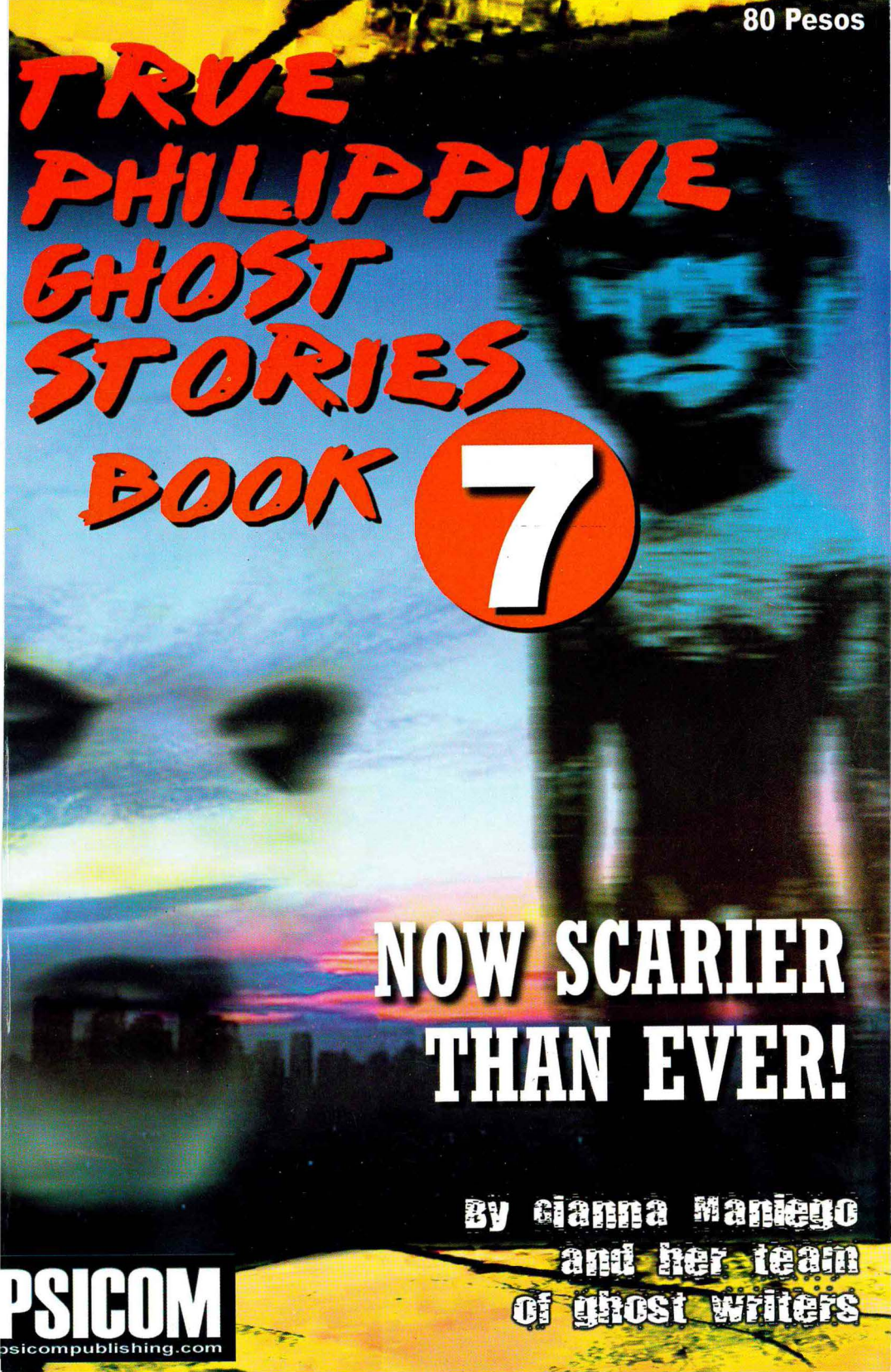
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BOOK 7
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# TRUE PHILIPPINE GHOST STORIES BOOK 7

By Gianna Maniego And Her Team Of Ghost Writers

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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, ghost pictures feel free to share them with us*. E-mail us at psicom@vasia.com

For comments and suggestions, Txt us at **09189305034**

If you want to talk about ghost experiences, join us at our messageboard at **http://www.psicompublishing.com/forum**

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Everyone loves a good scare, and judging from the response this series has elicited, this adage is definitely true.

With seven volumes out (and possibly enough material to carry us through to the 10th), there seems to be no surfeit of interest in ghost stories and other tales of the supernatural.

It's interesting to note how critics have tried to analyze the appeal of the ghost story. There are those who expect the complicated twists and turns of a Stephen King thriller, or the preternatural scenarios of an Anne Rice novel.

Then there are purists who maintain that stories about ghosts should never, ever be mixed with stories about other supernatural beings.

We, on the other hand, prefer our ghost stories short, sweet, and devoid of complicated subplots and eschatological discussions—the way a storytelling session should be.

Neither are we nitpicky about our monster *du jour*. It may be a spirit, an elemental, or a demon—as long as it amps the scare factor, it's good enough for us.

At the end of the day, we are neither Stephen Kings nor purists.

We are simply storytellers.

The Editor

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# A BROTHER'S PROMISE

**By Anonymous**

**My brother died on November 1 several years ago.**

I loved my brother very much. We were only one year apart and grew up pretty close. He was my protector and he would often swear that he would never leave me and would always be there if I needed him.

Little did I know how seriously he took this until he died.

I found out the hard way that my brother was dead.

My sister and I were on a holiday break at the house of my grandparents in the province. We were there with other family members and relatives who came home for the *undas* (All Saints' Day).

For some reason I felt uneasy throughout the day. Things just didn't seem right and everyone seemed cranky and in a bad mood.

For starters, there was a family spat at the breakfast table between my grandmother and my aunt. The latter didn't want to go to the cemetery and her brother's grave.

Then one of the kids fell from a tree and broke his arm and we had to find a clinic that was open on that day.

Later, as we were about to head over to my uncle's grave, our van wouldn't start and it took three cars to haul all of us to the cemetary

Nevertheless, my sister and I stayed until dinner. Neither of us was entirely too happy about having to stay.

The following day, bright and early, my sister and I set out for home. When we finally reached home neither of our parents was there.

That's odd, we thought.

My brother, who didn't get along with my dad, joined the military at the age of 22 and usually stayed in the barracks. But this year, he was sent to Mindanao where fighting was said to be escalating among the rebels.

I went into my parents' room and found the newspaper lying on the bed. I picked it up and almost went into shock at what I read on the front page.

One of the stories read "14 soldiers die in rebel encounter" and beside it were pictures of the soldiers who died in the skirmish.

There, third from right, was the picture of my brother!

We found out later that they were riding in a truck when they were ambushed by the rebels. They never had a chance as they were outnumbered - three rebels to one soldier.

My family grieved for a long time. My Dad and I took his death harder than the rest of the family. My Dad grieved because he never got the chance to patch things up with my brother.

I, on the other hand, mourned the loss of my "bestest" friend.

Somehow, because of my brother's death, my family grew apart.

I drifted away from my other siblings and I hated my father more and more everyday.

I tried to keep my brother's memory alive by adopting his hobbies such as puttering around in the garden and coaching the local choir members.

My brother had a great voice and was an expert guitar player. The two of us would often sing at family gatherings or in church.

Even when he stayed at barracks, he would come home on weekends to help the choir with their songs.

With my brother gone, I volunteered to fill in the vacuum.

I had lost a lot of weight and was beginning to have nightmares.

Voices haunted me and I found myself always checking my back because I could feel someone watching me.

As November 1 neared, my family began preparations for my brother's first death anniversary and *babang luksa* (end of mourning).

We were going to have some family and friends over for the mass and then have a little *merienda cena.*

I planned to have the choir over so they can sing the mass songs and then later perform for the guests.

One late afternoon, as I was teaching the choir a new song, my cellphone rang. It was an unregistered number.

Who could be calling me from abroad, I wondered. Only an overseas number would appear on the cellphone as unregistered.

"Hello," I answered tentatively.

"*Hoy pangit, ako ito* (Hey ugly, it's me)," said a voice that sounded disturbingly familiar.

"Excuse me, *sino po ito* (who is this please)?"

