon seeing them. "Leave me alone!"

Those words hurt *Aling* Tali but she didn't give up. Every time there was practice, she would be there, watching and smiling at her daughter.

Letty continued to ignore her.

After a year and a half, Letty had become quite successful as a stage actress. All through that time, her mother would watch and smile at her.

Letty wouldn't mind her, not even sparing her a look.

But one day she glanced at her mother.

She was watching her, as always, but Letty saw that her mother's nose was bleeding. The other day, she saw her mother losing her hair. At times, she saw her pale and her eyes white, but *Aling* Tali was

always smiling.

Sometimes Letty would hear chopping sounds, which reminded her of her mother slicing the cassava. She would also hear chicks under her bed.

Letty shared all this with my *Lola* Yolanda, who was her assistant at that time. *Lola* assumed they were just hallucinations caused by the pills Letty took.

The worst, according to my *Lola* Yolanda, was when Letty told her that she saw her mother with a bleeding face and her teeth had fallen off. She was crying, but smiling still. Letty wanted to run outside the room but *Aling* Tali was standing by the door and slowly approached her. Letty covered herself with the blanket, and when she dared to look again, the image of her mother had disappeared.

The next day, Letty searched for her mother. My *Lola* and Letty eventually found her house in Balagtas, Bulacan on Christmas Day. Letty's younger sister Lina met them. Letty asked her where their mother was because she wanted to apologize.

"You can never do that," Lina said. "*Nanay* died two days after she talked to you."

Shocked, Letty could only cry.

"*Nanay* was rushing to your set to give you a letter but she was hit by a speeding car." Lina went on to describe how the blood burst from her face and how her teeth fell to the ground. *Aling* Tali died on the spot.

Before my *Lola* and Letty left, Lina gave their mother's letter to her sister.

The following day, my Lola found out that Letty had committed suicide. In Letty's pocket was the letter from her mother.

"Take care! Love, Nanay" was all it said.

Intramuros Shadow

by Alexander Jhan M. Dugho

❖ ❖ ❖

The walled city of Intramuros is a place we can go to relax, have fun or simply hang out. It has become a center of enjoyment.

But Intramuros served as a battleground during the World War II. There is no doubt that many people died there during the war, and there is no doubt that it is haunted, what with all the spirits roaming the grounds.

A friend of mine who was "sensitive" acts strange there. Knowing her abilities, I would sometimes ask her, *"May nakikita ka, 'no?* (You see something, don't you?) But she would never tell us whatever it was she saw.

The first time I saw her bothered was when we did a shoot there last semester, when we had to make a movie as a final project. We had chosen Intramuros as one of our locations for a night shoot.

At first, I didn't know why my friend suddenly announced a cut. We walked over to her and asked her what was the matter. She indicated the video camera and told us to watch the playback. She replayed the scene we had just taken, and we saw that it blurred many times. The camera was mounted on a tripod, which immediately ruled out shaky hands. The image just suddenly blurred but returned to normal. My "sensitive" friend told us that it was a mist ghost. Maybe it was just some technical glitches, but none of us could explain what happened.

But what really scared me happened last October 22, a Friday. We had received our class cards and we decided to hang out in Intramuros to celebrate.

My parents were not keen on letting me stay out late, and so by eight o'clock I bid my friends farewell and asked them if anyone else was leaving. Oma and Dida said that they too had to get home and walked with me to the exit.

As we climbed down the wall, Dida spotted a group of freshmen, one of which lived near her. She bid us goodbye and went with the freshman, much to Oma's indignation, for she had expected Dida to accompany her on the trip home and now she was making the trip alone. I volunteered to go with her as far as I could (she was headed north while I was headed south) and off we went to get our rides.

We must have walked about twenty feet when I felt someone following us. I saw a shadow on my left. I turned to look and saw someone behind us that I didn't recognize. I didn't know why but I just suddenly felt nervous about him. Even though there were other people I didn't know walking around the place, I felt strange about that man.

When we walked another ten or fifteen feet, Oma looked behind us. I was surprised when she said that Dida was following us. I also looked, and, indeed, Dida was standing there looking at us. Oma and I were both surprised at how fast Dida had caught up to us. I felt something wrong with the situation but I couldn't place my finger on it.

"*Sinundan mo pala kami* (So you followed us after all)," I said.

Oma, who was still feeling a bit resentful, said, "*Sige, ganiyan ka, Dida. Lagi mo na lang akong iniiwan* (You're like that, Dida. You always leave me)."

Dida just laughed her unmistakable laugh.

"Let's go," I said and we resumed walking. After taking a couple of steps though, Oma and I turned around at the same time to find out that Dida had vanished! If she had walked away, we would have

been able to see her.

I felt a cold chill creep up my spine, and I'd bet Oma was feeling the same thing, too. At first we asked each other where Dida could have gone, but, feeling it was something we could not explain, continued on home. The feeling of someone following us did not go away the whole time we were there. I felt it somewhere behind me to my left. Sometimes I would turn around to check but we were alone.

Only when we left the gates of Intramuros did the feeling of someone following us go away.

A few days later, we asked Dida if she had followed us that night. She said she didn't, which caused my arms to break out in goose bumps.

Ang Pansit

by Boo!

❖ ❖ ❖

This happened to my cousin a few years ago in Zamboanga. It had been 10 years since my cousin's father had died. My cousin and his family were so busy with their own lives that they had forgotten their father's death anniversary. They noticed that there was pansit bihon on the kitchen table. They were all puzzled because not one of them had had the time to cook. A little while later, they heard the pansit fall and its plate break. When they checked it out, nobody was in the kitchen, not even a cat or dog. It was only then that they remembered it was their father's death anniversary.

My Experiences in Grade Six

by peekaboo_rinoa

❖ ❖ ❖

Early Morning Madness

This story happened when I was in Grade six. I was studying in a Catholic school in Caloocan. I wake up at 4 because the school service picks me up at 5, and we usually get to school by 5:30, long before the flag ceremony at 6:30.

One December morning, I decided to go up alone to my classroom to finish my Social Studies assignment. My classroom was on the top floor, and it was my *barkada's* habit to wait for each other by the entrance before heading to our room. As I climbed the stairs, I felt that the air was unusually cold and a bit eerie. In the classroom, I closed the windows, but even with them closed, I still felt cold.

My friends haven't arrived yet when I finished my assignment. Thinking that they were downstairs by the entrance waiting for me, I decided to go down and meet them. I made a detour to the bathroom first to tidy up and relieve myself.

When I looked in the mirror, I heard running water in the last cubicle. Even though I was scared, I forced myself to investigate. My mind was filled with scary images of headless priests and white ladies.

There was no one in the cubicle; I was totally alone in the bathroom. I closed the cubicle door and went back to the mirror to fix my hair.

I felt myself being watched. I turned around to look at the door to the bathroom but nobody was there and nobody had come in. When I looked back at the mirror, I saw a black lady beside me. I couldn't scream; it seemed like my voice box had turned to ice. My legs felt weak and I went down to my knees. Nothing registered in my mind, not even the ringing of the first bell that signaled the flag

ceremony. I felt her eyes pierce my very being. I could not even blink! When I slumped to the floor, the lady was still looking at me. After what seemed like hours, she disappeared. I unsteadily got to my feet and ran down to the quadrangle. It was still dark and I felt someone following me. .

My friends asked me where I had been as I joined the line. I tried to talk but no words came out. When the ceremony started, it was an effort to participate, especially during the *Panatang Makabayan* because I was still shaking from my experience.

Only when we got to our classroom did I tell them what happened. They screamed in fright and none of us ever used that CR ever again.

After that event I was able to perceive the unseen with my sixth sense.. That experience opened my third eye, but I'm not too thrilled by this "gift." Who in his right mind would want to see scary creatures everyday?

Retreat

As a graduating student, I was required to attend the seniors' retreat in Tagaytay for three days and two nights for reflection and meditation. The trip to Tagaytay was exhilarating, but it was raining when we got there. It was already noon, and the priest had us eat lunch first before we started.

After lunch, we checked where we were going to sleep. The room that was assigned to us had 5 double deck beds. My *barkada* chose the beds near the windows, since we noticed that there were no electric fans in the room.

During dinner, the priest announced that he would hear confessions in the room beside the refectory. We set up chairs outside the room to serve as a waiting area.

The air was cool and soothing that night. As I talked to my classmate while waiting our turn, I felt someone was looking at me. I looked around but there was no one else there; my batch mates had already gone to their rooms. I ignored the feeling, and went up to the priest when it was my turn. When I was done, I waited for my friend to finish, so we could go to our room together. I still had the

feeling that someone was watching me, but I didn't mention this to my friend; I didn't want to freak out her since she knew that I had an open third eye.

Before we slept for the night, we chatted with each other. I glanced out the window and I saw a girl standing beside the mango tree. I thought it was my imagination, coupled with my near-sightedness. But as I lay in bed, I felt something cold caress my legs and arms. I immediately sat up, and one of my friends, Annie, asked me why. I told her and she said that she had felt it too but had ignored it. Annie and I shared a bed that night, feeling secure in each other's company.

During the night, I saw a lady dressed in white pass by our beds, going around the dormitory. When she peeked at our bed, I was shocked to see that she was gruesome—her cheek was torn, its skin already black; blood dripped from her hair; her eyes were almost falling out of their sockets. I trembled in fear. Annie must have felt me shaking because she asked me what was wrong and why I was so cold. My friend in the next bed was also awake, and she said she also felt something cold. She described her feeling to me and asked if that was what I felt. I said yes and added jokingly, "Welcome to my world."

I could still see the lady roaming around the room and I just prayed that we would all be safe. I tried to sleep but I tossed and turned, my inner defenses alert. I was finally able to sleep at around 3 a.m.

Sometime in the night, I was awakened by the sound of whispering. My classmates were talking to each other because they were all awakened by one of us screaming. That girl was coming from the bathroom, and she had screamed in terror when she saw a nun walk past her. I, on the other hand, did not hear her because I was tired from my lack of sleep. All of us weren't able to sleep after that. We talked for the next few hours about our experiences, until the breakfast bell rang.

We were glad that nothing untoward happened the following night. The "white lady" had only seemed to welcome us. When we asked around, we found out that the seniors before us had also seen her during their first night.

Habulin

by storytellah

❖ ❖ ❖

Pumunta ako sa bahay ng best friend ko at doon kami nag lunch. Habang kumakain kami, bigla siyang napatigil at napatingin sa room ng parents niya (kaharap niya ang room at that time).

"Someone's there," sabi niya.

Tiningnan ko rin ang room and I "saw" in my mind that a lady was peeping through the door. Confirmed na "nakita" ko dahil pareho ang description namin ng best friend ko kahit hindi niya sinabi sa akin kung ano ang itsura ng nakita niya noong una. Pero dahil gutom kami, hinayaan lang namin.

Biglang sumara ang pinto nguni't wala namang hangin. Nagtitigan kami ng best friend ko. Naramdaman ko na lumabas ng kuwarto ang "babae" at malapit sa amin. Nag-open na naman ang pintuan, at doon kami napatigil sa aming pagkain.

Malapit ang water dispenser sa kuwarto, at buti na lang at nakakuha na ako ng tubig. Nguni't gustong kumuha ng tubig ang best friend ko at since ako itong matapang, nakisuyo siya na isara ko ang pintuan. Sa ngalan ng pagkakaibigan ay sinara ko ang pinto.

Biglang naramadaman ko ang malamig na kamay ng sinumang naroon! Hindi ko na ito sinabi sa best friend ko at baka lalo pa siyang matakot. Sinabi ko na lang sa kanya na umalis na kami sa bahay nila.

One time naman ay kasama niya ang mga former classmates niya. Apat sila ng time na iyon, puro lalake. Dumaan sila sa science college namin. Nagtaka siya kung bakit biglang nanlamig ang paligid even though napakainit ng gabing iyon. Mas lalong nagtaka ang best friend ko nang biglang nagtakbuhan ang mga kasama niya. Siyempre tumakbo na rin siya dahil ayaw niyang magpaiwan.

Nang tumigil na sila katatakbo, tinanong niya kung bakit bigla silang tumakbo. Tanong din ang sagot ng mga kaibigan niya:

"Pare, hindi mo ba nakita na may sumusunod sa iyong white lady?"

Seriously, I can't see kung bakit habulin ang kaibigan kong iyon.

Na Pilar

by Luis Voltaire Castillo

❖ ❖ ❖

I grew up in a quiet town in the province of Marinduque, a very laid-back place compared to the hustle and bustle of Manila. It has been more than a decade since my family and I moved here but we will always remember the old place. We all miss it.

One day, my mom came home with bad news

"*Kumare* said that Na Pilar had just passed away," she gloomily said as she joined us for dinner.

Na Pilar was the thin, elderly woman that always had her hair in a ponytail. She was the one we called on if we needed to pray for our dead relatives. Though we never knew her real name, nor did we bother to find out, we often talked about her for she was a character. She walked in slow motion and talked in an odd voice. But she knew her prayers really well and she would breeze through lines of verses with ease. Up to this day, we would mimic the way she said, "tower of David, tower of Babel," and all the other prayers.

"Jay, since you always gave her food, I'm sure she'll visit you," I said to my brother.

"No, maybe Che because she would pray beside her," he said.

"Go on, make fun of her. She just might visit you," our sister Che warned.

"She doesn't know how to get here. And even if she did, she would get lost here in Manila," I said.

"Yeah, a ghost from the province will probably get lost," my brother agreed.

We found it so funny that we kept laughing about it the whole evening.

The next day, I hailed a jeep to get home and I sat next to the driver. When the jeepney stopped to load more passengers, I saw a familiar figure gingerly walking along the sidewalk—the gray-streaked pony tailed hair, the old-fashioned dress. My hair rose at the thought that it might be Na Pilar. As the jeepney slowly moved past her, I saw her profile. It really looked like Na Pilar!

She turned into an alley. Wanting to find out if it was really her, I got off and went after her. However, I saw no one when I looked down the alley. There was nowhere for her to turn into, as concrete walls lined both sides.

I stood there, puzzled. I then heard a loud noise down the street. I saw that a crowd had gathered at a collision between a jeepney and a bus. Fortunately, no one was badly hurt except for the jeepney's driver, who was carried away in an ambulance. Bystanders said that the bus was trying to beat the red light and hit the jeepney.

I looked at the jeepney. Its front portion was a wreck. If somebody were sitting there, he or she would have been seriously injured. That was when I recognized that it was the same jeepney I was riding in earlier. I would have been injured or killed had I not gone down to look for Na Pilar. Come to think of it, she might have just saved me. Or her ghost did. I felt goose bumps and saw something out of the corner of my eyes. I just shook my head in disbelief, called out at a passing jeepney and headed home.

Ang Mama Ko

by Marlene Florentino

❖ ❖ ❖

When I was in Grade 3, 5:30 ng hapon ang uwian namin. One time, mag-isa akong naghihintay ng service ko sa classroom namin. Pumunta ako sa CR sa second floor, nguni't sarado na siya by then. Tumuloy ako sa 4th floor na kung saan sabi nila'y may multo. Hindi naman ako naniniwala at binale wala ko lang ang mga sabi-sabi nila.