"It's me, Anton."

"Anton who?" my cellphone shook as my hand trembled.

"What do you mean Anton who? Ah, *tampo na ako nyan* (I'm hurt). Don't you recognize your own brother?"

"Who is this? Carlo! How dare you pull a trick like this. I hate you."

"It's me! I just wanted to let you know I intend to keep my promise. I am OK."

At that, the line went dead.

The choir members saw me and said I had grown as white as a sheet. I was so weak, they had to half-carry me to the nearest chair

Later on I forced myself to calm down. As I stood up, I saw Carlo. I wasted no time confronting him.

"How dare you pull that kind of a trick on me! I thought you were his friend! How could you be so mean?"

"What are you talking about? Wait! He was your best friend. How could you do something so mean!"

Carlo stood there perplexed. Then something dawned upon him.

"Did Anton call you too?"

I looked at Carlo for a long time.

"He called me last night too. At first I thought it was a joke but he knew too much. Then I thought maybe he hadn't died but I saw the body. I saw him buried. He probably wants

us to know he is still with us."

Carlo and I cried for a long time together. We never spoke much after that.

My brother never called again, but there were times I could have sworn I saw him nearby.

I would see him walking on the side of the road like he always did.

But soon enough, I began feeling haunted not just by him. Unfortunately my brother had opened me to a world I wasn't ready for.

I began seeing other spooks as well. My brother had opened me to being a receiver and others wanted to be heard.

I see things in the night I am scared of. But what haunts me the most is my brother's voice.

# A HOUSE ON FIRE

**By Jenny Chua**

**When JC was about seven or eight, his family moved to the province, in an area famous for ghosts.**

They moved into a modest normal-looking, two-story house near the outskirts of the town.

"Something about this place frightened me," he recalled.

He lived in the house with his father and grandfather, and Brandy, their dog.

His father, a government employee, worked at the town hall, while his grandfather was the principal of the local elementary school.

JC's mom was working in a hotel in Dubai and was gone for two years at a time. His grandmother passed away several years before.

Since his grandfather had arthritis, he slept in a room on the first floor, while JC and his dad occupied the second floor.

JC's father's bedroom door stood on the right of the

second floor landing, JC's on the left.

JC noticed that even in the hottest weather, his father's bedroom would get really chilly

Everything was smooth sailing for the first couple of months. Uneventful, actually. But JC had never felt at ease in the house.

Until several strange events began happening.

The first few events occurred in JC's bedroom. There was a small court beside the school and JC's grandfather would bring home rubber balls hit out of the court for Brandy to play with.

Brandy, most annoyingly, would play with these balls in JC's room late at night. Finally, he got sick and tired of the havoc that Brandy would wreak at night so he took to locking the balls inside a cabinet at night.

But the funny thing is, the next morning, he would wake up to find Brandy playing with the balls in front of the cabinet door—which remained locked.

The same thing happened everyday.

At first, JC tried to ignore these daily occurrences. But one morning JC awoke to find Brandy laying on a pile of what must have been 50 rubber balls. Where they came from, he didn't know.

But that was not the only strange thing that happened in that house.

JC's dad kept his bedroom closed throughout the day and every time JC walked past it he could swear he heard voices, doors opening, and music—like a party was going on. Once, JC opened it to check. The music and the voices immediately stopped.

JC asked some of their neighbors if they knew any-

thing strange about the house.

He was told that the lot they lived on had seen many different houses. But each one had burned to the ground a few years after they were built.

Eventually, after a little more probing, he found out that the owner of the first house built on the lot burned down his house because he was despondent over the death of his wife who died in childbirth.

After several months of living in the house, JC had the most horrifying experience of his life.

One afternoon, he was watching TV with Brandy when the dog started acting crazy. It ran to the foot of the stairs and began barking like mad towards something at the top of the stairs.

"Aaaaauuuughhhh!!"

JC heard what sounded like an agonizing scream and a loud thud coming from upstairs. Alarmed, he rushed up the stairs to find out if anyone was hurt.

As he passed by his father's bedroom, he smelled the faint odor of smoke coming from it.

He looked inside but no one was there.

Once again, he smelled smoke. Panicked, he grabbed Brandy and ran outside.

Within 10 minutes, the house was ablaze. During the time it took for the house to burn down, he heard someone screaming "NO!" over and over until the house was nothing more than ashes.

# ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT

By Jherry L. Barrinuevo

**Some say there are lost souls everywhere. They may inhabit a school, church, office, house, and even former military bases.**

Clark and Subic, where the United States military bases were formerly located, are oozing with ghost stories. Many who visited the place have a spooky or weird story to tell.

They say Subic is haunted, not only by spirits, but also by other supernatural beings that roam over and beneath the earth.

This is the story of my friend Jessie, who had a hair-raising experience in Subic.

On the surface, the place is a busy tourist hub that boasts of several exciting offerings for both local and foreign visitors. For many, it has become a weekend getaway from urban stress.

People who want nature trips would love the place.

But according to Jessie, when darkness falls, Subic slowly turns into a place where paranormal sightings and ex-

periences occur - from a tourist spot to a place for ghost hunters and psychics. A place where lost souls try to feed their hunger for attention.

Jessie says that one of his unforgettable paranormal experiences happened while he was in Subic sometime in early 2002.

He had been invited to produce a TV show featuring the place.

"There were eleven in our group who were invited to go to Subic - me, my boss, Tita Nida, Dr. Luisa and her daughter Tes, our coordinator for the project Tita Trina, two of our scholars and two production assistants, and our driver Gardo."

The group left Manila at 8 am and needed to be in Subic at 11 a.m. to meet their host.

When Jessie and his group arrived at Subic they immediately met the host and discussed how to shoot the feature.

Since it was already 2 p.m. by the time the meeting ended, the group decided to grab a quick lunch before proceeding to one of the former US Navy officers' house where they would be staying for the night.

As soon as they entered the house, Tita Nida (who is reportedly "sensitive") and Jessie immediately felt an eerie presence inside.

"It was like a lot of unseen beings were staring at us as we roamed about the house."

Jessie went to the laundry area to check the main water valve to ensure they had water to use.

"As I got closer to the main water valve I suddenly saw two shadows on the wall in front of me," he said.

"At first I thought that maybe someone was following me. But when I glanced behind me, I saw no one there. Then I

looked back again at the wall. THERE WERE STILL TWO SHADOWS ON THE WALL! As I looked closely at the other shadow, I noticed that it had two small horns on its head."

Jessie fled the laundry area. When Tita Nida saw him, he was trembling and breathing heavily, his face pale as paper.

"What's the matter? You look like you've seen a ghost!" she joked at first.

But when she saw that Jessie couldn't stop trembling, she asked again:

"Did you see something? I know you saw something in the laundry area, I can see it in your face. Whatever it is just keep it to yourself. Don't tell it to the others, because they would just freak out and our project might not push through."

Jessie nodded numbly.

"Even though I was terrified, I heeded Tita Nida's advice to keep what happened in the laundry area a secret. We all wanted the project to push through," Jessie said

Jessie and Tita Nida then went to their designated rooms and settle into the house.

On the second floor, there were two corridors that led to their rooms.

"Dr. Luisa and her daughter went to the right corridor and chose the first room on the left side. Tita Trina and Tita Nida went to the room adjacent to that, also on the left side of the right corridor. At the end of the right corridor was the common bathroom.

"My boss and one of the scholars stayed in the master's bedroom on the left corridor while I, one of the production assistants, and the other scholar took the room at end of the left corridor," Jessie related.

Jessie says that when he entered the room, he immediately felt the temperature inside go down. It certainly felt colder there than in the other rooms which they had visited and explored earlier. The weird thing about it was the room did not have air-conditioning.

"I could sense a presence, but I could not see anything extraordinary."

Unpacking, he decided to hang some of his clothes in the closet. But when he opened the sliding door of the closet, he couldn't help but shout in fright!

"I saw an American girl, around 8 or 9 years old, standing inside the closet. She was looking at me steadily with bloodshot eyes."

Jessie immediately knew the child was a ghost because she appeared translucent, as if his hand could pass through her. Besides, their host specifically told them that the house that was assigned to them was vacant, so there couldn't be anyone there other than him and his friends.