Habang nasa loob ako ng cubicle, may narinig akong kakaibang tunog sa katabing cubicle. Lumabas ako at tiningnan ko kung sino ang nasa kabila. Isang batang lalaki na naka P.E. uniform. Tinanong ko kung ano ang ginagawa niya sa CR ng babae. Nagmaktol siya sa harap ko at panay sabi ng, "Ang mama ko, ang mama ko."

"Tara, punta tayo sa faculty room," sabi ko. Baka mahanap namin ang nanay niya roon.

Nguni't walang tao sa faculty room; umuwi na ang mga teacher. Dinala ko na lang ang bata sa classroom ko at doon kami sabay naghintay sa service.

Pagpasok ko sa classroom, laking gulat ko nang makita kong maraming nakasulat sa blackboard. Nagtaka ako dahil alam kong binura ko ang blackboard bago ako nagpunta ng CR. Kinuha ko ang eraser at binura ko uli ang mga nakasulat.

Nang matapos ako, umupo ako. Ang batang kasama ko'y lakad ng lakad sa loob ng silid na parang hindi mapakali. Pumunta siya sa utility cabinet na lagyanan ng walis at dustpan. Pumasok siya roon.

Akala ko na gusto niyang makipaglaro ng tagu-taguan kaya't nagtago rin ako.

Nguni't pagbukas ko ng cabinet, wala na ang bata! I was shocked! Hanggang ngayo'y hindi ko alam kung saan nagpunta ang bata.

The Man with No Feet

by Joana Marie B. Verceles

❖ ❖ ❖

One night, my cousins and I were making pancakes for a midnight snack. I received a text message from my boyfriend that he was dropping by. I went outside and checked to make sure that the gate was unlocked. When I returned to the kitchen, my cousins had already gone upstairs. I continued cooking, impatiently waiting for my boyfriend.

There was a knock on the gate. I thought it was my boyfriend but when I got closer, I realized it was someone else. The man by the gate was tall and was staring at me. I looked down and I saw that he had no feet!

I ran back inside the house but he kept knocking. When I reached the kitchen, I didn't hear him anymore.

Minutes passed and I heard someone knock again. I was hesitant to go outside because I was afraid to see the man without feet. The knocking stopped, and my cell phone beeped. My hands were shaking as I checked the message. My boyfriend was outside, waiting for me to open up.

Boarding House

by Mae M.

❖ ❖ ❖

This scary experience happened about 4 years ago when I was in first year high school. My cousins, brothers, and I lived in a boarding house we rented from one of my mother's friends. It had two floors and four bedrooms. My brothers occupied the bedroom on the ground floor. On the second floor were the other three bedrooms—one room for my cousins, one for the other boarders, and the smallest room for me. My windows faced the street and passersby can see me from the street.

It was 9 in the evening and I was reviewing in my room in preparation for exams the next day. I was sitting on my bed with my back against the window as I read my notes. My cousin called me from downstairs, informing me that I had a phone call. I hurriedly went down, not bothering to turn off the lights and the electric fan.

I had been chatting with my friend Arlene when I heard someone call me from outside the house.

"Mae-mae!" he shouted.

Why was he shouting when I was downstairs and near the gate? I told Arlene that I was going to check on who was calling me.

It was my friend John. He was surprised when he saw me.

"Kanina ka pa ba riyan sa telepono? (Have you been on the telephone long?)," he asked.

"Oo 'no, nagtataka nga ako sa inyo kung bakit kayo sumisigaw diyan sa labas, eh nandito lang naman ako (Yes, I have been wonder-

ing why you were shouting when I was just down here)," I said.

"Sigurado ka? (Are you sure?)"

"Oo naman, kahit kausapin mo pa si Arlene (Yes, I'm sure, you can even talk to Arlene)," I said irritably.

John then held my arms and dragged me outside. My other friends Clark and Jenny were outside. They looked shocked when they saw me. I wondered what was going on.

Clark pointed to my room and said, *"Kung kanina ka pa riyan, eh sino ang babae sa kuwarto mo?* (If you've been down here all along, then who is in your room?)"

I looked up at my room and I saw a silhouette of a girl. She had hair as long as mine, and she was sitting in the same spot I was in while I was reviewing my notes.

We all went up to check. We braced ourselves and counted to three before flinging open the door.

To our surprise, no one was there. We went back outside and when we looked up, the silhouette was gone.

I was afraid to sleep in my room that night so I asked my cousins if I could sleep with them.

The boarders also had weird experiences around the house. One boarder, Maricel, was headed to the CR one night when she saw a little boy sitting by the stairs and rocking his body. Ilonah, another boarder, was hanging her wet clothes in the *bodega* when she saw an old man in a *barong* in the corner of the room.

Then there were items that would get lost but when we looked in the place we saw it last, it would be there. Sometimes plates and glasses would fall off the table without anyone touching them.

Rico's Room is Haunted

by Annaliza A. Carlos

❖ ❖ ❖

My best friend Rico had been experiencing different and odd events but he mostly ignored them, thinking they were just fragments of his imagination. Sometimes he would call me in the middle of the night, disturbing my sleep, to tell me that he had dreamt of his dead relatives talking to him. I didn't take him seriously, believing that Rico was pulling my leg. I know he doesn't believe in the supernatural, but sad to say, those mystical creatures kept haunting him and telling him that they exist in our world. Many of his friends and relatives tell him that he has the gift to feel and see those beings, but he didn't want to believe them because he didn't want to see and feel them. For him, being a clairvoyant was living with a curse.

One Saturday night, Rico was resting in his room. His *barkada* didn't have any plans that night and his mother asked him to stay home because his father would be at a convention that evening. Unfortunately, Rico was still awake at two in the morning, unable to sleep. He turned on the TV and watched a comedy movie.

Suddenly, Rico heard loud noises in the backyard. He heard people digging, and they were whispering in a different language.

Strange, Rico thought. *Who would be digging at this time?* He glanced at the clock and saw it was two thirty.

He decided to ignore the noises and focused his attention on watching the movie. But the digging and the whispering got louder,

and he could tell that they were getting angry. He tried to listen to their conversation but he still could not understand their language.

Angry, Rico got up from bed and went to the window. He looked out into the backyard but all he saw was darkness. There was no one there but he could still hear them.

Thinking it was his uncle in the other house, he ignored the noises and prepared to go to bed. He was about to close the window when he felt a rush of cold wind blow into his room. He didn't pay this any mind and returned to watching the film.

The digging and the whispers suddenly stopped. When Rico felt drowsy, he turned off the TV and climbed into bed. He was already half asleep when he saw a shadow pass. A figure of a lady dressed in white appeared in front of him. He thought he was dreaming, but when felt the cold air touch his skin and the bed sheets move, he realized that he wasn't.

His head suddenly ached. He couldn't move. His blanket was pressing down against his body. He felt like someone was lying down beside him and hugging him. He felt cold air touch his lips.

That's it! he thought. *I cannot stand this anymore!* Rico quickly got out of bed and moved into his parents' room.

The next morning, Rico told his mother and sisters what had happened. His mother told him it was just his imagination and advised him to sleep earlier the next time.

"Maybe it was just the effect of staying up late at night," she said.

Rico knew what he saw and what he felt. He knew he wasn't imagining things but he kept that thought to himself.

That evening, Rico tried to sleep early and with the lights on. He didn't want to experience again the events of the previous night.

Rico woke feeling refreshed the next morning. Nothing had disturbed him in the night. Maybe his mom was right, that it was just his imagination.

But when he got up to fix the bed, he froze in fear.

There was blood everywhere; there was blood on his bed, on the bed sheets, on his pillows, and there were bloody footprints all over the room.

He ran out calling for his mother. When she saw the blood in his room, she knew that Rico wasn't making up what he saw the other night. She examined the footprints and concluded that they were female. She asked her daughters if they were playing a trick on Rico but they said they were asleep the whole night. When she looked back at Rico, she could see that he was really frightened. She tried to make light of the situation, suggesting that maybe he had stepped on a rat and trailed footprints all over his room.

His mom sought the help *Mang* Erning, a friend of hers who could communicate with the unknown. When *Mang* Erning went to their home, he unerringly went to Rico's room. He told them he could feel strong energy inside the room and he looked at Rico. Then, after touching the walls and offering prayers, *Mang* Erning touched Rico's head and recited a Latin prayer.

Mang Erning looked at Rico and then at his mom and said, *"Hindi sila aalis dito. Pero huwag kayong mag-alala dahil hindi naman sila nananakit. Natutuwa lang sila kay Rico. At isa pa, may gusto silang ibigay sa anak mo. Isang babaing multo rin ang umiibig sa kanya na laging nandito at nakabantay sa kanya. Siya rin ang may kagagawan nito dahil gusto niyang mapansin siya ni Rico* (They are not going to leave. But don't worry; they are harmless. They are just fond of Rico. One thing more, they want to give something to your son. One lady ghost is also in love with him and guarding him. She's the one responsible for this because she wants Rico to pay attention to her)."

The very next day, Rico moved out from his room. He rented a flat here in Manila where he thought he could live in peace.

To this day though, he could still see that lady ghost in his dreams, trying to hold his hand and telling him to go back to his room.

The 2 a.m. Singer

by Josie P. de Dios

❖ ❖ ❖

My father was very strict; he would not allow anyone to court me. At 22, I have not had a boyfriend yet.

I met Rudy through the pen pal column of a magazine. He was a taxi driver. In my earnest desire to leave my father and his strict rules, I eloped with Rudy.

Since Rudy was from the South, he was lodging in the taxi terminal here in Manila. Since I could not live with him in the taxi terminal and because he wanted me to feel better, we looked for another place to live. We were able to get a place near the taxi garage, a short walk away, that will get him home in minutes after clocking out at 3 or 4 in the morning. It was small and located at the end of a compound, but it was cheap.

Everything was fine except for one thing: I would hear a voice, a humming voice as if preparing for a song rehearsal. It would always be cut short. I would hear it by the stairs every 2 a.m. and I always tried to find out where it came from.

One night I did not rouse from bed when I heard the humming voice. This time though, after the humming had ended, I heard footsteps. The footsteps came up the stairs. Before I could get out of bed, the footsteps came closer, and, if I was not mistaken, were already inside the apartment.

"Rudy, is that you?" I called out.

Before I opened the door, I saw a woman by the window. I looked at the door but it was closed. When I looked back at her, she was gone.

I heard another set of footsteps inside the room, but when I checked, there was no one there. I was sure I had seen a lady. She

was clad in a white blouse and a checkered skirt. But I was alone in the apartment; the doors were closed and none of my neighbors would visit me at this time. I felt a chill and I felt the hair on the back of my neck stand on end.

I told Rudy about what happened the moment he arrived. I begged him not to leave me alone at night anymore.

"After I take a little nap, I will go back to the terminal and ask that I be allowed to make my trips in the daytime," he said.

"Thank you," I said. I felt a little better but the eerie feeling was still there. I did not know what else to do.

Rudy went to bed immediately. I, on the other hand, could not sleep.

I jumped out of bed when I heard a very soft female voice say something I could barely hear. "Help me!" I think she said.

I clasped my blanket around me but I was freezing. I wanted to wake Rudy but I could not move.

The lady appeared right in front of me. She reached out to me, begging for help. I could not stand it anymore. I screamed but no words came out.

Then everything went black. I did not know that I had lost consciousness. When I woke up I was already in the hospital. Rudy was right beside me. He called for the doctor the moment he saw me open my eyes.

"You're lucky, Sally. You didn't lose the baby," the doctor said. "Do you remember what happened?"

"I do not know doctor. I think I saw a ghost," I said.

I know the doctor did not believe me because he answered me with a smile. "That was really frightful. Anyway, next time be a little more careful."

Rudy and I talked to the landlord as soon as I got out of the hospital. I wanted to be sure that there was nothing wrong. I did not want to risk my baby should anything like that happen again. If we

needed to leave the house then so be it.

We learned from the landlord that the old tenant of our unit was a student that was raped and killed. She was found beneath the bed inside her room. She had been manifesting herself to everyone that rented that unit, eventually scaring them away. The landlord thought she was gone because Rudy and I were able to stay there for a month.

I was too scared to go back to the apartment. Rudy packed our things and we moved to another apartment that same day.

Chapel Ghost

by Sir_Bouleville

❖ ❖ ❖

An exchange student of a famous school in Alabang went to the chapel at a little past six in the morning. She was about to pray when she saw a lady in white crying not far from where she was. She approached the lady and asked what was wrong. The crying lady said that she was looking for a teacher at the school and asked if the exchange student could fetch him for her. The lady said to tell the teacher that she was waiting for him at the chapel.

The exchange student went to the faculty room and asked around but for some reason nobody told her where the teacher could be found. Tired, the exchange student went to the principal. With a grim face, the principal asked if the exchange student was serious, because the teacher she was told to fetch had died from a heart attack. He had been dead for over ten years.

The principal and a guard escorted the frightened exchange student to the chapel. They did not find the lady who asked the favor. The principal asked the exchange student to browse through old yearbooks to see if she could identify the said lady. Indeed, she found the lady's picture there, and she turned out to be a teacher that had died in a vehicular accident on her way to school. She had been dead for over five years.

The Angry Spirit

by Kenneth Gimpayan

❖ ❖ ❖

We were in Olango, a small island in Cebu, for our Geography class doing a research study. After our studies, we gathered by the campfire and shared ghost stories. When the fire died, we joined a group of teachers that were having a drinking session. It was then that Tess asked me if I believed in ghosts and ghost stories.

I had met Tess in the same class in a university in Cebu. She looked Japanese and, when I got to know her better, revealed that she was from Japanese descent.

"Of course I do," I said to her.

With a bland but strange look on her face she said, "Then you have to got to believe my story."

"Why? What happened?" I asked.

"I keep hearing about people telling ghost stories of the friend of their friend of their friend, but never a person with first-hand experience."

"Have you experienced one?" I asked again.

"Yes. I even have a third eye," Tess replied.

I chuckled, perhaps to express mockery, but I saw in her eyes that she was serious. I insisted that she tell me about her experience.

"Okay, but promise me you wouldn't tell anyone else," she whispered.

"Every summer, my family and I would always go to our rest house

in Leyte. Ever since I was young, I would see and feel paranormal phenomena in the house. One time, I was sitting on a chair and a couple of shadows kept following me. The shadows seemed to float everywhere without being attached to anything. They didn't look flat and they looked three-dimensional, like a real person. I was scared the first time I saw them, but I grew accustomed to them as I saw them more often."

"Are you sure about this? You see, the mind is very playful. Eyes also have complex lenses and the images that you saw might have been reflections," I said.

"Ken, I was there and to me they were real!" Tess replied.

"Could it be possible that you were just imagining things? Anyway, please continue your story," I said.

"The horror didn't stop there," she continued. "One day, an old woman told us never to put away the Sto. Niño statue that was in the altar outside because someone might come. But as time passed, the house grew old and had to be renovated. We forgot about the old woman's warning and removed the Sto. Niño from its altar and placed it somewhere inside the house.

"One night, I dreamt of soldiers fighting in a battlefield. One of them struck me with his sword and I actually felt it cutting me, as if it were real.

"I woke up from my dream and I saw a hand holding a knife, trying to reach for my feet. I rubbed my eyes to make sure I wasn't seeing things. Then I saw that the hand belonged to a white lady with long hair kneeling outside my mosquito net. But what got my attention were her ferocious eyes. She seemed to be very angry with me, I didn't know why. It was like she was holding a grudge against me!"

"You're definitely kidding me now," I said and laughed.

"She horrified me but, instead of freezing in terror, I managed to shout at her, *'Kinsa man ka?* (Who are you?)'

"She made a rattling sound while her jaw dropped, which almost

reached the floor! She quickly ran outside, seemingly afraid to reveal her identity. I totally freaked out on seeing her jaw drop that I didn't know what to do. I ran out through the same door she went through and headed to my parents' bedroom near the stairs.

"To my surprise, the second floor was filled with an eerie aura. The hallway looked misty and black, and it felt so cold. I could barely see where I was going.

"The sound of footsteps made me turn. There was the lady, looking at me! She was holding the knife and her big black furious eyes were locked on me. She was slowly coming up the stairs, intending to get me.

"I tried getting into my parents' room but it was locked. I screamed in panic and banged hard on the door.

"*Tabang! Tabang!* (Help! Help!)," I shrieked in fright.

"She was only a few steps away from me when the door finally opened. I hugged my parents and tearfully told them what happened. They did not believe me because when they peered into the hallway, there was nobody there. They comforted me and advised me to calm down.

"After that confrontation with the lady, I still could not forget her anger. What have I done to deserve it? Have I insulted her? Have I offended her feelings? That woman must have experienced something so terrible for her to act like that. She acted angrily, and I could smell her need for revenge. My parents also told me never to tell anyone about that incident. My mom said that if I did, the bad spirit might follow me."

"Great pitch! This story sounds familiar, though. Ahhh, does the movie *The Grudge* ring a bell?" I asked Tess.

"What is it about?" she asked.

She had never seen or even heard of *The Grudge* or *The Ring* movies. She had avoided horror movies because she didn't want to be scared.

I knew then that she was not joking and that it truly happened.

Maybe she was on drugs or drank too much that night, but she reacted with a faint smile and denied doing those things. I noticed that she wasn't partaking in the drinking session, where one must drink even just a little as a sign of respect; she refused to drink anything at all.

She regretted relating the story to me; even her best friend did not know it. I asked her if she had seen the lady lately.

"I pray that I never see her again," she said as she shook her head. "I haven't seen her again since that night, but I will never forget. She wouldn't let me."

The Detour

by Gio Sevilla Loyola

❖ ❖ ❖

When I was a medical student, I was assigned to a psychiatric ward in Mandaluyong. I chanced upon a patient singing a tune that went, "Tinini-ni-nin Tinini-nini-ninin," the same tune snake charmers use. The patient also swayed her arm back and forth with a closed fist as she sang. Her name was Tin-Tin and I asked the head nurse about her case.

One night, Tin-Tin and her boyfriend were cruising along the service road headed for Tarlac. They came to a detour and turned into a dirt road, tall *pilapil* grass on both sides. They were getting scared; the silence was so still that they thought there were becoming deaf. At one point, their car overheated and broke down.

Vincent got out and looked down the road to see if they could get help.

"We need water to cool down the radiator," he said. "The last house I saw was around 500 meters back where we came from."

Thinking that they had parked in a safe place, he got a container and told Tin-Tin to wait for him in the car. Tin-Tin, being a brave, sweet girl, just nodded. She adjusted the rear view mirror and watched Vincent walk away.

She saw a woman approach her boyfriend. She could see that she was mentally challenged, and she had torn clothing like that of a *taong grasa*. Vincent looked at the woman straight in the eye. She sang a tune that went, "Tinini-ni-nin Tinini-nini-ninin" while swaying

her arm back and forth with a closed fist. Vincent didn't mind her and continued walking. Tin-Tin relaxed when she saw that Vincent was safe.

A few moments later, Tin-Tin realized that the woman should have already passed the car. She looked in the rear view mirror and she saw that the woman was still walking towards her but was still at the same distance where she saw her last. Tin-Tin turned around and looked through the rear windshield of the car to double check. Objects seen in the mirror were closer than they appeared, after all.

The woman was still approaching. Tin-Tin immediately looked towards the front to avoid making eye contact with the woman. However, when she looked in the rear view mirror again the woman was gone. Surprised, she looked back but nobody was there.

Suddenly, the woman appeared beside the car, looking at Tin-Tin with dreaded red eyes. She was singing. Tin-Tin screamed wildly as she closed the windows and locked the doors.

"Vincent! Vincent! Where the hell are you?" she shouted.

The woman remained by the window, still singing and swaying her hand back and forth. She seemed to be holding something. Slowly, the woman raised her hand to reveal that she was holding Vincent's severed head.

"Oh my God! Oh my God!" Tin-Tin screamed. She quickly transferred to the driver's seat. Still screaming, she looked back at the window and, thankfully, the woman was gone. There was silence all around.

But, just as Tin-Tin was about to breathe a sigh of relief, the woman appeared by the driver's side, still singing the same tune while holding Vincent's head. Tin-tin tried to start the car, but the keys weren't there! She screamed in fright and frustration, tears rolling down her cheeks. Tin-Tin noticed that the woman was holding something else in her hand. She risked a look and she saw that the woman was holding the keys to the car!

Tin-Tin couldn't take it anymore. She jumped to the passenger's

side, opened the door, and ran until she came upon some townspeople. When they asked her what happened, they never got a clear answer; she kept singing a tune that went, "Tinini-nini-nini Tinini-nini-ninin."

The Lady at Intramuros

by Joana Marie B. Verceles

❖ ❖ ❖

I had been to Intramuros several times but when I went with my aunt, my cousin, and her friend, I never thought that time would be the scariest experience I'd ever have.

I saw a white lady under a tree. As we continued to walk, she kept appearing to me, but I ignored her. By the time we were on the wall, I was lagging behind my companions. I walked faster to catch up to them.

I felt someone behind me and I heard someone weeping. I looked left and then right, but I couldn't see anyone. I was so afraid because I knew that the white lady was coming near me. I wanted to run and shout but I couldn't. My cousin shouted my name to get my attention. They were really far ahead of me. When I looked back, the white lady and the sobbing had disappeared.

When we reached the underground, the white lady appeared again. I stared at her; it seemed like she was trying to communicate. I wanted to walk away but I couldn't move; my feet seemed to be glued to the ground. She told me she was one of the people that died when the city was bombed. She was crying as she moved closer to me.

I felt a tap on my shoulder. It was my aunt, asking me what was the matter because I was staring into space and not moving. I shook my aching head.

"*Ano kaya ito, 'no? Siguro malaking* maze (What is this place?

Maybe it's one big maze)," commented my aunt.

I smiled and told them what the white lady had told me.

"Imbento ka naman. Excuse me, di ka po historian! (You're making this up. Excuse me, you're not a historian!)," my cousin said to me.

"Eh, di 'wag kayong maniwala! (Then don't believe me!)," I said to them.

As we made our way to the food stalls to buy something to eat, we saw a monument. Written on it was exactly what the white lady had told me. My companions looked at me strangely.

"So naniniwala na kayo? (So, do you believe me now?)," I told them. "Remember *noong nandoon tayo di ba sabi n'yo nakatulala ako, di ko alam kung paano pero may nagpakita sa aking* white lady *at kinausap niya ako at sinabi niya sa akin iyon* (Remember when we were there and you noticed that I was staring into space, I don't know how but the white lady showed herself to me and talked to me and told me what happened to her)."

Nobody spoke, and I heard the weeping again. I suggested to my companions to pray for the lady's soul. When we finished the prayer, the crying stopped. I opened my eyes and saw the white lady in front of me. She said thank you, tapped my shoulder, and disappeared.

The Lady in the Big House

by Ma. Cristina C. Paculba

❖ ❖ ❖

My mother worked as a stay-in cook in one of the houses in Makati. One summer, she asked me to spend my summer vacation there with her since her foreign boss was away for a couple of months.

When I first arrived, my hair stood on end but I didn't know what caused it. I learned to ignore it and enjoyed my stay there. I loved staying in the huge living room, watching movies all day until past midnight.

One time, mom and I decided to sleep in the living room. I took the couch as my bed and my mom occupied the alphabet mat (the room also acted as a playroom for the kids).

I couldn't sleep but I kept my eyes closed. Then I had the feeling that someone was staring at me. I bravely opened my eyes to find out who it was.

I saw a woman in a long white long gown walking towards me. I could not move and I was shaking in fear. When she was in front of me, I shut my eyes and prayed, hoping that I was dreaming. A thought flashed in my mind, something my maternal grandmother told me when I was fourteen.

"If you're having a nightmare and you couldn't move or even shout, just pray and try to move your body. If you don't, you will die. That's what we call *bangungot*," I remember her telling me.

And so I tried to kick my legs and, fortunately, I was able to move them. When I opened my eyes again, I saw nothing but darkness.

The next day, I told my mom about the incident. She told me it was just a bad dream.

Months later, another maid, Delia, was hired to help my *tita* and my mom in the housework. Delia was my mother's friend and she had an open third eye. While cleaning the pool one afternoon, she saw a girl standing in the living room, facing the main door. The lady was wearing jogging pants and a white T-shirt. She looked liked a student. A moment later, the girl went into the dirty kitchen. Delia waited for her to come out but she never did. If she had gone out through the squeaky kitchen door, why didn't Delia hear it? Delia checked the kitchen but no one was there. Delia asked my *tita* if she was in the house that afternoon, but my *tita* was in the village that afternoon.

The foreign family had visitors one evening. Clara and Eva, the daughters, were playing with the visitor's son. The boy kept shouting, running in and out of the entertainment room and eventually locked himself inside. Suddenly, he screamed. His parents rushed over and when they finally got the door opened, they saw their son huddled in a corner.

"I saw somebody," he said. He hugged his mother and pointed, but no one was there. They searched the whole room but they found no one.

Kuya Noel, the guard, also had a terrible experience. He was taking a nap at around 1:00 p.m. inside the house. Hands caressing his head woke him. He opened his eyes and found himself on the lap of a lady with long hair. He tried to turn his head to see the woman's face but he couldn't move. He was able to reach out and grab some of her hair, enabling him to wake up and run out. Since then he stayed outside. Even though he knew it was a bad dream, the fear still lingered.

When the lease period matured, all the things that were left there were transferred to the office. My mother resigned to start her own business.

We were having a meal one evening, and I asked her, out of curi-

osity, if she or *tita* had any bad experiences in that house.

"We always heard footsteps on the ladder at night and we felt somebody watching us, but we just ignored them. Ghosts won't harm humans. And the ghost never showed itself to us, anyway. Why bother with such foolish feelings?" she said. "And besides, the place had been vacant for almost five years before my boss rented it. It was possible for a ghost to reside there, especially since the area was quiet and vacant.

The neighbors said a strict couple and their eighteen-year-old daughter first owned the house. One time, a wailing from inside the house disturbed the neighborhood. The neighbors went over to the house and found out that the daughter had committed suicide in her room by cutting her wrists. (Her room would eventually become the living room). Her reason for killing herself is still unknown. Some say that her boyfriend abandoned her after she told him that she was pregnant. After the burial, the couple sold the house and went to the U.S. and never returned.

Snobbish Reflection

by Boo!

❖ ❖ ❖

Jenna was a stay-in seminarian at one of the religious sects in the country. One night, she was looking at herself in the mirror when suddenly, she saw her own reflection turn its back and walk away. She rushed out of her room and became hysterical. From then on, she seemed to be mentally ill, as in *hindi na siya nakaka-usap ng matino* (she couldn't talk coherently)! She's out of the seminary now.

The 'Other' Friend

by Aries Jake L. Montilla

❖ ❖ ❖

December 15, 2003

Our college *barkada* (circle of friends) loved to organize parties, out-of-town trips, and anything else that sounded like fun. With 16 members, we're a big group when we get together.

We held our Christmas party at our friend's condominium unit in Westmont, Parañaque. Inspired by *Victim,* a TV show where people played practical jokes, Florinel and I came up with a prank to pull on our friends. She told them that she was pregnant and that I was the father. After a series of dramatic dialogue, we managed to pull it off, making everyone believe that I was fathering Florinel's child.

After making our friends squirm for an hour and a half, we came clean and told them that it was just a prank. Everyone was both relieved and mad at us for pulling a fast one on them. But in no time at all, they laughed and marveled at how good we were.

"Wala talaga kayong magawa, ano? Hindi nakakatuwa pero tatawanan na lang namin. Akala ninyo ha. Gaganti rin kami sa inyo! (You have nothing better to do, eh? It wasn't funny but we'll just laugh about it. Just you wait, we'll get even with you!)," Lester joked.

A few hours later, we prepared for bed. And since we all wanted to be together, we shared one room. We managed to fit because some of us slept on the floor. Unfortunately, I was given the "privilege" of sleeping near the bathroom.

I wasn't sleepy yet so I struck up a conversation with the two

people next to me – Wilbert and Francis. Of course the first topic we talked about was ghost stories and the supernatural.

As Wilbert was talking about an urban legend, Francis interrupted him and claimed that he could see a pinkish fog in the air by the airbed, which was on the other side of the room.

"Saan? Wala naman, ah! (Where? I don't see anything!)," Wilbert said.

As they scanned the room, I saw Bernadette get up from her bed and walk in front of me as she headed to the bathroom. I watched her, only turning away as she reached for the doorknob. I heard the bathroom door lock from the inside.

"Nice try, Francis," I said. I thought he was joking, but Francis was serious. He insisted that he saw something. I told him that maybe he was just too engrossed in our topic.

A few minutes later, I had to use the bathroom. I did not see Bernadette leave, as my attention was focused on the talk we were having. I got up and went to the bathroom door. I tried the knob but it was locked. I really needed to go so I knocked on the door.

"Berns?" I called but there was no reply. "Berns?"

"Ssshhh! Ang ingay mo, ang dami na kayang tulog (Sssshhh! You're so noisy. Can't you see that most of us are already sleeping?)," Wilbert scolded me. *"At sino ang tinatawag mo riyan? Tulog na kaya si Berns* (And who are you calling? Berns is already fast asleep)." He pointed at Bernadette at the far end of the room. She was curled up like a cat on the airbed, asleep.

"Naka-lock ang pinto eh. Akala ko nasa loob pa si Berns. Na-lock niya yata kanina noong nag-CR siya (The door is locked. I thought Berns was still inside. Maybe she accidentally locked it when she used it earlier)," I said.

"Wala namang nag-C-CR diyan ah. Ako kaya ang huling gumamit niyan. Pero sigurado akong di ko ni-lock iyan (Nobody had used the bathroom. I was the last to use it. But I'm sure that I didn't lock it)," Francis said.

I remembered Francis going to the bathroom before we began

our "forum." That was before I saw Berns use it during our talk. I insisted that she had used it; Francis and Wilbert insisted that she hadn't.

That's odd, I thought. Then it dawned on me: "Nice try!" I said to Francis and Wilbert. I smiled at them. *"Gumaganti na kayo, ano?* (You're already getting back at me, aren't you?)"

They exchanged confused looks.

I was convinced that they had played a prank on me but a peculiar event three months later caused me to think otherwise.