"She was wearing a beautiful checkered dress, with a headband on her blonde curly hair. When she looked at me I saw that there was fear on her face so I told her, 'Don't be afraid, we're not going to hurt you. We'll just stay for the night.' After I talked to her she ran out of the closet and out of the room."

Jessie said his roommates were all dumbfounded to see him talking to someone none of them could see. But they were not really surprised because they knew that he had a third eye.

Curious, they asked, "Did you see something, *kuya*?"

"I told them yes but not to tell the others, because they might panic and leave the house," Jessie recalled.

After they unpacked and tidied up their room, they re-

alized they were not yet sleepy, so they decided to have a look around Subic.

"After all, we needed to know the places we would feature so I could also prepare the script. After we had dinner in one of the restaurants, we went to see a movie (The Mummy) and went back to the house to rest."

Jessie and his roommates were preparing for bed when Tita Nida knocked on their door and told them she wanted to trade rooms.

"Bakit tita (Why, tita)?" they asked.

Tita Nida said she felt uneasy in her room.

Jessie and his roommates looked at each other, but didn't say anything. They agreed to swap rooms with Tita Nida and her roommate.

But as Jessie and his roommates unpacked in their new room, they felt uncomfortable and found it hard to settle down for the night.

"We found it hard to sleep in our new room, which was near the common comfort room. So, my roommates and I decided to exchange stories and swap jokes. Tita Nida went again to our room and told us not to close the door so that they could wake us up if anything scary happened."

So they left their door open but they decided to turn off the light in the corridor. But when they turned off the light, Tita Nida went back to their room and told them to leave the light on in the corridor.

"We told her we would have a hard time sleeping if we will leave the lights on. So we compromised and left the lights on in the CR."

By that time, it was already about midnight. Still, Jessie and his roommates could not sleep so they continued to swap

stories.

"Dr. Luisa went out of their room to go to the comfort room and asked why we were still awake. We told her we felt uneasy in our new room."

After five minutes, they saw her again pass by their room. They greeted her "good night" and she smiled and replied, "good night".

As she turned away, they noticed that the corridor was dark. They thought Dr. Luisa turned off the lights in the CR by mistake.

"One of my roommates, who was busy reading a book and didn't notice Dr. Luisa pass by, said, 'Isn't she still inside the CR? I didn't see or hear anything pass by our room since she entered the CR.'" Jessie said.

"But I saw her! Didn't you see her?" Jessie turned to his other roommate, who nodded vehemently.

They were still arguing when suddenly Dr. Luisa passed by from the direction of the CR and asked them what they were arguing about.

"We just looked at her, stunned. My roommate said again, 'I told you she was still inside the CR," Jessie said.

But Jessie and his roommates were shocked when they noticed that Dr. Luisa was now wearing pink pajamas. Awhile ago, when they greeted her, she was wearing a black nightgown.

When they asked her what happened to the nightgown, she answered that she didn't own a black nightgown! What's more, she didn't greet them good night!

Around 2 a.m., Jessie and his roommates suddenly heard a thud from the next room.

"What was that?" asked Jessie.

"Did someone fall out of bed?" his roommate joked.

They went out of their room to determine where the sound came from, but all was quiet once more. They went from room to room, listening at the doors, but no sound came from within.

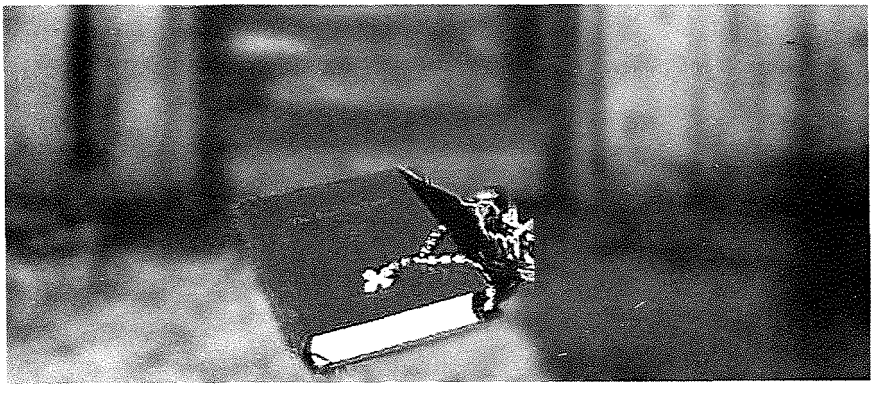
Upon reaching the stairs, Jessie saw the little girl who was inside the closet earlier. As they approached, she ran down the stairs.

"My roommates didn't see her but they said that they saw a small shadow running down the stairs," Jessie related.

The following morning, they told the others what they saw and experienced. Jessie's boss and the other scholar also confessed that they couldn't sleep well because they could hear moans and cries in the night. Moans that sounded like they were in deep pain and crying out for help.

Tita Nida said she too heard the thud sound. She said she placed a Bible at the foot of their door so that the ghost would not enter.

"That thud was probably the little girl kicking the door. She probably got mad because she wanted to enter the room but couldn't because the Bible was against the door," Tita Nida shuddered.



# BREATH OF LIFE

**By Anonymous**

**I once worked as a security officer at a provincial hospital in the Visayas.**

The old hospital was very old and several of the areas were closed off to the public.

The hospital contained a respiratory unit where people suffering from respiratory illnesses had their therapy.

We were required to patrol all areas of the hospital, interior and exterior, and even check the areas that had not been in service for years.

I had been working in the hospital for about four months, taking the graveyard shift, and slightly leery of checking these vacant floors, which were in semi-darkness.

Nevertheless, I tried to put any fears I may have had out of my head.

There were two of us during the midnight shift, and we took turns doing the rounds.

It was probably two or three in the morning and it was my turn to do the rounds when I had the most horrible experi-

ence of my life.

I started the way I usually did, working from the sixth floor down. I finally began to check the second floor, which at one time was a wing to treat terminally ill patients.

I checked the floor from one end to the other, checking all the rooms and the old office behind the nurses station, and all was clear.

As I started making my way back towards the elevator to go to the first floor, I heard sound of voices. I could not make out whether there were two or three persons talking, but they were without a doubt coming from an area down the hall where I had just checked.

The first thing that came to my mind was that these were respiratory patients that had gotten out of their rooms and slipped past the nurses at the counter. They sounded like they were making their way down to the second floor, and were fooling around, possibly hiding in the closets of one of the rooms I had just checked.

I listened very intently to be sure of myself, and could clearly hear the voices. The strange thing was that they sounded like they were just voices, which could be heard very clearly, but there were no intelligible words, just voices.

I called out down the hall for whoever it was to step out of the room into the hallway. I got no response.

I called out again. Still no response, but the voices were still there. I used my radio to contact my partner and alert him that I had a trespass situation on the second floor as this was what I thought I was dealing with and needed his assistance.

My radio crackled but the response I got over the radio came back broken up and nearly inaudible. But I was sure I heard his voice through all the crackling and interference.

Satisfied that my partner was on his way to find me, I began to make my way down the hall, thinking without a doubt in my mind I was dealing with respiratory patients.

Once again I called out to whoever it was to step out into the hallway.

That's when I noticed the temperature suddenly drop in the hallway when it was warm just a few seconds ago.

Suddenly I realized something: how could there be a crackling sound coming over my radio when I had not hit the button to transmit.

I tried once again to contact my partner over the radio, knowing full well that if he heard me the first time he would have been here by now, but the crackling and interference continued to come over the radio whether I hit the button to transmit or not.

At that point I could feel something was just not right, but I tried to tell myself that this was just a couple of people who had wandered onto the hospital's old, out of service unit.

By this time, the voices had gotten louder and the hallway had gotten colder, and all I could think about was getting off the floor to the elevator or the stairway.

The stairway was closer to me so I turned and began searching for my keys to unlock the door.

The voices were louder now and more persistent, and sounded nearer than when I last heard them. I could clearly hear footsteps along with them, not coming from one direction of the hallway, but all directions.

The voices started coming from all directions too, and that's when I fell to the floor, which was ice cold

I wanted to push myself away from the floor as soon as I touched it but I didn't seem to have the energy to do so.