March 19, 2004

Our *barkada* headed to Tagaytay for our summer getaway. We were packed inside a rented jeepney, and all of us were looking forward to a great time. We had booked a room at a house near Picnic Grove and everybody was in high spirits.

However, I was disappointed that Lester couldn't join us. He called me earlier to tell me that he was feeling sick; he had a headache and a high fever. When I told the rest of the gang about Lester, they said too bad, it's just his luck that he got sick and was missing out on what was sure to be a great time.

We arrived in Tagaytay at around 9 in the morning. We unpacked our things and headed to Picnic Grove for a lunchtime picnic. We then went to the Palace in the Sky and spent the rest of the afternoon there, returning to our rented apartment by 6 p.m.

After dinner, we played parlor games. Having been eliminated early, I stood by one of the windows and watched my friends.

It was only a split second, but I thought I saw someone in the trees looking at me. I thought he looked like Lester; he had a white shirt and had a fair complexion, although he did look a little pale.

Half an hour later, as I was still debating whether it was Lester or not, one of the girls screamed. Sheila pointed at the window and said, *"May nakita akong tao roon! Tapos paglingon ko ulit, wala na!* (I saw someone over there! But when I looked again, he was gone!)"

"Ako nga rin, eh! (Me too!)," said Helen.

"Actually, ako rin. Akala ko nga imagination ko lang kaya di ko

pinansin (Actually, I saw it too. I thought it was just my imagination so I didn't pay it any mind)," Florinel said. *"Parang kamukha nga ni Lester pero ewan ko* (I thought it was Lester but I'm not sure)."

Our other friends chimed in that they also saw "someone" by the windows. A creepy feeling swathed the room. I didn't want to add to the tension so I kept my mouth shut about what I saw. Just thinking about it made my hair stand on end.

"Baka naman may tao lang doon (Maybe there was just someone there)," Wilbert suggested.

"E di tingnan mo! (Why don't you take a look!)," one of us said.

We looked at each other nervously until finally Francis and Roy volunteered to go out and check. As the minutes dragged by, the rest of us recounted our own versions of the incident. I noticed that Helen was talking on her cell phone.

"Wala namang tao roon (Nobody was there)" said Roy as he and Francis returned.

Helen called for everybody's attention. She had hung up and there was a strange look on her face.

"Guys, may problema tayo (Guys, we have a problem)," Helen said. *"Tumawag sa 'kin ang ate ni Lester. Sinugod daw siya sa ospital. 50-50 daw siya* (Lester's sister called me. She said that they brought Lester to the hospital. He could go either way)." She started to cry. *"Ilang araw na pala siyang nilalagnat...* (He's had a fever for a couple of days now...)"

We did not hear the rest of her explanation because several of the girls screamed. I noticed that they were pointing at the window. I turned and experienced one of the scariest moments of my life.

Standing by the window was a white human form. It was smiling. It was the same person I saw earlier out by the trees. I tried to scream but no sound came out. *It's Lester's ghost,* I thought. I felt my body shake. Most, if not all, of my friends were screaming.

Then the "ghost" laughed! An evil sounding laugh.

Amidst the screaming, I heard laughter. I turned around and saw Roy, Francis, and Helen laughing their heads off. They shouted, "Victim!"

It was a joke, a prank. They had gotten their revenge. I felt relieved and angry at the same time.

"Lester, pasok ka na. (Lester, come on in)" Francis said as he opened the door. *"Pare, ang galing mo a!* (Dude, you're good!)"

The rest of us were still in a state of shock that nobody could speak. Roy, Francis, and Lester smiled at us. Their prank went too far and that made most of us angry.

"Sabi namin sa inyo gaganti kami eh! (We told you we'd get even!)," Roy reminded me. I didn't know what to say. I was thankful that there was an explanation for what happened. Roy and Francis kept

teasing all of us. Lester just smiled.

After the tension and anger subsided, Roy told us the details of their "big act." Lester was the mastermind; he planned everything a month ago, including making the reservations for the room. He got Roy, Francis and Helen to be his accomplices. Lester would call me and tell me that he couldn't go with us to Tagaytay. He would then follow by bus. Roy and Francis gave him the signals and updated him on what was happening. He would stroll by the window to scare us while Helen would act like she received a call from his sister. They told us they were sorry but they had to think of a convincing story to get back at the prank we pulled on them last December.

There was a knock on the door. The owner of the house heard the screams and came to check what had happened. We told her about the prank and we apologized for the noise.

"Nice one. Now we're even," I told Lester. He smiled at me as I gave him a high five.

After the excitement wore off, we continued with our parlor games. Everybody was having fun, the prank already relegated to memory.

However, I noticed that Lester wasn't joining in the activities. I asked him if something was bothering him and if he was feeling all right. He just nodded at me. *He looks like he's going to be sick. Sinasapian ba ito? (Was he possessed?)* I thought.

"We're finally complete! Time to celebrate!" Wilbert announced.

Everybody agreed with the idea but nobody wanted to go out and buy the drinks. Finally, it was decided that the one who came up with the idea should be the one to buy the beer.

"OK, sige na nga (Ok, I'll do it)," Wilbert said. *"Oy, Lester, samahan mo ko ha!* (Hey, Lester, accompany me!)"

Lester agreed. They left, Wilbert's arm around Lester's shoulders. I watched them through the window as they boarded a tricycle. Wilbert was animatedly talking to Lester.

The rest of us settled down and talked about the night's event. It was something definitely to be remembered.

As we laughed and joked, my cell phone rang. The screen displayed Lester's name. I thought something had gone wrong, like they needed help in carrying the beer or their money wasn't enough.

It wasn't what I expected. It was Lester, all right, but he was calling from a hospital. I asked him what happened and where we should go meet him. He had met an accident and he was confined at the San Juan de Dios hospital. That hospital wasn't anywhere near Tagaytay; it was in Pasay City!

How did he get all the way there? I thought. My spine tingled and goose bumps spread over my arms.

I carefully listened to Lester, assuming it was another prank, but he sounded very serious. I hung up and told the rest of the gang about the phone call.

Earlier that day at around 10 in the morning, a car along Coastal Road hit Lester while he was on his way to Tagaytay. He lost consciousness and he just woke up that afternoon. He told me not to worry because he wasn't seriously injured and that he was going to be okay. He told me to convey his apologies to Roy, Francis, and Helen because he wasn't able to carry out their plans.

I knew that everybody was thinking the same thing: the prank had pushed through without a hitch.

They looked at me suspiciously, sensing another prank. I, on the other hand, was thinking it was still part of Lester's plan. I insisted that I was serious.

We called Lester's mother, to verify if Lester did figure in an accident. She confirmed that Lester was confined in the hospital since that morning.

The room fell silent. I felt the hair on my neck rise once more. I felt my hands shake.

The sound of an approaching tricycle broke the silence. We exchanged nervous looks. When someone knocked on the door, I opened it.

It was Wilbert. He was smiling, holding a case of beer.

"Nasaan na iyang si Lester? Nanloloko na naman iyon. Iniwan ba naman ako roon. Bumili lang ako nito at bigla na lang nawala (Where's Lester? He's playing a trick again. He left me there. I just bought this and he was gone)," Roy said. He was confused at the expressions on our faces.

I have never been more scared in my life.

Unknown Voice

by Melveen Melocoton

❖ ❖ ❖

Last September 2004, here in Iloilo City, at around 6:30 p.m., my classmate was waiting for her parents to pick her up from school. The only people left in the school were the security guards that were manning the front gate.

My classmate waited near the principal's office (which was rumored to be haunted). Bored, she took out her Nokia 3660 cell phone (the one with the video cam) and took some video near the Faculty CR until her parents arrived.

She replayed the video in the car and saw that it was pretty normal, nothing weird. When she was in her room, she replayed the video. To her surprise, she heard a buzzing sound, then a man shouting. He said, *"Ngaa, sino ka gid haw?* (Why, who are you anyway?)."

She told the whole class the next day about the sound she heard on the video. She even showed the video to us. True enough, we heard the man.

Afterwards, she erased the video and never talked about it again.

The Portrait

by Jan Camille R. Tongco

❖ ❖ ❖

"Would you like to have a painting for free?"

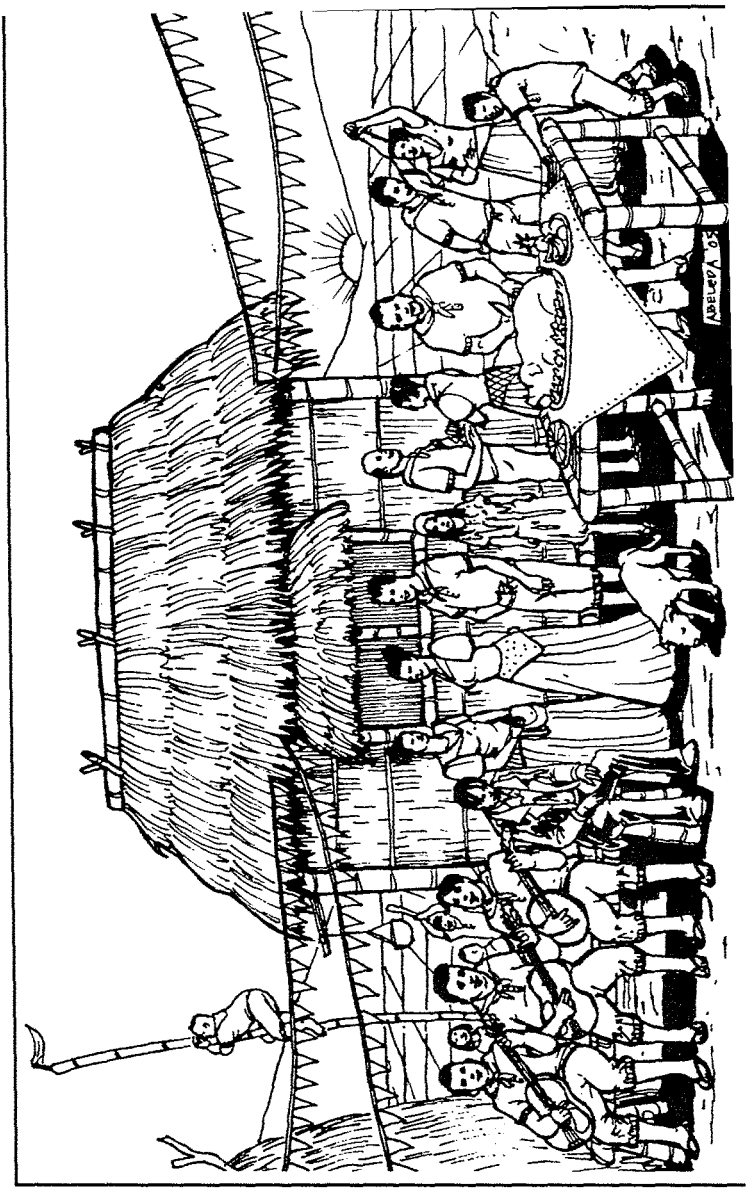
When she heard those words, Janine ecstatically said yes, got in her car, and drove straight to her friend's house. For an art lover like her, opportunities like those were hard to find and she wasted no time in getting her hands on the prized portrait.

"This," her friend said with a smile "was a wedding gift from a friend. I've forgotten all about it until I found it in the attic the other day. I've never been fond of paintings and so I'm giving it to someone who can appreciate it."

After thanking her friend, Janine went straight home to her apartment, unwrapped the painting and hung it on the wall near her bed. When she had finished her adjustments, she laid down on her bed and looked at the painting.

The painting was a scene of a typical barrio *fiesta*. Colorful *banderitas* were hanging all around, a large wooden table filled with sumptuous meals amidst the townsfolk. In one corner were some couples dancing to the beat of the *rondalla* singers. The children were trying their luck at *palo sebo* and *palayok-palayukan*. Overhead, the setting sun gave the painting an overall feeling of flushed excitement.

The faces in the portrait were full of joy except for one: The man's face was gaunt and he looked more at home at a funeral than at a *fiesta*. He wore a dark brown jacket, which made him stand out from



the colorful *camisa de chinos* and *sayas*. Janine thought it strange that such a dreary man was included in the painting.

Suddenly, the phone in the *sala* rang. Janine got up and thoughts of the strange man in the portrait vanished from her mind.

That night, Janine had a strange dream. She dreamt that she was in a barrio attending a *fiesta*. As she approached the table laden with food, she saw a man dressed in a brown, faded jacket walking away, headed for the nearby woods.

Janine had an uncontrollable impulse to follow the man.

The man kept walking until he reached a clearing. Janine noticed that there was a woman in a white T-shirt and blue jeans sitting under a tree, asleep. The man made no sound and quietly approached the

girl.

Sensing that there was someone beside her, the girl woke up. The man quickly grabbed her hands and tried to kiss her. Janine could see that the girl was screaming but no one could hear her. She herself could not hear anything except the sounds of the *fiesta*.

As the girl's struggles intensified, the man slapped her so hard that her head hit the tree trunk. Before she could lift her head, the man grabbed her by the neck and started choking her. Horrified, Janine began to scream.

Janine was sweating and shivering when she awoke from her nightmare. She turned on the lamp beside her and stared at the portrait.

What she saw made her scream. The strange man was sitting beside the *rondalla* players, his jacket drenched in blood. And standing amidst the crowd was the bloodied girl Janine saw in her dream.

The next morning, Janine's friend brought a psychic to examine the painting. He instructed Janine to burn the painting, which she immediately did. After reciting a prayer, the three of them watched the fires consume the portrait and turn it to ash.

When they asked the psychic about the portrait, he said that he had felt a strong negative energy, perhaps anger or revenge, coming from the painting. The psychic asked Janine's friend about its painter and she told them that the friend who gave it to her was the one who painted it.

The painter had died a year ago from a car accident. He had a sister that was murdered when she attended a *fiesta* in their hometown. He was devastated by her death and he frequently cursed the man he suspected to be the killer. He gave the portrait to Janine's friend as a wedding gift, saying that he hoped that it would fulfill her wish for a happy life the same way it had fulfilled his.

"Do you know what happened to the suspected murderer?" Janine's friend asked her. "I found out later that he had died from a nightmare. *Binangungot*. My friend's wish of revenge was fulfilled."

The Strange Obsession of Dr. Bukesa

by Rex S. Blaza

❖ ❖ ❖

Decades ago, in my *Lolo's* native town of Iloilo, there was an old doctor whose name was Josephino Bukesa. He was the private doctor of Cipriana, the daughter of a rich man. She had tuberculosis since childhood.

But even with Dr. Bukesa's help, Cipriana died. Filled with sorrow, Dr. Bukesa gave up his work and went home to forget.

Since then, Josephino experienced odd things at night. He dreamt of Cipriana's lovely face and he would hear her soft voice whispering in his ear. He became bothered, unable to work, eat or sleep well.

He finally came upon a solution. "The best way to have her is to be with her," he said.

The doctor went to the cemetery and dug up Cipriana's body.

"We'll never be separated again," he said.

He treated the corpse by dipping it in a solution of vitamins and minerals made from plants and trees. The solution would delay the decomposition of the body, and he did this everyday.

The doctor began to act strangely, and his neighbors noticed his odd behavior. Every night, they heard odd and scary piano music. They would even hear the doctor laugh strangely during these piano performances.

One day, while Dr. Bukesa was away, some of his neighbors went into his house. When they approached a locked room, they smelled a very foul odor. They peered through a small opening and were petrified to see Cipriana, the young girl who had died two years ago.

The neighbors reported this to the police, and when Cipriana's family found out, they ordered an autopsy. According to the medical examiner, Cipriana's eyes were of fine quality porcelain and her hair was replaced by plastic fibers. They found some metallic tubes in the girl's genitals, prompting specialists to believe that their purpose was for sexual intercourse.

Cipriana's corpse was brought to Manila. The family changed her name so that nobody could ever find her.

Dr. Josephino Bukesa was found dead inside his house in Iloilo a year later. He had poisoned himself.

Several days after his death, his neighbors would still hear piano music and Dr. Bukesa's odd laugh coming from his house. Passersby would sometimes see the doctor standing by some of the opaque windows.

People say that Cipriana's soul might be at peace, but there was another soul that has been clamoring for silence.

Silence after his peace was taken from him.

White Sando

by Karlo Jose R. Pineda

❖ ❖ ❖

It was already eight in the evening when my girlfriend Kassey and I crossed the overpass on España. It was raining but we both had umbrellas. We kept close together as we stood on the sidewalk, waiting for a ride home. We were the only people there, and the jeepneys that were headed to our destination were few and far in between.

As we waited in the languid expanse of the night, Kassey said that she saw a boy, about nine years old, beside me, sharing the shade of my umbrella. I searched for the boy but no one was there. I told her that she must have been seeing things for it was unthinkable for a boy to be out there on a rainy night.

Minutes passed and we were still stuck there. Our elusive ride home was nowhere to be found. I was already getting tired of standing, and my eyes were strained from watching the drenched street. In my peripheral vision, I saw that Kassey shared the same feeling. I glanced at her and my jaw dropped open. I was flustered. Kassey asked me why but I couldn't answer.

After I got a hold of myself again, I asked her if the boy she saw was wearing a white sando. She said yes. I told her that I saw the same boy, this time behind her, staring at me. His face was smeared with blood, making his eyes seem like two big black pearls floating in a crimson sea.

As if on cue, a jeep approached. We hailed it at once and hastily boarded it. Kassey and I were shivering, maybe from the cold or

from our "unexpected companion." Kassey advised me not to think too much of what had happened, but I said that prayers were a better idea.

I looked out the jeep. It was still raining, but in my mind I still saw the boy's bloody face.

The alarm clock woke me at six o'clock in the morning. My eyes slowly adjusted to the rays of sunlight that penetrated my window.

"Karlo, it's time to wake up! You'll be late for school," my mother called out.

I was already awake but I wanted to lie in bed for a while longer.

My mother came into my room, and seeing that I was awake, told me to get moving or I might get stuck in traffic.

"Okay, I'm already up," I said, yawning as I stretched.

With that, my mom turned away. How I wished she hadn't left because standing there by the door was the boy Kassey and I saw on España the night before. He was still wearing a white sando and his face was bloody. His eyes seemed to pierce my very being.

I was shocked. I then heard him whisper. It was a whisper that indicated that he knew me.

"Karlo," he said.

What Happened When We Forgot To Mind Our Own Business

by Bigs Marfori

❖ ❖ ❖

Last year, when my friend Nate and I went to the cafeteria for lunch, we were just thinking of the food. Our school had numerous cafeterias scattered around campus, and our favorite was the one in the middle of the independent research complex. Situated at some distance from the main college area, their food had large servings at relatively cheap prices. It had been some time since we had eaten there and we were eager to partake of their food again. We came for a meal, but we ended up leaving with a story to tell our grandkids on cold, dark nights.

During the meal, I recalled that a friend of mine who lived in the nearby girls' dormitory told me that the area was haunted; she and her other dorm mates would sometimes hear strange sounds at night. Nate and I talked about it a little, sharing a few other ghost stories about the other places on campus. We even cracked a few ghost jokes, being the corny people that we were.

Before heading off to hang out at the nearby National Bookstore, we stopped by the bathroom. For some reason, the whole ghost thing was brought up again. I think that was where we made a mistake.

The door to the bathroom was the type that pushes open, and when we entered, it was open and propped against the wall. As we went about our business, the door suddenly slammed loudly. Nate

and I thought nothing of it at the time, despite knowing that there was no one else in there. It was only on our way out that we actually stopped to think about what had just happened.

"Weren't we the only ones inside?" I asked Nate.

"I think so," he said.

It was a sweltering day, and I suddenly wished there was wind.

"Do you remember it being particularly windy when we were inside the bathroom?" I asked Nate. I was starting to panic.

"No," Nate answered. He stopped walking and turned to look at me. "Wait, what are you saying?"

"I'm saying there wasn't anyone inside, and there was no wind. So how did that door slam shut?"

"Maybe someone from outside pushed it?" he said. He was trying to remain calm, but I could see the worried look on his face.

"Couldn't be. That door only opens in one direction: towards the inside," I said. "Someone would have to push it from inside for it to slam shut. That door was against the wall when we went in."

"Forget about it," Nate said. "I'm sure there's a logical explanation for it."

I don't recall what school or organizational activity we had that kept us in school late that day. It was around 6 in the evening when Nate and I boarded his car. He was going to drop me off at the MRT station on his way home.

"I wonder what really happened this afternoon?" I asked.

"With what?" he asked as he started the car.

"At the cafeteria."

He was beginning to get exasperated with me. "Listen," he said, "if you really think that something happened, let's go back there and check it out."

"At 6 in the evening? Sounds like an adventure!"

Apart from Nate's car radio, the ride there was relatively a quiet

one, save for some speculation from both of us.

"Maybe the wind did it," Nate said.

"There wasn't any wind," I countered.

"But there was a vent, wasn't there?" he insisted.

"I'm not sure."

Nate smiled. "Then that's probably it. The wind."

The charming cemented walks alongside patches of bright green grass that added character in the daytime to a dull gray exterior were ominous at night. Since the cafeteria was already closed, we looked around outside until we spotted the vent that was part of the bathroom.

"I told you so," Nate said.

I looked up at it. "Yeah, but it faces upward."

"What?"

"Look," I said, pointing at the vent.

The layout of the bathroom came back to us: the door against the wall, the urinals, the faucets, and the vent that directed the wind upward towards the ceiling. If there were any wind in the first place, the vent would send it straight up, and then down into the cubicles, not even coming close to the door.

The same door that slammed shut for no reason at all when we were joking about ghosts.

No earthly reason, maybe.

Creepy Office

by Dandee

❖ ❖ ❖

©©Our office was located in an old Spanish house. The first floor served as the office area while the second floor served as the home of our director. They had been renting the house for about 2 years.

One week after I started working there, I heard many creepy stories from my co-workers. One story was about the family that died in a room, which we were using as our editing room. Another was about a young boy that kept on making "*paramdam*" to all the employees and even the director's family—they saw bloodstains on the walls and ceiling, and sometimes they'd see the chandelier swinging. Our stay-in receptionist saw the boy's name written on the pantry walls in red crayon. When she and the maids cleaned away the names, they became ill for two days. They said there was even a gravestone (*lapida*) in the stockroom. There was also the story about a newly hired employee that didn't last a day because a black lady appeared in front of her.

Hearing all those eerie stories made me bring a rosary everyday.

Four months later, an old employee came to do a project at our office. Before we started working, he told me his scary experience in the editing room. I was already scared of the editing room because the door to the comfort room would slam by itself from time to time.

This old employee was sleeping alone in the editing room when suddenly he saw a young boy and his family sleeping. They were all wearing black clothes. When he went outside to smoke, he saw a boy playing in front of him.

"Direk, nakita ko ang anak mong lalaki na naglalaro kagabi (Direk, I saw your son playing last night)," he said to the director the next day.

"Anong anak na lalaki? Dalawang babae ang mga anak ko! (What son? I only have two daughters!)," exclaimed the director.

After telling his stories, he asked me, *"Mayroon pa bang nagpaparamdam dito?* (Is there still someone making himself felt here?)"

"Wala na siguro (I don't think so)," I said.

"Kasi pagpasok ko sa pantry *may naramdaman ako* (Because I felt something when I went into the pantry)," he said.

By 3 a.m, the old employee had fallen asleep outside the editing room. I was alone inside the room, working. I heard the voice of a young boy calling my name, twice. When I heard it the first time, I was shocked and I froze in fear. When I heard him call my name the second time, I forced myself to get up and run outside.

When I told the old worker what had happened, he thought for a moment and said to me, *"Sabihin mo na huwag kang guluhin at may ginagawa ka* (Tell him not to bother you because you're busy)."

Feeling brave, I went back inside the editing room and said, *"Huwag ninyo po akong guluhin, kailangan kong tapusin po ito* (Please don't bother me, I have to finish what I'm working on)."

That was the first and last time I heard him. It was the scariest moment of my life. To this day, I know that he still hangs around the office. I know that if something strange happens in the night, he's only welcoming and greeting me.

Ghost in the School CR

by Vincent Palma

❖ ❖ ❖

This incident happened during my birthday, September 13. My friend Camy had to go to the bathroom. It was around 2 p.m. then, during our Math class. Mabait ang teacher namin at pinayagan siya pumunta sa bathroom.

After a few minutes, we heard a loud scream. We saw Camy run past, heading straight for the chapel. My friends and I followed her. She was crying.

"Ano ba ang nangyari? Ba't ka tumakbo?" tanong ko.

Hindi siya sumagot kaagad. Hinintay namin siyang tumahan. Nang kalmado na siya, ikinuwento niya ang nangyari.

"Paglabas ko ng cubicle, biglang bumukas ang pinto ng 3rd cubicle. Ang lakas ng kanyang pagbukas. Nakakapagtataka dahil walang hangin. Hindi ko na pinansin kasi sanay nako sa ganoon. Di ba may 3rd eye ako?

"Maghuhugas na sana ako ng kamay nguni't pagbukas ko ng gripo walang tubig na lumabas. Sa kabilang gripo lumabas ang tubig!

"Habang nagsusuklay na ako, nabitawan ko ang suklay. Pinulot ko siya nguni't nagulat ako nang makita ko ang reflection ko sa mirror na nakatayo pa rin. Sinubukan kong ibalik sa dati ang reflection ko kaya nagsuklay ako muli.

"Pero imbes na suklay ang hawak ng reflection ko, kutsilyo ang hawak niya! Tapos biglang sinaksak ng reflection ko ang sarili niya.

"Nagdasal na ako dahil natakot na ako. Nguni't sa kalagitnaan ng Hail Mary, tiningnan ko kung naroon pa ang multo sa mirror. Lalo

akong natakot kasi pagdilat ko'y nasa harapan ko na ang multo, at nagcha-chant siya ng, 'Hail Mary, Hail Mary, Hail Mary.'

"Ayun, sumigaw na ako at tumakbo."

Mula noon, bihira na namin gamitin ang CR na iyon.

Nguni't hindi pa riyan nagtatapos ang kuwento. Last September 20, sinubukan ng mga classmate ko na kausapin ang multo through the spirit of the glass. Binalaan ko na sila na masama iyon nguni't walang nakinig.

Habang sina-summon nila ang spirit, nagsimulang gumalaw ang glass. Nagtanong sila nguni't paikot-ikot lang muna ang glass.

"Ano ang pangalan mo?"

"Strvwy," ang sagot ng ghost.

Nagtaka sila kung bakit ganoon ang reply ng ghost.

"Bakit ka namatay?" ang sunod nilang tanong.

"Hindi pa ako namamatay dahil hindi naman ako multo," reply ng ghost.

Nagulat sila kaya sinubukan nilang sarahin ang session nguni't kahit anong gawin nilang dasal ay ayaw umalis ng multo.

"H-A-H-A-H-A," paulit-ulit niyang ni-spell.

Bumitaw na silang lahat pero isa sa kanila, si Krista, ay hindi gumalaw. Nakayuko siya. Nagdasal ang mga classmate niya nguni't hindi siya kumibo. Mayamaya, bigla siyang tumayo at tinitigan silang lahat. Ang nakakatakot ay ang mga mata niyang namumula at sumigaw siya na parang demoniyo.

Tumakbo ang isa sa kanila sa CIE office upang tumawag ng pari.

Niyakapan si Krista ng mga naiwan dahil nagsimula itong magwala. Nagsisigaw ito at ayaw magpapigil, na parang alam niyang may parating.

Pagdating ng pari ay nagdasal siya sa Latin. Habang nagdarasal siya, palakas ng palakas ang boses ni Krista. Tuloy ang pagdasal ng pari. Mayamaya tumahimik din si Krista. Dinasalan siya ng pari upang

mapaalis ang anumang sumanib sa kanya at binenditahan niya ang CR.

Nguni't kahit nabenditahan na ng pari ang CR, bihira pa rin ang gumagamit nito. May usap-usapan na may naririnig na umiiyak na babae sa CR kahit na walang tao roon.

Walking Out

by DarK_eYes_Mikko

❖ ❖ ❖

One time around 9 p.m., hinihintay ko ang isang doctor sa night shift. Naroon ako sa nurses' station by the intensive care unit. The doctors and nurses were doing their rounds.

The swivel doors of the ICU swung open and a patient walked out, pulling along his dextrose stand. I assumed he was a burn victim kasi naka-bandage ang left side ng face niya at ang left arm. Medyo nag-stand out siya kasi ang patients' gown niya ay may naka-pin na hankie with a cartoon character design. I did not mind him much pero medyo na-chill ako. Baka mag-C-CR lang, I thought. He walked by and rounded the corner.

Biglang nag-alarm ang ECG sa loob ng ICU—a long tone and intermitent beeps. Nurses and the doctor came running. After a few minutes, they proclaimed the patient dead. They wheeled the body out of the ICU moments later.

When I saw the patient, chills at kilabot to the max ako when I saw the hankie with a cartoon character design on the gown of the dead patient.

Hot and Cold

by Mae M.

❖ ❖ ❖

My first spooky experience happened to me when I was 9 years old, while studying at a private school in Quezon City. We had no teacher that time, so my friend Jane and I went to the prayer room beside our classroom.

We noticed that the central aircon was off when we entered the room. We knelt in the back row and silently prayed. My friend left after a few minutes, leaving me alone.

Suddenly, I felt a chill all over my body. I ignored it at first but when I felt a cold hand touch my legs, I became scared. I closed my eyes and continued praying, afraid of what I may see. The hand disappeared.

Then the room became so hot that my body quickly broke out in sweat. That was my cue to leave the room.

I told Jane what had just happened, not knowing that a classmate of ours overheard us. Being a school bully, she went into the prayer room alone.

"Ang init sa loob, parang impiyerno! (It's hot inside, like hell!)" she said when she came out.

A few weeks later, something weird happened to me. I was about to go to school one morning. I had closed the windows in my parents' room and closed the door. As I was putting on my socks, I heard the door open. My back was to the door so I couldn't see who opened it. Assuming it was my mom calling me for breakfast, I said, *"Sandali lang po!* (Just a minute!)"

No one replied. I turned my head and saw that no one was there.

I was putting on my shoes when the door closed and opened again quickly. When I looked, no one was there. The door closed again, then opened.