All I could hear were voices, but I still could not make out what was being said, and the footsteps were growing louder. I was on my hands and knees, looking at the floor, I struggled to hold my head up so I could find the door leading to the stairs, but what caught my attention was what looked like several people walking around me. I couldn't make out what they looked like or if they were male or female, as they had no faces and no type of clothing could be seen. They simply looked like wrinkles and blurs in the air with a human shape walking all around me through the dimly lit hallway. It was then that one of these "shapes" walked towards me as I was still on my hands and knees, and then walked right through me.

At that point I experienced severe difficulty in breathing, and seemed to lose more control of myself physically than I already had.

I gasped painfully for air, I tried to force air into my lungs and then just as forcefully, push it out.

After repeating this process several times, I noticed a funny taste in my mouth, and then saw several small puddles of blood on the floor, which I was exhaling with the air.

It was then that I panicked and then forced myself to move towards the stairwell door with every ounce of strength that I had, which was not much. I tried to get to an upright position, but as soon as I got up, I fell to the floor again.

I was really begining to lose control of myself at this point due to the fact that I was very scared.

I was still having difficulty breathing, and still had blood coming up from my throat. I was also shaking uncontrollably, and was struggling to regain control of myself.

Behind me, the hallway was still very active with voices, footsteps, and blurry images which continued to wan-

der up and down the unit.

I tried once again to look for the keys and practically crawled to the stairwell door. Finally, my hand touched the doorknob, which was absolutely freezing and almost stingingly painful to the touch.

I grabbed for the key, the whole time thinking the lock may be frozen.

I managed to control my shaking just long enough to get the key into the lock and turn it. I fell through the door and into the stairwell, crawling from the hallway to the stairs.

The door closed once I got my legs out of the way, and the warm air in the dimly lit stairwell hit me almost immediately, and I could feel some of the energy coming back.

I wanted to get as far away as I could so I grabbed the railing for support and walked myself, still quite shaken, down the stairs to the first floor, and into a bathroom.

I was breathing easier now, but still coughing heavily. I made my way to a toilet, where I coughed up several pieces of coagulated blood.

When I was done, I checked myself out in a mirror. My eyes were glassy and bloodshot, my skin was very pale, and I was sweating profusely. I splashed cold water on my face, toweled off and tried to compose myself the best I could before I made my way back to the security office.

My partner immediately noticed that something was wrong with me. He asked why I took so long on my patrol, at which point I realized he did not get my transmission over the radio earlier.

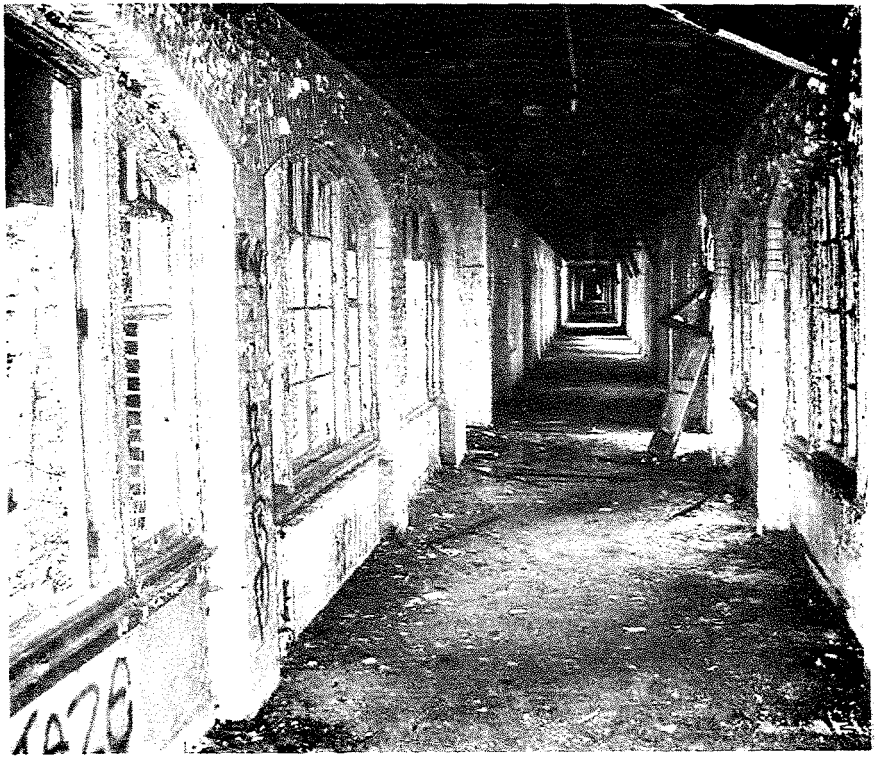
When I asked him about it, he said he had his radio with him the whole time, and not once did he receive a transmission from me.

I feigned illness and told him I wanted to go home. A replacement was called in for me and I left immediately upon his arrival.

When I got home I lay in bed trying to make sense of what happened, but I couldn't.

I still don't fully understand what happened that morning. Although I was apparently hurt physically, I don't think it was done intentionally. I had been on that floor several times before and never encountered anything of that sort at all.

Did I do something to set off the attack? Or was I merely at the wrong place at the wrong time?



# DATE WITH A GHOST

**By Judy May Geronimo**

**Recently, I went out with my *barkada* from high school.**

Unlike before when every time we went out, we would go to a bar where we could drink ourselves to death or go dancing until our feet could no longer take it, this time we chose a coffee bar somewhere in Tomas Morato.

Maybe it's because we've already matured.

There, we ate and drank gallons of coffee while swapping stories and updating each other on our recent escapades.

We reminisced about our high school days and caught up on each others' love lives.

Funny, because in the middle of all the talk, the conversation centered on me.

This is probably because I was the only remaining one in the group who hasn't gotten married yet. All of my friends are married with kids.

They teased me all night. They could not believe that all the years that we hadn't seen each other, I remained unattached.

"*Ano ka ba? Bakit hindi ka pa naga-aasawa? Ikaw na nung* high school *pa lang tayo e kikay na* (What's the matter with you? How come you aren't married yet? Even when we were in high school, you were always the fashionable sort)," one of them asked.

"*Bawat isang* subject *natin e ganun ka din kadalas mag-*retouch. *Tapos* up to now, single *ka pa* (You retouched your makeup as often as we changed subjects. And yet you're still single)," another friend, Lourdes, joked.

" It's not easy to find the right man. All of you are lucky to find your true love," I told them.

Upon hearing my remark, Shalimar, my closest friend in the *barkada,* shared her parents' story.

Her parents had always been a loving couple. They never failed to celebrate their wedding anniversary.

We knew this because we would always get invited to the celebration in their house when we were still in high school.

But three years ago, her parents decided to celebrate their wedding anniversary with just the two of them. After all, according to my friend, all their children already had families of their own. It was going to be their second honeymoon.

There was nothing extraordinary planned though. They would simply watch a movie, dine out, and stay overnight at a hotel to cap the night.

According to Shalimar, her dad bought a special gift for her mom. It was a gold necklace with a diamond-studded cross pendant.

It has always been like that with her dad. He always has an anniversary gift for her mom, whether it's flowers, a cake, a dress, etc.,

The awaited day finally came.

It so happened that one of their children was to give birth at the same time as their parents' anniversary.

Her dad told her mom that after dinner he would drop her off at their hotel and he would go to the hospital and check.

At the hospital, her dad called her mom and told her not to worry because their grandson was so handsome and my friend's Ate was doing fine.

"*Huwag ka nang mag-worry at ayos naman ang anak at apo natin. Antayin mo ako dyan, dahil me sorpresa ako sayo* (Stop worrying, our daughter and grandson are doing fine. Wait for me, I have a surprise for you)," Mang Ramon told his wife.

Shalimar's mom waited at the hotel. She fell asleep after some time and when she awoke, she realized that three hours had passed since she talked to her husband.

She called Mang Ramon on his cellphone but it was out of the coverage area.

"Where could he be?" she wondered. It wasn't that far from the hospital to the hotel.

She called the hospital to confirm what time he left.

"*Ma, akala ko po magkasama na kayo, kanina pa po umalis si Papa dito. Tatlong oras na nakalipas* (Ma, I thought you'd be together by now. He left the hospital three hours ago)," her daughter informed her.

She called Mang Ramon again. This time, he answered.

"Hello? Ramon, *nasaan ka na ba? Nakatulog na ako, e wala ka pa dito* (Ramon, where are you? I've fallen asleep waiting for you and you're still not here)," Aling Stella asked.