I was getting angry, and so I stared at the door. To my surprise, it slowly closed. When it opened again, and I'd stare at it and it would

slowly close.

Finally, I grabbed my things and ran out of the room. Outside, I noticed the door opening again. I grabbed the doorknob and to my surprise, it was cold as ice.

I ran to the kitchen as fast as I could.

Two or Forty?

by Jeffry Khris P. Bigay

❖ ❖ ❖

I'm sure many have heard of ghost stories in hospitals, but no story has scared me more than my very own encounter in one of the rooms of a popular government hospital here in Manila.

My mom had her eyes operated because of a certain eye disorder that could render her blind if not treated immediately. I was keeping her company in her hospital room, since obviously she could not do a lot of things with her bandaged eyes. Plus, she was advised to have complete bed rest and was discouraged to move around, even to stand or lean forward.

One night, as I lay on my makeshift bed consisting of three monobloc chairs, I was about to doze off when I noticed a female figure standing in the corner of the room opposite me. Even though the room was dimly lit, I clearly saw that she was barefoot and was wearing a crisp, neatly pressed hospital gown. And she was staring directly at me!

I tried to open my mouth to scream but before I could do so the woman suddenly knelt and proceeded to crawl under my mothers' bed! All the while she did not take her eyes off me. Even when she was under the bed she never stopped looking at me, as if warning me not to utter a sound.

As if she wasn't scary enough, another form began to materialize by the door. It took the shape of another woman, wearing white. No, it was not a white lady but a nurse, a ghost nurse! Unlike the woman under my mom's bed, the nurse was hazy and I could not

make out her features. She was hovering a couple of inches above the floor.

The ghost nurse paid me no attention as she floated towards my mom. She stopped by the side of her bed, unmindful of the other ghost beneath her.

Seeing two ghosts in one night was more than I could take and, even though I was scared for my mom, I turned and faced the wall, covered my face with both hands (I had no blanket), and forced myself to sleep.

Fortunately, nothing untoward happened that night.

Before I could tell my mom what I saw the next morning, she revealed to me that last night she could see through her bandages, and she saw that the room was full of faceless white people. There were about forty people inside the room, she said, including children that kept running around her bed.

I didn't want to frighten my mother more, and so I decided not to tell her about what I saw that night. To this day, I have kept it only to myself and vowed never to return to that hospital ever again.

Lolo's Call

by Bhevz Vidal

❖ ❖ ❖

I usually stay home at night. I don't mind not going out, since my friends would often come over for a little chat. I live in Pagadian City in Zamboanga del Sur.

One night, my friends and my cousins came over to watch some TV. Together with my parents, we all plunked down in the *sala* and enjoyed the evening shows.

In the middle of one show, I thought I heard my *lolo* calling me, who lives in the next house. I got up and my cousin asked me where I was going. When I told her that *lolo* was calling me, she said that

she thought *lolo* was still at work and didn't know when he would be back.

When I entered *lolo's* house, I felt a chill in the air. I didn't give it much thought. I noticed that there was a man sitting in one of the chairs. Thinking he might be a friend of *lolo's*, I greeted him a good evening.

"Good evening, sir. Do you know where my *lolo* is?" I asked him.

He looked at me and I felt myself freezing up. I couldn't say a word because in front of me was my uncle who had been dead for almost 10 years! Yet there he was, looking fresh and alive! He slowly got up from his chair and walked towards me.

Then he walked right through me!

The air was so cold and I could smell a strange odor, which I think was the same smell when he died. I almost fainted and I barely managed to hold on to the doorknob to keep from falling. I slowly turned around and when I realized that he wasn't there, I ran to my house.

Everybody in the house was worried when they saw me. I was pale and my lips were trembling. I told them what I saw, but my cousins wouldn't believe me.

My friends said that they had also seen a shadow lurking by the windows of my *lolo's* house at night. It would vanish when they would try to find out who it was. They never told anyone about it before because people might think they were making it up.

That same night, I saw my uncle above our gate. I could only see his head, and I knew that he was floating because our gate was high.

My friends and I did not dare part company that night.

Lost Soul in Capiz

by Mr. X

❖ ❖ ❖

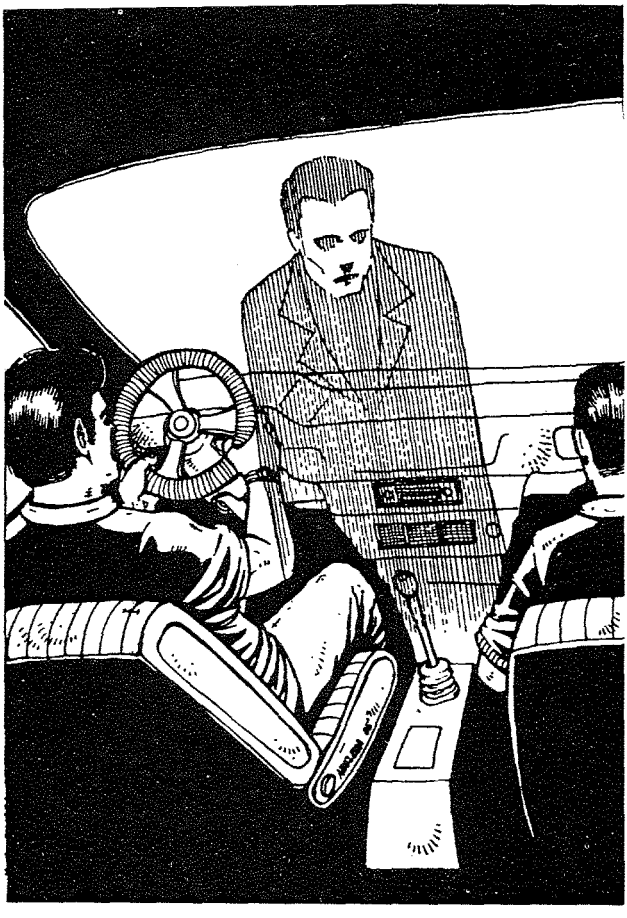
I will share a story na nangyari noong kalagitnaan ng 2001. May isa akong friend na ang pangalan ay Danny. Mayroon siyang girlfriend na nag-aaral sa Roxas City, Capiz. Danny and I live in Iloilo, and the trip to Roxas City would take 2 hours. Danny would visit his girlfriend at least three times a week.

One day, tinawagan ako ni Danny na samahan siya sa pagpunta sa Capiz. Magaganda raw ang mga beaches doon at gusto niya ng kasama sa pag-uwi sa gabi. Wala naman akong gagawin kaya pumayag akong samahan siya. After ng class ng girlfriend ni Danny, paikot-ikot kami sa beach ng Roxas City. 8 p.m. na nang maihatid namin ang girlfriend niya sa dorm at tumuloy na kami pauwi ng Iloilo.

Madalas kong samahan si Danny, but one night nalaman ko ang totoong dahilan kung bakit nagpapasama siya.

Gabi na kaming nakaalis ng Roxas, siguro past 9 p.m. na. Kaming dalawa lang ang nasa daan, si Danny ang driver. Tahimik lang kami dahil medyo pagod kami. Content na kaming makinig sa music na mahina ang volume. Nakabukas ang mga bintana at medyo mabagal ang takbo namin kasi nagtitipid ng gas si Danny. Okay lang kasi hindi naman mainit ang gabi.

Sa national highway ng Capiz, kami lang ang nasa daan at walang ibang sasakyan. Naka high beam kami kasi madilim ang lugar at kakaunti lang ang mga bahay. Habang nakatingin ako sa daan, may napansin akong usok. Binale wala ko lang, nguni't nang palapit na kami'y kumapal ang usok at nag-form ng korteng tao. Tumagos sa driver's side ng kotse at biglang lumamig ang hangin. Kinilabutan



ako! Hindi kami nakapagsalita ng ilang segundo, at nagtinginan kami ni Danny, sabay sabi ng, "Nakita mo iyon?"

"Aaaahhhh, multo!" sigaw ko, sabay sara ng bintana ng kotse. Nagtatatayo ang mga balahibo ko!

Walang nagdare sa amin na tumingin sa back seat. Ibinaba ko ang rear vew mirror para wala kaming makita sa likod. Inarangkada agad ni Danny ang kotse. Nagdaldalan kami para mawala ang takot.

Sa boundary na ng Capiz at Iloilo lang kami nakahinga ng maluwag. Medyo maliwanag na roon. Doon lang inamin ni Danny na hindi lang iyon ang first encounter niya sa ibang nilalang at kung bakit gusto niya ng kasama sa pag-uwi.

One time daw, between 9 and 10 ng gabi, may nakita siya sa gilid ng mata niya na may kamay sa loob ng kotse. Kakaiba raw ang pakiramdam at hindi niya binuksan ang ilaw upang tingnan kung sino ang katabi niya dahil natakot siyang baka pigilan ang kamay niya. Mura siya ng mura at tinawagan niya ang girlfriend niya sa cell phone para mawala ang takot. Inaway pa nga niya ang girlfriend niya at buti na lang hindi siya kinausap ng multo.

At isa pa, habang nilalakbay niya ang national highway, may nakita

siyang white lady na nakatayo sa tabi. Ang tulis daw makatingin, parang alam ng white lady na tinitingnan siya ni Danny, kahit na madilim ang tint ng kotse. Nagtitigan sila hanggang malampasan niya ang white lady. Huli na nang makaramdam siya ng takot.

Mula noon hindi na kami nagpapagabi sa daan.

The Apartment

by Paulinette C. Gutierrez

❖ ❖ ❖

My most unforgettable experience with ghosts happened five years ago in October of 1999. I was working as a fashion model then, and I was staying at my manager's apartment. There were six of us staying there – 4 models, an OIC, and our manager. Our neighbors always complained of the loud music my friends would play in the middle of the night.

I didn't feel anything strange or creepy during the first two months of my stay, until one morning. We came home at around 5:00 a.m. that day. Emmy, the OIC, and I arrived first because the rest had gone somewhere else. I immediately went upstairs to put my things in my closet. Emmy stayed in the living room to watch the early morning news while the OIC prepared breakfast.

When I entered our room, I felt something creepy. I didn't know why I felt that way because I didn't see anything unusual. But my senses became alert, and I slowly walked to the closet. I threw my things inside, but when I was about to turn and head towards the door, I saw a lady standing near the closet. She had very long black hair and her face was very white. She was facing the wall and dressed in white.

And she was floating!

I could not believe what I saw. My eyes went wide and my hair stood on end. I couldn't move my body. I turned my head to check if the lady was still there.

Oh My God, she was still there! I fervently hoped that she had disappeared but there she was, not moving.

I forced myself to move towards the door, but it was like I was moving in slow motion. I realized then that it was true what they say, that when you see a ghost your body would seem to go into shock and you wouldn't be able to move fast. I tried to shout as well but no

sound came out from my mouth. I struggled with all my will to move my body and run down the stairs. Never in my life had I been scared like that!

When I reached the stairs, I jumped and fell down. I didn't mind the pain of the fall because all I wanted was to get out of that room.

I saw Emmy near the dining table, looking at me and wondering what had happened. She said that I looked pale and scared. She was talking to me as if I didn't know how to speak; she kept asking me what was wrong, until I finally answered her by screaming and crying that there was a white lady in our room. Emmy was shocked and, because of how I looked and acted, she believed me.

After the incident, no one wanted to be left alone in the apartment. We also tried not to make too much noise; we felt that the lady was disturbed because of the noise we made.

Ever since I saw the white lady, creepy things started happening in the apartment. In the middle of our sleep, the aircon would turn on and off even though it didn't have a timer. Our closets had a certain stench. We tried cleaning them over and over again but the stench was always there. Whenever we would eat dinner, we would hear footsteps in the rooms above. No one dared to go up and check.

We did a little investigation and found out about the apartment's history. Back in the '80s, two sisters died there, murdered by a thief. One of the sisters had been hiding in the closet when she was killed, and that was why it had a foul odor. The other one was killed in the laundry room, which explained why we felt uneasy when we would wash our clothes there.

After learning about the murder story, we moved out of the apartment.

The Man In The Mirror

by Joy Jonette Chuyaco

❖ ❖ ❖

This story happened in a school in Sta. Cruz, Manila. Just by looking at the school's construction (the buildings were mostly made of wood and the windows of Capiz shells), one could already see that it had been there for some 60 years.

Jennifer was a bright and cheerful girl. She had a lot of friends and was quite popular. When she was in grade 4, her classroom was located in the oldest building of the school. Her classroom was also near the CR.

The comfort room was quite clean and lined with white tiles. It had a number of sinks and cubicles but the locks on the wooden cubicle doors were broken. A small rectangular mirror was positioned above the sinks.

One day, Jennifer excused herself to go to the rest room. While fixing her hair in front of the mirror, she felt a draft of cold air. She looked around to determine where the breeze was coming from but she saw nothing.

She felt nervous. She closed her eyes to calm herself down. When she opened them again, she saw the reflection of a man standing behind her. He was smiling at her.

The man was a *Kawal*, a Spanish *Guardiya Sibil*. He was dressed in his uniform, like the ones seen in various history books. He was young, tall, and handsome.

Jennifer and the Spanish guard were looking at each other in the mirror for some time. Only when the bell rang did Jennifer notice

that they had been there for some 20 minutes. And it was only when the man disappeared that Jennifer felt afraid. She ran back to her classroom but didn't tell anyone what had happened.

A year later, Jennifer had only begun to recover from seeing the *Guardiya Sibil*. Unfortunately, her classroom that year was beside that bathroom.

One day, she really had to go and so she braved entering the haunted bathroom. After relieving herself, she couldn't resist looking in the mirror to fix her hair. She felt the cold draft again. She

looked in the mirror to see if the Spaniard would appear again. She looked behind her and glanced around the bathroom. There was no one there.

Then, for some reason, she looked up at the ceiling. There, floating above her, was the *Guardiya Sibil*. But if last time he was young and handsome, that time he looked old and decaying. His uniform was torn in places and looked like had gone through a war. He looked at Jennifer for a couple of moments before he turned away and disappeared.

And again, Jennifer only felt fear when he had left. She quickly ran to her classroom and told her classmates what she had seen.

Her story spread like wildfire across the school, but the teachers and most of her classmates did not believe her. She was even warned by the councilors to stop spreading her lies and fanciful stories.

A few days later, another student reported seeing a black lady playing the piano in the auditorium. The auditorium was then closed for a month. Did school officials believe her? Were they conducting an investigation?

There have been other stories of ghostly encounters. Some were revealed to have happened before Jennifer's experience, as most of the people were unwilling to tell their stories.

As the years passed, Jennifer discovered that the school used to be a hospital and cemetery during the Spanish era.

A few years after Jennifer had graduated, the school tore down the old elementary building and constructed a new one. It is not known whether the man in the mirror still appears there.

The Night Shift

by Sir_Bouleville

❖ ❖ ❖

This incident happened during my junior year back in High School. It happened at a private hospital somewhere in Ortigas.

Due to an intestinal flu, I had an ailment similar to that of a heart attack. This was the first time I experienced this and the doctors themselves were having trouble understanding the cause of my pain. They decided to keep me in the hospital for additional tests.