"*Andito na ako sa* balcony *ng* hotel, *bumaba ka at salubungin mo ako* (I'm already here at the balcony of the hotel. Come down and meet me)," Mang Ramon told his wife.

"*Sus, kaarte ng matandang ito, akala mo e mga bata*

*pa tayo* (You're so finicky, we are not young anymore)," Aling Stella snapped back.

She went down anyway.

Upon reaching the lobby, she glanced around to look for her husband. But he was nowhere in sight.

She called him up again.

"*San ka ba? Di kita makita* (Where are you? I can't find you)," she said, already getting annoyed.

"*Andito ako sa* balcony *sabi, ulyanin ka na ata e* (I told you I'm here on the balcony. You're getting senile)," he teased.

She checked the balcony but there was no one there! Ten minutes passed and she still couldn't find her husband.

Her cellphone rang. It was Mang Ramon and he told her:

"*Sige, wag nating patayin ang cellphone natin, habang sabay tayong bumabalik sa suite natin* (Okay, let's not turn off our cellphones while we both head back to our hotel suite)," he instructed her.

By the time Aling Stella reached their room she expected her husband to be waiting for her. But still, Mang Ramon was nowhere to be found.

"*Ano ka ba naman, Ramon, napapagod na ako sayo. Nasan ka na ba talaga* (What's wrong with you? I'm getting really tired with your antics. Where are you, really?" she scolded him on the phone.

"*Tandaan mo Stella, mahal na mahal kita. Magkikita rin tayo* (Remember Stella, I love you very much. We will eventually see each other.)

After he uttered these words to Aling Stella, Mang Ramon's phone went dead.

When Aling Stella entered their room, she saw a small velvet box on top of their bed.

She opened it and found the necklace.

The card on it read: Happy Anniversary, Stella.

My friend doesn't remember the details anymore but that same night, her dad, upon leaving the hospital, met an accident and died on his way back to his wife.

During the wake of Mang Ramon. Aling Stella kept telling her children:

"*Binalikan nya ako, binalikan ako ng papa niyo, para ibigay ang sorpresa niya sa akin* (He came back. Your father came back to give me my surprise)."

After hearing the story, all of us in the group became teary-eyed, but I was the one most affected and touched and wished to myself that I would be able to find someone like Mang Ramon.

Someone whose love for his wife transcended even death.

# FORESHADOWING

By Jherry L. Barrinuevo

**Accidents can happen to anyone. They can strike anytime. Some escape, some don't. These are events we don't want to happen but can't prevent.**

Some say the only way to escape accidents, besides being safety conscious, is by being sensitive to warnings from the unknown world. Some people call this foreshadowing.

Henry had a taste of this.

It was back in 1996.

Henry's officemates decided to troop to one of the remote towns in Quezon to attend the wake of the parent of a co-worker.

It was a long drive from Manila to Quezon. The entourage left Manila at around 11 am. A lot of them were tired and were dozing off during the trip, which up until then had been uneventful.

As the vehicle rounded the bend in a place called the Bondoc Peninsula, Henry spotted something wiggling on the road.

"What is that?!" he asked to no one in particular.

Those of his officemates who were awake idly turned to look in the direction he indicated, thinking it was just a carabao peeing or goats slapping their tails to drive away the flies that buzzed around them.

"It looks like a horse's tail wriggling," said Henry. "But where's the horse?"

It was certainly a weird sight-that bushy tail wriggling in midair. It even seemed to sparkle in the midday sun.

The driver slowed down to check whether someone was wriggling the tail or whether there were tall grasses that concealed the rest of the horse from view from the highway.

They couldn't find any.

"*Gutom lang yan* (That's just the effect of hunger)," one of them said.

"*Oo nga noh, gutom na nga ako eh* (You're probably right. I am hungry right now)," another agreed.

So they decided to look for a restaurant by the wayside where they could stop and eat.

Henry tried to forget what he saw, fully believing it was just a combination of heat and hunger that had him seeing things.

"I tried not to mind it, even though I felt strangely disturbed by the incident," he recalled.

They finally arrived at ther house of their officemate in Unisan, Quezon at around 4 P.M., and had a short rest. At around 5:30 they went to the wake.

After hearing mass at the wake, Henry and his officemates had a hearty dinner before preparing for the lengthy trip back to Manila.

Although their host invited them to stay overnight, the group refused saying they had things to take care of. Some of them had important appointments the following day.

"By 8:30 P.M., we were ready to go. After saying our farewells and paying our last respects to the family of our officemate, we set off," said Henry.

By this time, Henry had forgotten all about the apparition he saw earlier. He was too tired and eager to get back to Manila. He needed an early start the next day as there was a lot of paper work he had to accomplish.

"I was so tired that I switched places with another officemate so I could stay at the back seat and get some rest. My friend took my place beside the driver. We were all eager to go back to Manila and at least have a couple of hours of rest before we go back to our daily routines," he said.

It was again a very long drive but by this time it was a long drive in the dark. The only illumination on the road came from the headlights of our car and the faint light of the moon.

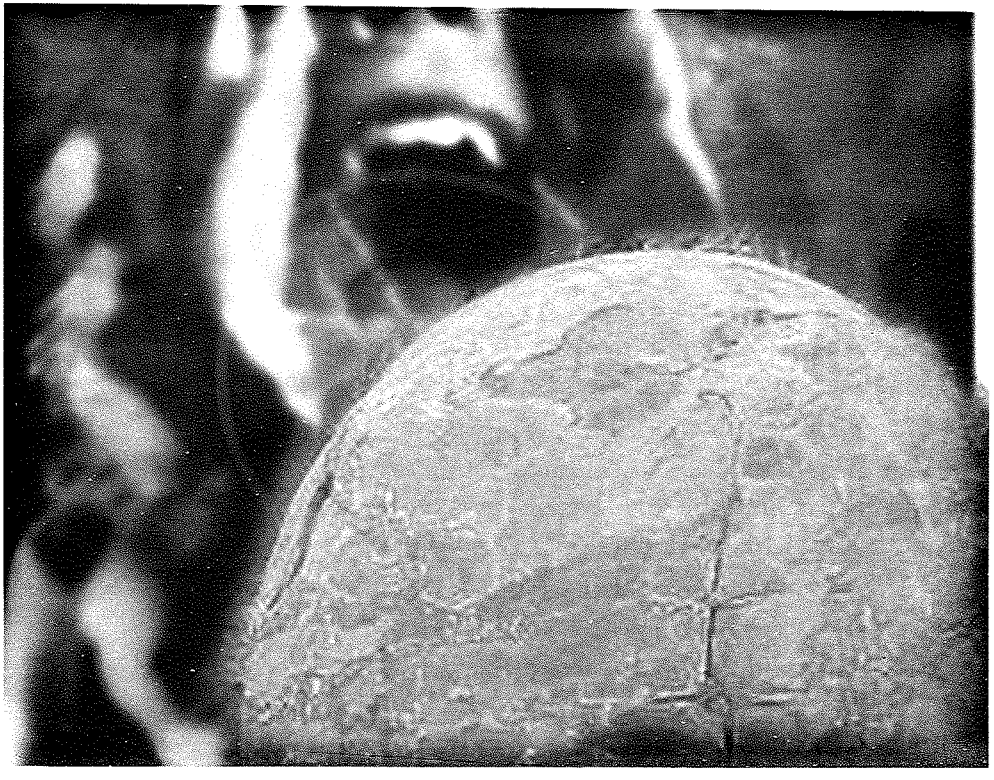
There were no lampposts to guide us on our trip so we had to travel carefully.

"The road we were traveling on had a deep ravine on the right and the slightest wrong turn would lead to certain death," he said.

As they reached the spot where Henry saw the horse's tail earlier, he told the driver to slow down so he could get a good look at the place again.

Suddenly Henry saw a huge boulder looming up straight ahead.

"I shouted in panic when our driver showed no signs of slowing down. He was headed straight for the boulder and was about to smash into it. I realized that he couldn't see the



huge boulder in front of him."

He yelled for the driver to swerve to the left. In reflex the driver did as he was told, swerving violently to the left, just as a sharp hairpin curve came up on the road. The vehicle missed slamming onto the railings of the road by several inches.

It was a good thing the vehicle had slowed down or the railings wouldn't have been able to stop its momentum and it would have shot out into the ravine.