The first series of tests were okay, but then came the laboratory test I wouldn't forget for the rest of my life. It was past seven in the evening when the nurse knocked on my door and told me that I had a scheduled x-ray test. They transferred me to the first floor where the x-ray lab was but by the time I got there, the red light was on.

"Teka lang ha? Pahinga ka lang dito (Just a minute, okay? Rest here a bit)," said the male nurse as he went away and handed my chart to another nurse.

A couple of minutes later, the red light went off, which signaled that I was next. I gave all my metal objects to the nurse, which was standard operating procedure.

Inside the laboratory was a metal bed and on it was a dried up female carcass. A medical physician was standing next to the metal bed and he was doing something to the carcass.

"Naman o, bakit naman isinabay sa akin (Why did they schedule this together with mine)," I whispered as I was set a few feet from the metal bed.

I tried to ignore the carcass and focused my anger on the doctor there, whose back was to me at that time. A lab assistant at the other end of the room asked for my name, which I gladly gave.

Things took a different turn when the lab assistant walked towards me and went through the doctor. The lab assistant instructed me what to do and not to do during the x-ray process. I really wanted nothing more than to get out of there.

"Mga bangkay ba ang ginagamitan ng x-ray sa kama na iyon? (Is that x-ray on that other bed used on corpses?)," I asked him.

"Yes," he said. *"Huwag ka mag-alala. Hindi kita ihihiga roon* (Don't worry. I won't make you lie down there)," the lab assistant joked as

he took a solid metal sheet (I forgot what it was called) and placed it on my back. He positioned the x-ray over me and took the scan.

"Sandali lang. Tingnan ko kung nabuo (Just a minute. I'll see if it formed)," he said as he took the metal sheet to the other end of the room.

I was left alone with the 'doctor' and his corpse. I tried not to look but my curiosity got the better of me and I took a little peek. Thankfully, the dead body was no longer there but, for some reason, the 'doctor' was.

And this time he was looking at me.

He looked human, except for the fact that his eye sockets were blank; there were a black voids where his eyes should have been. He turned to the other side of the room and went straight through the wall.

I was about to scream when the nurse came back. He said my x-ray was done and that it was time to get me back to my room. Actually, I believed it was time I got out of the hospital, and the sooner the better!

The doctors concluded that my heart attack was due to the intestinal flu I had a couple of days back. A week or two later I was discharged from the hospital and swore I would never get an x-ray at there again.

Or at least not at night.

Mumu sa Cab

by GYPSY2000

❖ ❖ ❖

Medyo ginabi ako ng uwi from work, so kahit nagtitipid ako, I decided to take a cab. Smooth naman ang biyhe pauwi sa Caloocan.

Medyo liblib ang place namin pero nice naman kasi parang probinsiya na malinis—no pullution kaya enjoy ang beauty ko. Maraming bakanteng bahay pa roon, at talagang grassy pa ang ibang areas ng subdivision.

Going to my place ay may madadaanang sementeryo bago dumating ng Zabarte. Almost 11:30 na ng gabi when suddenly may nakita kaming girl parang mga early 20s ang edad.

Tingin ko emergency kaya sabi ko na lang sa driver na isakay na lang niya kung malapit lang naman sa amin ang punta niya. Nakaupo ako sa tabi ng driver at kung sasakay man ang babae sa backseat siya.

Mukhang okay naman ang girl; tahimik lang siya at kung hindi ko kinausap hindi siya iimik.

I asked kung saan siya bababa. Sabi niya ituturo na lang niya at tumuloy na kami. Nagtaka lang ako kung bakit hindi ko maaninagan ang face niya. Hindi siya naka white; parang floral ang dress niya. Hindi ako madaling matakot pero parang kinilabutan ang bandang batok ko, at parang lumalaki ang mga tenga ko.

Biglang nagsalita ang babae. Binanggit niya ang subdivision na kung saan siya magpapababa. Surprisingly, doon din ako papunta.

"E di mabuti para sabay na tayo bumaba," sabi ko.

"Hindi," sabi niya. Magkaiba raw kami ng babaan.

Somewhere in a very secluded part ng subdivision na madamo at pinaliligiran ng malalaking puno ng acacia, pinara niya ang taxi. Walang mga bahay roon.

Hindi pa rin namin makita ang face niya. Kinalibutan na ako. I

don't know kung ganoon din and feeling ng driver.

Habang pababa na ang babae, inabot niya ang bayad niya sa driver. Sinara niya ang pinto ng taxi at naglakad sa damuhan na parang naglalakad sa ulap.

Yumuko lang ako ng sandali para tingnan ang oras. Pag tingin ko wala na ang babae.

Umarangkada na ang driver sa takot.

Bibilangin na sana ng driver ang binayad ng babae, nguni't panay tuyong dahon ang nasa kamay niya. Kitang kita ko kanina na inabutan ng babae ng P100 ang driver. Nanginig na ang buong katawan ko.

May mga tambay kaming nadaanan at sabi nila nakita nilang bumukas ang pinto ng taxi sa likod at bigla ring sumara pero wala namang bumaba.

Pag-uwi ko sa bahay nagdasal ako kaagad. Hindi na ako nakatulog. I will never forget this incident.

The Shirt

by Angela Christy Castañares

❖ ❖ ❖

One night, my friend Elly was asked by her cousin Ric to get his white shirt in the backyard. Her father was headed to the water pump, and so he turned on the lights in the backyard.

Even with the lights on, the darkness seemed gloomy. Elly had a hard time finding her cousin's white shirt. She was about to head back when a white flicker caught her eye. She felt a cold draft that made her uneasy. She noticed that her father was still working on the pump, which gave her the courage to continue looking for her cousin's shirt.

She looked for the white flicker again and she spotted something white off to one side of the yard. Upon further inspection, she noticed it was a small boy! Elly was taken aback and the hair on the back of her neck began to stand.

"Hi there! I'm Elly. What's your name?" she asked the boy.

The boy looked at her for a long time and did not say anything. The boy was clad in white, and he seemed unresponsive to Elly's queries.

"Okay, may I ask what you're doing here in my backyard?" Elly tried again.

After a long pause, the boy timidly answered, "Nothing much. I'm just waiting here for my playmate."

"Who is your friend? Where does he live?" Elly asked. She was feeling a bit weird about the situation.

"My friend's name is Tom-tom. He lives over there," the boy said, pointing to the house next door. "Have you, by any chance, seen him out here?"

"No, I haven't," said Elly. She didn't know anyone with that name and the boys living next door were too old to be the boy's playmate. None of them were named Tom-Tom.

"Elly, who are you talking to?" her father asked.

"Just a kid, pa," she replied.

She was about to ask the boy another question but it got stuck in her throat. The boy had disappeared!

The next day, Elly asked her mother if she had seen a kid in white in their backyard.

"You probably saw the ghost of the little boy whose body was dumped there years ago," her mother said. "The only thing we know about him is that he was murdered. Why he was killed and who could have done such a ghastly act nobody knows to this day. He must still be looking for justice."

An Unexpected Guest

by Marisheil Pagtacconan

❖ ❖ ❖

In Ilocos culture, if someone dies, there has to be a *padasal* for nine days. On the eighth day, all his close friends, neighbors and relatives have to make *kakanin* as an offering. This offering of food for the dead is known as *atang*. The *atang* must also be prayed over by the *Mang-lualo*, the one who leads the prayers for the souls.

During my *lolo's* wake, we had a *Mang-lualo* pray over the *kakanin* we made. After the prayers, we partook of the *kakanin*. It wasn't long before everybody was talking and chatting with relatives they haven't seen in years.

I was looking outside when I saw a woman dressed in white enter the gate. She slowly came in but then suddenly vanished. I felt goosebumps run up my arms when I saw that. Then she appeared in front of my brother, who was standing by the door. But it was only her head that we saw; her body was nowhere to be seen! She then disappeared and appeared by the window. It seemed that she wanted to join us.

"*May* white lady *sa labas!* (There's a white lady outside!)," somebody screamed.

Everyone in the *sala* could feel their hair stand on end. Nobody wanted to go home that night; everyone stayed in the house until the sun rose.

The next morning, my *lola* and I went to another wake. A neighbor of ours had passed away recently. When I glimpsed inside her coffin, the hair on the back of my neck and arms stood. The white gown the woman in the coffin was wearing and her hairstyle were exactly the same as the woman from the night before. Her niece told us that her aunt really wanted to attend my *lolo's* wake and eat *kakanin* with us, but due to her illness, she passed away a few days before the eighth day.

Boarding House Scare

by Ana Lorraine Palman

❖ ❖ ❖

I'm from Bulacan but I teach here in Makati, which forced me to live in a boarding house. And in that said boarding house I have experienced a lot of strange things that eventually made me decide to move out.

The Door

❖ ❖ ❖

I stay in a room upstairs. According to my housemates, they often hear my door swing open and suddenly bang closed. At first they thought I was there and that I was in a bad mood for me to bang my door like that. They were surprised when they found out that I wasn't home. In fact, no one was upstairs at that time.

One time, I went to the nearby Ministop to buy some ice cream. I didn't bother to lock my door because I wasn't going to take long. I hurried back to catch a TV show but, to my surprise, my door was locked and I didn't have the key. I asked my housemates about it, and they told me that no one had gone upstairs and that they heard the door bang closed. When I told them I didn't have my key with me, they tried to force open my door. We made a lot of noise that our landlady came and asked us what was going on. As we told her what happened, she reached for the knob and turned it. My door opened! Our landlady just laughed at us.

The Radio

❖ ❖ ❖

It was a Sunday afternoon when this happened. I had just come from my sister's birthday in Bulacan. When I got to the boarding house, everyone had gone to church. Upon entering the living room, I turned on the lights. It was so quiet so I went to my room and

changed clothes.

I then heard the radio playing. Thinking that my housemates had arrived, I hurriedly went downstairs. To my surprise, no one was there. I turned off the radio and went back to my room.

Five minutes later, I heard the radio playing again. I immediately changed clothes, went downstairs and left the house, not bothering to turn off the radio.

What made it scarier was that the radio was playing an old tune that I didn't recognize.

The Bathroom

❖ ❖ ❖

It has become my ritual to use the bathroom before going to bed. One evening, some of my housemates were entertaining guests in the living room. I went to the bathroom but found it locked. It could only be locked from the inside and I could see that the light was on. I turned to my housemates and asked them who was inside.

They were as shocked as I was to learn that not one of us, guests included, was using the bathroom. We then kicked the door open.

It was really locked from the inside.

Imagine, even ghosts use the bathroom.

The Stairs

❖ ❖ ❖

Some of my housemates told me this incident when I was in Bulacan visiting my family. They were sleeping in my room, and at around 2 a.m., they heard footsteps on the stairs. They thought I had arrived so one of my housemates went downstairs to check on me.

No one was in the living room and when she checked the front door, it was still locked. Since she was still sleepy, she went upstairs and went back to bed. Again she heard footsteps on the stairs. She

quickly opened the door to see who it was.

No one was there.

The Phone

❖ ❖ ❖

This is a peculiar incident that happened quite often. The phone would ring, and somebody in the house would answer. A guy would ask if I was there. My housemates would then ask who he was but he refused to say his name and would hang up.

One time I answered the phone. He was asking for me. I asked who he was because I didn't recognize his voice. He didn't answer and just hung up.

The Admirer

❖ ❖ ❖

All my eerie experiences in the house were tame compared to this last incident. It was around 3 a.m. when I suddenly felt a cold gust of wind sweep around my legs. At first I thought the wind came from the window, but I remembered closing all of them before going to bed.

I then felt someone beside me. Suddenly, I felt someone hug me. It was not a tight hug but I could feel someone's breath on my nape. I opened my eyes to see who it was but it was too dark. Still feeling a bit cold, I forced myself out of bed and I ran towards the light switch just beside the door. When the lights came on, I looked over at my bed.

There sat a white figure, looking straight at me. He seemed to be smiling. The figure slowly stood up and disappeared.

My legs were trembling. I wanted to scream but I couldn't. I was dumbfounded with what I saw. I sat on the floor, trying to cry but I was too shocked and afraid for tears. I just sat there and waited for the sun to come up.

When my housemates awoke, I told them what happened. Most of them were shocked and scared.

"Maybe the ghost has a crush on you," one of them said.

University Ghosts

by love_sheree

❖ ❖ ❖

I graduated from college back in 2000, and I had a classmate that saw different entities around campus. We used to have classes on the second floor of a certain building of a college in the university belt. My classmate saw an old woman sitting at the top of the stairs, staring straight at her. Even though sanay na siya (bata pa lang nakakakita na siya even sa bahay nila sa Bulacan), nakaramdam daw talaga siya ng takot. Sabi niya ang talim ng tingin kasi alam nito na nakikita niya ito.

One time naman during our 3rd year, we had a class in an airconditioned room in the Mass Communication building. Sobrang dark that morning, at biglang bumukas ang door. Ang lakas talaga, napalingon kaming lahat. I asked my friend agad at sabi niya she saw a girl wearing white na papasok daw sana pero natigilan kasi maraming nakitang tao at umalis na lang siya.

Just the previous year, in another building naman, my friend saw a little boy and a woman (mag-ina raw) staring at her from the corner of the room. Lagi raw sila naroon.

Sa dorm naman daw nila, kapag natutulog siya ng mag-isa, minsan nagigising siya dahil may kumakalabit sa kanya. Minsan naman hinihila ang paa niya. Sa mirror naman nila she saw a white lady crying. Nang lumingon sa kanya, nakita niya na walang mukha.

Ghosts in Church

by netsie20

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I work for our church as an organist. Old folks say that there used to be a cemetery beside our church and that there were some instances of ghost sightings there. I was hesitant to believe them at first. *Baka kasi kuwento lang nila iyon para takutin kaming mga bata,* I thought.

One night at around 10 p.m. during our choir practice, my friend and I were chatting in the lit part in our church near the choir stand. Kita namin ang mga part na madilim at walang ilaw. We then noticed a shadow pass across the rows of pews. It really caught my attention kaya sinilip ko pa kung sino ang dumaan. I thought na baka isa lang sa mga utility persons.

"Nakita mo ba iyon dumaan?" I asked my friend. She said no, which gave me the creeps.

I then remembered the stories told to me by my friend, an usherette at the church. That particular usherette was in charge of cleaning the CR. The first mass was at 5 a.m., so mga 3 or 4 a.m. nandoon na siya habang wala pang tao.

One morning, napadaan siya sa may adoration chapel. Since it was 4 in the morning, usually hindi pa bukas iyon. She was shocked kasi may nakita siyang babae sa loob na nagdarasal. Nakasuot ang babae ng black na belo.

Sino ba naman ang magdarasal ng ganoon kaaga ang taka ng usherette. Nang papalapit na siya nag-turn ang babae at nakita niya na walang siyang mukha!

Another time, banda 4 a.m. din, naglilinis ulit siya. Nagulat siya kasi parang may nagmimisa sa loob. Sumilip siya at halos himatayin siya sa nakita niya! May mga nakita siyang parang mga taong nagmimisa. Ang suot nila ay parang panahon pa ng Kastila. Conse-

cration na ang naabutan niya, at lalong siyang nagulat dahil pugot ang ulo ng pari at ang kino-consecrate niya ay ang kanyang ulo!