It would have been certain death for them!

"Whew! That was a close call! How'd you know there was a hairpin curve in that spot?" the driver asked.

"I didn't! I saw a huge boulder on the right side and I thought you were going to smash into it, so I shouted for you to turn left!" Jessie explained, still breathless from the frightening experience.

"I wondered why I did not notice that curve on our way to the wake that afternoon, I was pretty sure I did not doze off along the way," Henry recalled. "I looked back to check the boulder but it was gone!"

The following week he told his co-worker from Quezon what he saw and experienced.

"Actually there have been many accidents in that area. Vehicles had already fallen off the ravine because it's dark and unlit, and the drivers don't usually know the road that well," said his officemate.

If not for the horse's tail he wouldn't have asked the driver to slow down. And were it not for the imaginary boulder, he wouldn't have warned the driver to swerve to the left.

Could someone from the other side have been warning him? Jessie couldn't tell for sure.

He was just so thankful he had those visions, otherwise, they could have suffered the same fate as those unfortunate travelers.

# INCENSE

**By Anthony Roy C. Montero**

I have always been interested in the paranormal. I'm one of those who are sensitive to other sentient beings around us. Unlike others who shy away from their ability to "sense", I have done my best to learn what I could do about my gift.

One of the things I learned was that elementals are friendly and should be treated with great respect; so are ghosts and other unseen entities. If you respect them, they will respect you back.

I learned this myself one day.

The day after I learned how to close portals, I prepared what I would be needing for the ritual and waited for the perfect time.

I had to do this soon because my mom had a sudden allergy attack for reasons unknown. I had a feeling it was caused by an entity my mom claimed she saw. An entity who must've slipped through an open portal.

Because of this, I was even more eager to seal the portals with my energy.

That day, my mom, together with our helper, went to see the doctor and the only ones that were left in the house were my sister, the other helper Ate Alma, and I.

My sister was preparing herself to go to her best friend's flat and I was preparing myself for something else—the ritual.

By the time my sister left, I was prepared.

I immediately lit a white candle in the center of the house and sprinkled rock salt in all the corners and rooms of the house while chanting a Latin prayer.

This was supposed to seal the portals I unconsciously opened several years ago.

I sprinkled salt outside the main door, inside, the dining room, kitchen, living room, stairs, my mom's room, and mine.

After the ritual, I turned on all the lights and left all the bedroom doors open.

There, I was done. I decided to rest from the exhausting activity. For a while I sat at the dining table with Ate Alma. I was sweating profusely by this time, and I could feel the energy flowing through me. Everything was very bright and very calm.

I noticed the dog playing with my mom's old shoe. Since it was old, my mom allows him to play with it.

After a few minutes, I decided to check on my room and see what was going on in there.

When I got up the stairs, I was surprised to find out that my room's door was almost closed. I said to myself this couldn't have happened for no one entered the room. Neither could it have been the wind because my windows are always closed and the electric fan wasn't turned on at the time.

I knew that there was a presence at my door but I

shrugged the feeling aside and went downstairs, ate my in-between meal and prepared myself for mass.

I went to mass alone.

I prayed for a lot of things and thanked God for a lot of blessings.

Shortly after returning home, I received a visit from J.R. (my psychic friend) along with Ramon, Dennis, and Joseph. These people are all psychically sensitive and everyone has his own forte.

At home, my mom asked me to light the incense but there was a thing that puzzled me.

I was on my way upstairs to light the candle. As I reached the landing, I noticed my mom's old shoe, the one the dog had been playing with, set neatly on the shoerack standing against the wall.

*Parang inayos* (Like it was arranged), I told myself.

I went back down and asked the helper and my mom if any one of them had been upstairs to put away the shoe.

Neither of them admitted doing it.

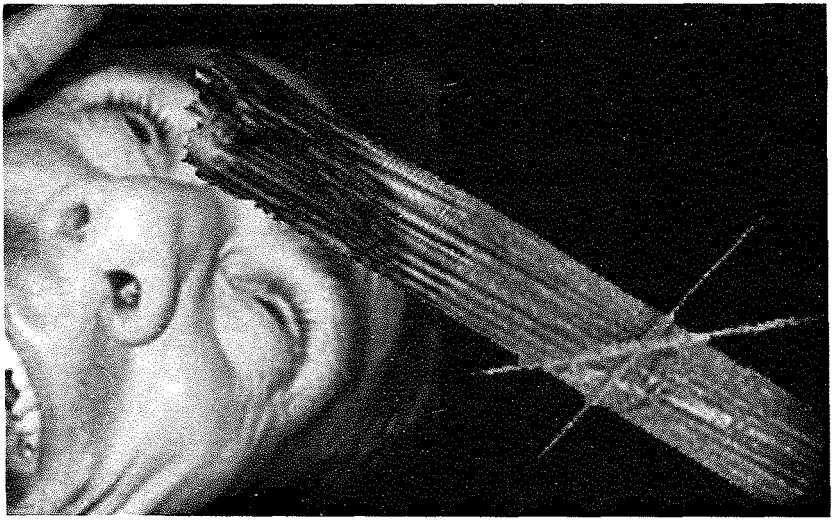
Funny, I thought, because if it was the dog who placed it there, it shouldn't have been neatly placed.

I went back to my room and grabbed my incense and lit some of them downstairs. After lighting some incense, I returned to my room and rearranged my stones in an old box and stored my incense where they were originally placed.

That night, I couldn't sleep.

I tried to go to bed early because I was tired from the earlier ritual. So after watching a little TV I went up to bed. But after settling in bed, I found myself wide awake.

So, I prayed.



Suddenly, on my left, I heard a crackling sound, like someone was noisily rubbing a plastic bag that I must have left on my bookshelf.

Trying not to panic, I did not turn my head, but said "Hi!" to whoever was making the noise.

I finished my prayers. Surprisingly, I fell asleep instantly after that.

The next morning, I woke up and remembered what happened the previous night about the plastic.

I immediately checked the bookshelf on my left. There was no plastic bag there!

There was nothing on my bookshelf except for one scented incense. One scented incense was separated from the group of incense neatly placed on my shelf.

I figured that it was one of the dwarves or the guardians in my room telling me something. He/she might have wanted me to light that scented incense for whatever reason.

# INCUBUS

By Ace S. Tolentino

**It has been a year since Lucette decided to renew her practice in a small, peaceful town in Pangasinan.**

Lucette is a pediatrician.

Even while she was in college, she liked the idea of establishing a medical practice in the province. For one thing, there wouldn't be any traffic.

For another, there wouldn't be much competition, and the lifestyle would be more laidback.

That's why immediately after passing the medical board, she set up her clinic in a renovated two-story house in Pangasinan, near the house of her mother's aunt.

It was an old Spanish house, Castilian in design and had five spacious bedrooms.

Lucette bought it with her savings—although her parents chipped in a little.

The house was rumored to once belong to Don Alonzo Balmaceda, one of the town's most powerful men during the Spanish era.

There was a tragic story attached to the house. According to legend, Don Alonzo's son committed suicide in it and that his ghost still haunted the place.

So far though, Lucette had yet to encounter him.

The young doctor loved the idyllic vista of the town. Although she terribly missed her life in Manila — bar-hopping and going out on never-ending gimmicks with friends — Lucette decided she would stay for the sake of the sick kids of the town.

At first, her parents disagreed with her plan. They wanted her to build a career in Manila, where opportunities for a doctor are greater. Her parents were leaving for Canada soon and they hoped Lucette would eventually settle there as well.

But after she suffered a broken heart—her longtime boyfriend married a girl chosen by his parents—Lucette decided that Manila held too many memories and she wanted a clean start.

After her parents left for Canada, there was nothing to keep her in the city — her brothers had families of their own — so she decided to go ahead and move to the province.

The first four months of her stay were uneventful. She soon established a routine, opening her clinic at around 8 a.m. and closing at 5 p.m.

Although the compensation was not that great compared to what her friends working in prestigious hospitals were getting, the thought of saving a poor child's life more than made up for any monetary lack.

Her life has been smooth sailing for several months when a bizarre experience broke the monotony of her life.

For several days, Lucette observed that whenever the

clock struck four in the afternoon, the wood-parquet floor in the left corner of her office beside the windows would squeak as if someone was stepping on it. This would be followed by several knocks on the floor.