The One Who Didn't Believe in Ghosts

by Ivy Patdu

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This story happened to Lei, a physician friend of mine in a well-known hospital in Manila. She specializes in ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat) and part of her responsibilities was to have 24-hour duties attending to patients in the wards and the emergency room.

We know the hospital as a place where the sick gets healing and treatment. It is, however, not uncommon that doctors could not always save their patients and the hospital inevitably becomes witness to a fairly large number of dying people. Inevitably, hospital staff and physicians have their own ghost stories to tell. Lei, my doctor friend, refused to believe their eerie stories.

Lei was on 24-hour duty one night. The senior physicians ordered her to go up to the operating room complex and check the equipment. It was a big hospital and the operating room complex, made up of 30 or so smaller operating rooms, occupied a whole floor.

It was an hour before midnight and the nurse on duty had already gone home. There were ongoing operations in the left wing and so Lei had to go to the opposite side. She was alone in the deathly silent right wing. Soon, her imagination took hold of her and she began recalling the ghost stories about the operating rooms in the right

wing.

One in particular haunted her that very moment. Supposedly, the nurse on duty was about to head home when she remembered that she forgot her cell phone. She heard it ring and she hurried towards it. As she reached for her phone, it stopped ringing. She noted that no number had registered, but she dismissed it as maybe an international call or a blocked number. She was about to leave, her cell phone safely kept in her pocket, when she noticed a light in one of the operating rooms. All emergency operations at night were done in the left wing and so she thought that someone must have left the lights on. She was surprised to see a thin old lady there, lying on her side, naked on the operating table, her back to the nurse. Was there going to be an operation and she was not informed?

The nurse walked towards the patient. There was no one else around, which was not standard protocol in emergency operations. She noticed that the patient's white hair had blood clots and that her skin was brown and dry.

"*Lola*, excuse me, are you here for an operation?" she tentatively asked.

The old lady did not turn but the nurse saw her breathing softly. As the nurse reached out to tap the patient, the old woman suddenly turned.

The nurse shrieked, her shrill cry echoing through the empty halls of the operating room. She closed her eyes but the image of the woman was imprinted in her mind.

The old lady had a blank face — a brown sphere with the nose barely visible. She did not have eyes, nostrils or a mouth. She was just an old naked body with blood clots in her hair and an empty face.

The nurse closed her eyes and screamed until she felt someone shaking her shoulders. When she opened her eyes, she saw that it was the roving guard that was shaking her. Trembling, she pointed to the old woman but there was no one on the operating table.

As Lei recalled this urban legend, her heart pounded louder and

faster. She didn't believe in ghosts, she reminded herself, but she swore that if an operating room light was on, she wouldn't dare check on it. And so she went on her way, did her job, checked the equipment, and almost ran back down to the wards.

Only when she got to the wards did she breathe a sigh of relief she didn't know she was holding. How could she scare herself like that? she berated herself. She needed a cigarette, she decided.

Smoking, even though she knew was a health hazard, had been her only vice, believing it to relieve her of the stressful hospital life. It wasn't allowed in the hospital but she knew of several hidden spots where she could light up.

She reported to her seniors regarding the equipment and told them she was taking a break. She asked an intern to accompany her — not that she was afraid, but because she wanted some company.

The two of them went to her secret spot by the administration offices, which was at the end of a short hallway near the wards. At night, no one passed there. The lights were off, however, and they had to make do with whatever illumination that came from the wards.

They took out their cigarettes and Lei took out her lighter. Only after several tries did it light, and the ensuing flame cast weird shadows around them. When they had smoked a couple of puffs, Lei told the intern about the story of the operating room and they both had a good laugh.

It was then that they noticed a man walking towards them. They weren't sure if he had come from one of the offices, and they were afraid that he might be part of the hospital administration. Lei and the intern quickly put out their cigarettes. When he came near, they saw that he was middle-aged and was wearing ordinary clothes. He was smiling.

Lei then thought that he might be a snatcher, as there had been reports of one running around. She refused to think that it might be a ghost. She felt her throat go dry and her heart beat in a different rhythm.

But the man seemed normal, especially when he asked if he could borrow a lighter to light his cigarette. His voice seemed a bit hoarse but friendly.

Lei lent him his lighter and he lighted up.

"Thank you," the man said softly as he gave back her lighter.

Since Lei and the intern had already put out their cigarettes, they decided to go back to the wards. They saw the man continuing to smoke as they walked away.

"He's a scary man," Lei whispered to the intern. The intern joked that Lei had gone pale when the man approached them.

They were inside the wards when Lei's cell phone began ringing. She took the call, which turned out to be the junior physician in the emergency room. A patient complaining of breathing difficulties had just been wheeled in. The junior physician had reviewed the charts and the patient was assessed to need an emergency tracheotomy. This procedure was an operation where they had to quickly cut a hole in the patient's neck and insert a tube to secure the airway to make the patient able to breathe. This was usually done when the patient has a throat or airway obstruction.

Lei got her operating instruments and ran to the emergency room, with the intern trailing behind her. When she reached the ER five minutes later, Lei was distraught to learn that the patient had already expired, his relatives grieving around him. She took the junior physician aside and gave him orders regarding the death certificate that he would fill up. She learned that the patient had been diagnosed a few months ago with cancer of the throat but he never followed up on treatment. She was about to console the relatives when another commotion occurred.

The intern that had been trailing behind Lei suddenly fainted and nurses were rushing to her side. The intern was revived within seconds and Lei was already beside her.

"Are you okay?" she asked the intern.

The intern weakly answered her, almost in a whisper, "Look at the

patient, doctor."

Lei saw that the patient that had just died was the same middle-aged man that had borrowed her lighter a few minutes ago. Except now he had the ashen face of death.

After that night, Lei quit smoking. For some reason, her lighter was also missing and she concluded that she must have misplaced it or it fell when she was running towards the emergency room. In any case, she didn't need it anymore. After all, smoking is really bad for you.

Ronda

by Kenshin

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Back in the prime of my grandparents, madalas daw nagroronda ang mga pulis. Siyempre kasama lagi ang lolo ko, kasi siya ang chief of police noong time na iyon sa isang town sa Batangas.

May nireklamo raw na house na medyo parang bizarre ang mga nangyayari. Lumapit ang may-ari ng house sa pulis. It turns out na may pagka-mischievous ang mga nangyari—may nanghahagis ng bato, biglang may malakas na hangin, etc.

Pinakain ang lolo ko at ang mga kasama niyang pulis ng may-ari noong gabing iyon. Naghain na ng dinner ang may-ari ng house at naka-set na ang table. Nakaupo na silang lahat at magsisimula na sana silang kumain nang biglang may nahulog na mga bato sa bawat isang plato nila. Hindi nila ma-explain and fruitless ang ronda.

In the following days, maraming nakakakita kapag gabi. May mga white daw na duwende na naglalaro sa garden ng bahay na iyon.

They made offerings, at mula noon ay hindi na sila namumukol ng bato.

My Terrifying Life

by Sue A. Yan

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I have had weird encounters since I was six years old, most of which are quite insignificant enough to remain in the dark corners of my subconscious. But some remain indelible experiences that still stir up the occasional nightmare.

We used to rent a house beside my uncle's place on a short dead end street that had only about eight or nine houses. Having grown up with three brothers, I was never interested in Barbie dolls and tea sets; I would rather go out and play in the street.

One day, my neighbor offered to teach me how to ride a bicycle. His father had just bought him a new BMX bike, and he was willing to let me learn on it. I was eager and excited because I would envy my brothers when they would ride around the subdivision without me.

And so my neighbor held the bicycle seat, acting as my guide and not letting me fall. I threatened to break his nose if he let go, so terrified was I of falling. It went on like that for a while, me spouting threats whenever he'd tease me about letting go. I was concentrating real hard when I noticed that my friend was unusually quiet behind me. I knew he was still behind me because I felt someone there, plus I heard the sound of his footsteps. I felt him put a hand on my shoulder, not letting go until I stopped in front of number 26.

I twisted around and was about to yell at my neighbor to quit distracting me when I saw that he was a couple of houses away, waving and grinning at me. He then ran towards me and said, *"Galing ah! Layo ng narating mo, marunong ka na pala* (Great! You've managed to get far, you've known how to ride all this time)."

I didn't tell him that there was someone holding on to the seat and the hand on my shoulder. I was afraid he'd laugh at me and call me crazy.

By the time I was in second year high school, I had come to conclude that I had imagined the biking incident; I was just a kid, after all. But a retreat in Tagaytay changed my way of thinking.

It was the last evening of the retreat and we were all in the chapel. The lights were off, and only flickering candles illuminated the room. Our heads were bowed and we were very solemn.

I felt someone put a hand on my shoulder. I didn't mind, thinking that it must be one of the facilitators doing a pray over. The hand moved to my head and it stayed there for quite some time. I felt faint and started shaking. It got really cold and I was starting to get a headache, one that started from my nape and worked its way up to my temples. The person beside me nudged me and asked me if I wanted to lie down because I looked pale.

"Maybe after the pray over," I said. I pointed to the person standing behind me, to let her know that someone was praying over me.

She looked behind me and said, "Dude, *walang tao sa likod mo. Anong* pray over? (Dude, there's no one behind you. What pray over are you talking about?)"

I afraid to look behind me, fearing I might actually see someone there. To this day, I still do not know who or what was behind me that day. It seemed that someone or something has been following me since I was six.

Three years ago we were able to buy our own house. It was on the same dead end street – number 26. The old occupants were friends of mine and my *kuyas*, but we had grown apart as we grew older.

"Someone is in the *sala*," my *kuya* said one night.

Now this particular *kuya* sees ghosts frequently, and other members of the family have confirmed his visions. But then he's also a prankster, always teasing us.

And so I didn't give his statement much thought.

A couple of weeks went by, then my mom started complaining of seeing someone walk in the hallway and the two sets of stairs (one led to the rooms while the other to the kitchen). She said she would catch a glimpse of someone from out of the corner of her eyes, but when she looked intently, no one was there.

Again, I didn't give it much thought. I shrugged it off as a trick of the light or a vision induced by stress.

One morning, my mom and my brother Alex were in the family room watching TV. The family room is connected to the formal dining room, with only the couch separating the two rooms, its back against the dining table. My mom was on the couch while Alex was watching the boob tube from the floor.

I had just gotten up and I was rubbing the sleep from my eyes when I saw a girl sitting on a dining room chair about three feet behind my mom. I thought it was my niece because of her long black hair, just a little past her shoulders. I sat down on the couch beside my mother and watched TV with them. I began to wonder why my niece was ignoring me, for she would usually shriek in excitement whenever she saw me.

When I turned around and looked at my niece, I was shocked because the girl sitting behind us was not my niece. Before I could react, the girl zoomed towards me until she was inches from my face.

I screamed and ducked, placing my head between my knees while covering my head with my arms. My mom and brother looked at me funny and asked me what had happened. I told them what I saw but they didn't believe me. I didn't try to convince them because I figured that they'll also see "her" sooner or later.

About a year after that incident, my brothers, my cousins, some neighbors and I were having a small get-together and drinking session outside our house. As the night wore on and we were running low on drinks, Noel and Oliver, two of my brothers, went out to buy more booze. They ran into the old tenant of our present house and they invited him for a few drinks. After having caught up with each others' lives, our conversation turned to ghost stories.

Our old friend teased that he had a number of ghost stories but he wouldn't share them. We prodded him until he finally he gave in and told us about the white lady that followed him around the house (meaning our present house!). What was uncanny was that his experiences were in the exact same locations where I experienced the ghost. My brother Alex looked at me and realized that I wasn't bluffing about what I saw that morning in the dining room. He told the group about it and we all fell silent.

I have also had a number of experiences in our vacation house in Batangas. One summer, I got to meet my friends there again. We

were all grown up, but we're still pretty close. My friends know me as a sensitive, and they'd usually panic when I would suddenly become quiet or looking off in one direction.

That night we were swapping stories at Emy's place, sitting on the steps that led to the front door. We were reminiscing about childhood pranks when I saw a shadow by the door. The shape seemed to be that of an old lady wearing a duster. I knew she was old by the way she stood; her posture was slouched and frail. She also sported a hairstyle mostly worn by *lolas*, and the duster she wore was similar to the dusters my *lola* wore.

Must be Emy's *lola*, I thought.

Her *lola* stood there for quite some time before turning and going back into the house. My friends Emy and Rhea were still busy chatting and didn't notice her. I suggested to Rhea that we should go on home because Emy's *lola* might think it improper for young ladies such as ourselves to be up at such a late hour.

Emy looked at me and asked, *"Sinong lola?* (Whose grandmother?)"

I asked her who else was living there with her. Emy said that it was only her, her parents, her sister and her brother living in that house. I asked if her *lola* was still alive, to which Emy nodded. I felt relief, thinking that her *lola* might be spending the night there without Emy knowing.

"But isn't your other *lola* dead?" Rhea asked.

I finally told them what I saw and why I had assumed her *lola* was there. Rhea and Emy were stunned when I finished with my description. They didn't say a word, and Emy just took my hand and led me inside the house. On the second floor was a picture of her *lola* in a duster, exactly as I had described her, down to the old-style hairdo.

One night, my parents had to go back to Manila for business reasons. I had the house all to myself, since my brothers skipped this trip. My only company was the house sitter and her family, and they live in a small hut in the backyard. What else was a girl to do? Of course I invited my friends to sleep over!

And so my friends Rhea, Bunny, Emy, and I were alone in the

house that night, staying up late and having fun. We even played hide and seek for old times' sake. To make things exciting and a little scary, we turned off all the lights and tried to find each other using only the illumination from the street lights outside. We invited the house sitter's niece to join us.

We were having a great time and making a great deal of noise when I thought of giving my friends a scare. When it was Rhea's turn to be 'it,' I changed into a black turtleneck and dark denim pants. I stood in the corner of the patio just beside the glass doors. I arranged my long hair around my face and waited. Soon enough Rhea began looking for us, and she found us all except for me.

I was snickering at the joke I was about to play when all of a sudden I felt the hair on my nape and arms stand. I couldn't quite put my finger on it but it felt wrong, like something didn't feel right. I peeked through the glass door and saw my friends walk towards the patio, everybody looking for me. I kept quiet, trying to squeeze more of myself in that little corner. I could hear them talking on the other side of the glass doors. They were pushing at each other to open the door and call me.

I was starting to get uneasy. When I risked a peek, my friends weren't looking for me at the patio anymore; they were looking above the door instead. I jumped out then, and it scared them out of their wits. They all screamed and I had a good laugh. I asked them what they were looking at and they told me it was nothing. Only when I visited them again the following year did they tell me what they really saw.

We were at Rhea's house, chatting the night away.

"Rhea, sabihin mo na kung ano ang nakita mo sa patio," Emy said.

Rhea was a bit reluctant but she eventually told me what they saw that night. She said they didn't – couldn't – go out on the patio because something was crawling on the wall that night. She described it as a person all in black stuck to the wall like a lizard. It came from the shadows and crept above the door directly above where I was hiding. No wonder I felt so weird back then. It was a good thing that I didn't look up; God knows what I would have seen or what that thing would have done if it had seen me looking at it.