One night, she was invited to go out by some of her staff and friends. Since the next day was a Sunday, and the clinic would open at 12 noon, Lucette agreed to make it a night on the town. She wasn't worried about getting home since her friends had transportation.

By the time Lucette got home that night, or rather, that morning, it was already 4 A.M.. Without changing her clothes, she went to bed and sank into oblivion.

When she woke up, at around 11 A.M., she was disturbed to find her blouse unbuttoned, and her bra unhooked. She barely remembered what happened last night. Her body was numb. But she was pretty sure she went to bed fully clothed.

But since her memory was hazy, she wasn't a hundred percent sure.

She was so tired, she could barely haul herself out of bed and into the shower.

That does it, no more all-nighters for me, she thought, as she curled up in bed feeling her hangover.

Mass, usually a Sunday morning ritual with her, was cancelled. The clinic would have to remain closed today too.

Her body felt so heavy and it refused to move and she had a headache to boot. She decided to stay in her room and rest for the whole afternoon.

That afternoon, as she lay in bed, she experienced what at first she thought to be a dream, but later on realized was actually happening.

While she was drowsing, she felt something touching her, she opened her eyes sleepily and saw a man in his late twenties, clad in a barong, seated beside her on the bed. Leaning over, he started touching her face, stroking her hair, and kissing her lips.

She could feel the tightness of his embrace. She couldn't see his eyes because his hair was hiding them, but she did notice the man was clean-shaven and was square-jawed. She tried to move her hands, but they were pinned to her body, which was immobile at the moment.

She woke up with a start, thinking she was having a dream, but at the edge of her bed, she caught a glimpse of a man's silhouette. But when she turned to take a closer look, the shadow was gone. She got up to close her windows. The night breeze blowing inside her room made her body shiver.

That night, Lucitte developed a fever that lasted for three days. She went in and out of a stupor. The funny thing was, whenever she fell asleep, she would have the same dream about the unknown man.

On the third day, she decided to call her great-aunt and ask her to come to her house. She told her great-aunt about the man who had been visiting her in her dreams for the past three nights.

Her great-aunt decided to call a faith healer to find out if Lucette's dream had anything to do with her malady.

As a doctor, Lucette didn't believe in faith healing. But after three days in a fever and experiencing strange dreams, she was willing to try anything.

So the faith healer came and did her *tawas* or ritual.

According to the faith healer, Lucette's clinic is a source of negative vibrations because Alfredo, the only son of Don

Alonzo Balmaceda, committed suicide there.

The cause of suicide has remained a mystery to the townsfolk. According to the old timers, Alfredo fell in love with the daughter of one of Don Alonzo's tenant-farmers.

Don Alonzo was aghast when he learned that his only heir had fallen for Elena, a farmer's daughter.

The Don tried to bribe the family of the girl with a piece of land in a faraway barangay if they promised to move away and bring Elena with them.

The girl's father conceded.

Forced by her father, the girl told no one, not even Alfredo, about the plan.

With Elena gone, Don Alonzo immediately arranged for Alfredo to be engaged to a merchant's daughter.

But Alfredo refused to recognize the engagement. Instead he began drinking excessively.

Eventually, he decided to end his life by hanging himself in his room. His love turned into hatred when Elena left without saying goodbye.

The faith healer said the room where Lucette set up her clinic was the room of Alfredo.

When Lucette related the story of the squeaking parquet floor in the corner of her clinic, the faith healer suggested they peel back the wood.

Sure enough, there was something underneath the floorboards: an antique jewelry box.

When they opened the jewelry box, Lucette fell in a dead faint—inside the box was a very old, very faded picture of Elena. She looked just like Lucette!

# JOYRIDE

By Jherry L. Barrinuevo

**Satan was not the only angel God kicked out of heaven for his rebellion.** Legions of fallen angels went with him when he fell to earth. All of them cursed to spend eternity in hell...never to return to heaven.

But for now, they roam the earth like hungry lions waiting for someone to devour. Many of us can't see them, but some, those who are gifted or cursed, can.

One of them is Anthony.

Anthony not only "sees" and "feels" ghosts, he can even talk to them. His so-called third eye was opened when he joined a bunch of clairvoyants in a drive to the unknown. This is his story:

Anthony is a member of an organization in Sto. Domingo in Quezon Avenue. He is also a teacher at one of the famous Catholic schools in Quezon City.

He's had numerous experiences with ghosts and the supernatural. He started by feeling their presence and eventually he was able to see them. He said that an incident with his

friends who are also clairvoyants opened his third eye.

This happened when he went to the house of Tony, one of his friends who is also a member of the organization in Sto. Domingo. Tony lives in New Manila (corner of Gilmore and 10th Street), near the old warehouse of Crispa. But the odd thing was that even though his friend owns a big old mansion in the area, his family doesn't live in it.

"They do not use the big old mansion, they just use the smaller space outside the spooky house. I don't know why they refuse to live in the big house. Neither does he, apparently," Anthony narrated.

Anthony said they would bring Tony home after meetings or activities, especially when it the activities end late. They would all pile up in another friend's car and drive all the way to Gilmore from Quezon Ave. (where they held their meetings) to drop him off.

Within this group there are three, two female members and the owner of the car, who have the ability to sense the supernatural.

One time, as they were about to drop Tony off, the girls, who could sense something was amiss, didn't want to alight from the car.

"Excuse me, *bababa na ako* (I'm getting off here)," said Tony, who was squashed in the middle of the girls.

"Shhh....don't make too much noise. We might disturb them," Marita, one of the girls, said in an undertone.

"What? Who?" the others asked curiously, for they could see no one in the dark yard.

The whole area was cloaked in darkness. The only feeble light came from a lamp post two houses down the block.

"Can you not see them?" Anna whispered urgently.

"Ghosts! They're everywhere!"

"Who?" Anthony asked again, goosebumps breaking out all over his body.

"There's one on Patrick (the driver)'s left over by the fence, another on your right on the other side of the road...and there are several just waiting inside the gate! Oh no, they're all slipping through. They're moving towards us!" they shrieked.

"Go, go, go!" they all shouted at Patrick.

Patrick stepped on the gas and fled the scene.

When they had reached a safe distance, Patrick stopped the car. Everyone started laughing over how childishly they behaved.

"What was that all about Tony?" they asked.

"Beats me," he shrugged.

After a while, they started ribbing each other over who was scared the most. Soon enough, the ribbing turned into dares.

"Let's go back and see if our 'friends' are still there," Patrick dared his friends.

"*Sige ba* (Sure)," said Anthony, not wanting to admit he still had the shivers.

Although they were scared silly, they decided to drive around just to get some thrill. They drove from Balete Drive to Doña Juana Rodriguez, to Gilmore, and all the other side streets, all the way to Lantana.

As they were cruising past these notoriously haunted areas, Anthony began noticing things—shadows that lurked in the dark corners of the streets, ghostly images that shimmered and vanished into thin air when he turned to look directly at them.

"I started seeing ghosts and other elementals in the area. I could not see the spirits physically, but I could sense them, much like (the comicbook hero) Daredevil. I could almost sense how they look, their 'expression' and everything," Anthony related.

Anthony said he could see spirits peering through the windows of some of the old houses, or beside the road, under some of the big trees lining the streets.

But it was in Lantana (the road going to the Mowelfund complex) where they had the most chilling experience.

"We saw a lot of spirits on the road. Somehow we knew they were not ghosts but elementals (*kapres*, dwarfs, etc.) They all gathered towards the middle of the road, as if to block us," Anthony recalled.

Patrick slowed down the car, but this was a mistake. As soon as the car reached the junction where the elementals had gathered, it stopped!

Patrick tried to step on the gas pedal, but the car wouldn't budge! It was stuck in the middle of the road.

"They're coming for us!" Anna screamed.

Sure enough, the elementals began shuffling towards the car, surrounding it. Everyone screamed as the car began to rock side to side.

The spirits were shaking the car!

Patrick tried to steer the car away, but he couldn't control the wheel.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHH!!!" Anna vented a blood curling scream.

Turning to look, the others nearly fainted.

Inches from Anna's face, separated only by the glass window, was the distorted face of an elemental, its red eyes

blazing and its forked tongue licking at the glass.

"Aaauuuggghhh," Anna screamed once more before falling into a dead faint.

As the others tried to revive her, Patrick tried to turn the car around to go back where they came.

"But even though we were able to turn down the side streets, we would always somehow find ourselves back where we started," Anthony recounted.

The group decided to pray hard while Patrick stepped on the gas and rammed right through the phalanx of ghosts and elementals to escape.

"We knew it was a risky move to go right through them, but we'd already tried everything and we couldn't get away from that spot," said Anthony.

The ploy worked as they managed to break free of the ghostly stranglehold and sped out of the area.

By then it was nearly morning. They'd been stuck in Lantana for three hours!

When she came about, Anna related that she felt something squeezing her tighter and tighter, like a vise. Then she felt a strange sensation, "like she was being sucked out of her body." Then she lost consciousness.

Patrick said he felt like someone else was holding the steering wheel. Anthony described what he saw and all of them said they saw the same thing!

After dropping Tony off (it was now daylight and safe to go back to his house), they all went home and swore never to go joyriding in New Manila again!

From then on Anthony could not only feel, but also see ghosts—the fallen angels of Satan.

# PORTAL

By Anthony Roy C. Montero

**Being a follower of the paranormal, I've always believed that things happen in life for a reason.** Reasons we may never get to figure out ourselves until we encounter a supernatural being from the other side.

It was an ordinary Saturday night. I was having dinner at our house.

Being sensitive to other "beings" I somehow knew our house was being guarded by elementals and other unseen creatures, but of course I had no proof of this.

That is, until that night.

I have had several encounters and experiences with the supernatural since I was young because of my third eye, so I wasn't really bothered.

But I never expected my mother to have an encounter herself!

After dinner, at around 8 P.M., I went straight up to my room to watch TV and chill while my sister and my mom stayed downstairs.

But before entering my room, I had to fix the light bulb in the landing area upstairs because the light had been fluctuating early on.

After channel surfing for a while and getting tired of the boring TV programs, I decided to just finish the book I started reading.

It was a book about ghost stories and I was so engrossed I didn't move a muscle, not one bit as I finished reading the book.

Despite this, I remained conscious of what was happening around me.

Sometime later, I heard the door of my mom's room close. I figured it was my sister who had gone up because I saw her preparing for bed earlier (brushing her teeth, changing into her nigh clothes, etc.)

Shortly after, my door opened and my mom peeped in to see what I was doing.

I asked her what was wrong? And she said "nothing."

Thinking everything was fine, I went back to my reading and eventually was able to finish the book.

But by this time, I wasn't very sleepy so I decided to have a chat with my friend over the phone about some paranormal stuff.

After a while, I grew tired and went to sleep.

The next morning, I was preparing brunch while my mom sat comfortably in the dining table texting some friend.

Then she asked me "Roy, did you think of me last night?"

I said "Huh? What do you mean think of you?"

According to her, she was sleeping and she was very

much aware that her eyes were closed when she saw me standing beside her bed calling her "Mama".

Thinking that I was in need of something, she decided to get up from bed and check on me.

That's why she peeked inside my room.

I knew right then and there that it was a **doppelganger**.

One can tell when there are ghosts and spirits around through electricity.

I remembered that the light bulb kept fluctuating during the night. This showed that there was a spirit present.

It was probably this spirit who imitated me. He probably managed to take some of my essence when I touched the bulb as I was fixing it.

My friend J.R. who also has a gift, said our house has portals, entrances to other realms where spirits pass back and forth.

He thinks I opened one of these portals accidentally when I was testing my gift. He then taught me how to close them all, which eventually I did.

I'm lucky that the spirit who imitated me wasn't malevolent and didn't cause further damage or scare the other members who dwelt in the house.

I know the elementals and the guardians of our house talked to him and made him go back to where he belonged.

# ROOM 301

By Joel P. Salud

**The story happened roughly 20 years ago in a small newly built, three-storey hospital.**

A rather prominent family in the area owns the hospital, which has through the years become a rather well-known medical institution.

However, during its early years in operation, it was witness to a ghost story like no one has ever heard...

One midnight, Tony and Marie Grace Sorillo rushed their eight-year-old daughter, Maritoni, to St. Francis of Assisi Hospital (not the real name of the institution) after the little girl complained that she couldn't breathe.

The doctors initially diagnosed her with bronchitis, but wanted to conduct further tests to make sure, so they had Maritoni confined.

At 2:00 o'clock in the morning, the small emergency room operated only with a "skeleton crew" of three nurses and a young resident doctor.

Unfortunately, every room – 21 in all three floors – was

occupied, mostly by children suffering from asthma, bronchitis, primary complex, and various upper lung diseases. The summer was hotter than usual and children were falling ill left and right.

Roger, who joined the nursing staff and emergency room graveyard shift only for the past two nights, brought Maritoni and her parents to the counter to see if there were rooms still available.

There were none available, and the queue of patients on the waiting list was just getting longer by the hour. Tony and Marie Grace begged Roger to find Maritoni a space in the hospital where she could rest.

Since the emergency room was packed to the brim that night, Roger said he would bring them to a vacant room as long as they wouldn't tell anyone about it.

The desperate couple agreed, so they took the elevator to the third floor and brought Maritoni to a locked room – Room 301.

Roger said the room has been locked for the past year but no one could explain to him why this was so.

When they entered, the couple saw that the room was clean and the sheets were all new, meaning someone had been making sure the room was well-maintained, despite being locked for several years.

Marie Grace asked Roger if they could stay there until they could get a room for their daughter. Having agreed, Roger and Tony went down to the counter and booked a reservation for Maritoni.

Maritoni slept soundly that early morning, but her mother did not.

Tired, hungry, and distraught over her daughter's con-

dition, Marie Grace went out to a nearby *sari-sari* store to buy bread and coffee.

She left Maritoni in the room alone, but figured that she would be back within five to 10 minutes. Seeing that Tony was already next in line, she told her husband to run to the room as soon as he gets the reservation while she bought something for them to eat.

Since Room 301 was located on the far side of the left wing, and that it was considered off limits, the mother thought their daughter would not be bothered by anyone.

Maritoni woke up a few seconds after her mother left because of a knock on the door.

A small girl about her age opened the door and went inside. She was wearing a dress which looked pale pink in the garish hospital light. Her skin was as white as an alabaster. She was carrying a small rag doll and she was smiling.

Maritoni smiled back as the girl sat beside her on the bed. She could see that the girl had happy eyes.

"Hi"

"Hi! My name is Maritoni."

"I'm Julie. Why are you here?"

"The doctor said I'm sick of bronch... bron..."

They both giggled because Maritoni couldn't pronounce the word.

"You wanna know a secret?" the girl whispered conspirationally, smiling.

"What?" asked Maritoni.

"This used to be my room!"

"Really? Are you sick too?" asked Maritoni as she placed her palm on the little girl's forehead.

"No. It's my birthday today," the girl said while she placed the doll lightly on Maritoni's chest.

"Happy Birthday! I don't have a gift for you..."

"But I have one for you..." the girl said. "When your Mama arrives, tell her to bring you home. Ask the doctor to look at you again. You're okay now."

The girl leaned over and kissed Maritoni on the cheeks and then she then left without looking back.

After Julie left, Maritoni realized that she forgot her doll.

When Marie Grace and Tony came back to Room 301, they found Maritoni on the floor playing with the rag doll.

"Hey, what are you doing up and about?" cried her mother who rushed to her daughter's side and felt her forehead.

"You look like you're okay." Tony took Maritoni's temperature, and miraculously, her fever was gone.

"Where did you get this doll? Did someone come in here?" her mom asked, when she saw Maritoni clutching the rag doll to her chest.

"Yes, Mama – Julie. She's this nice little girl who came

and visited me while you and Papa were out. She said this used to be her room. It's her birthday today. I told her I didn't have a gift for her but she said it's okay and then she gave me this," Maritoni held out the doll.

"When was this?"

"Just before you came in...Oh and she told me to tell you that you can take me home. I'm okay now."

The couple looked at each other.

"Do you think there are other kids on this floor?" Marie Grace asked.

"Let me check," her husband answered.

Curious to get to the bottom of the incident, Tony went in search of Roger, the orderly who led them to Room 301. He found him chatting with other emergency room nurses.

Tony asked, "Are there other children on the third floor?"

At this, Roger suddenly turned pale and cried, "Oh my God, we have to get your kid out of that room now!"

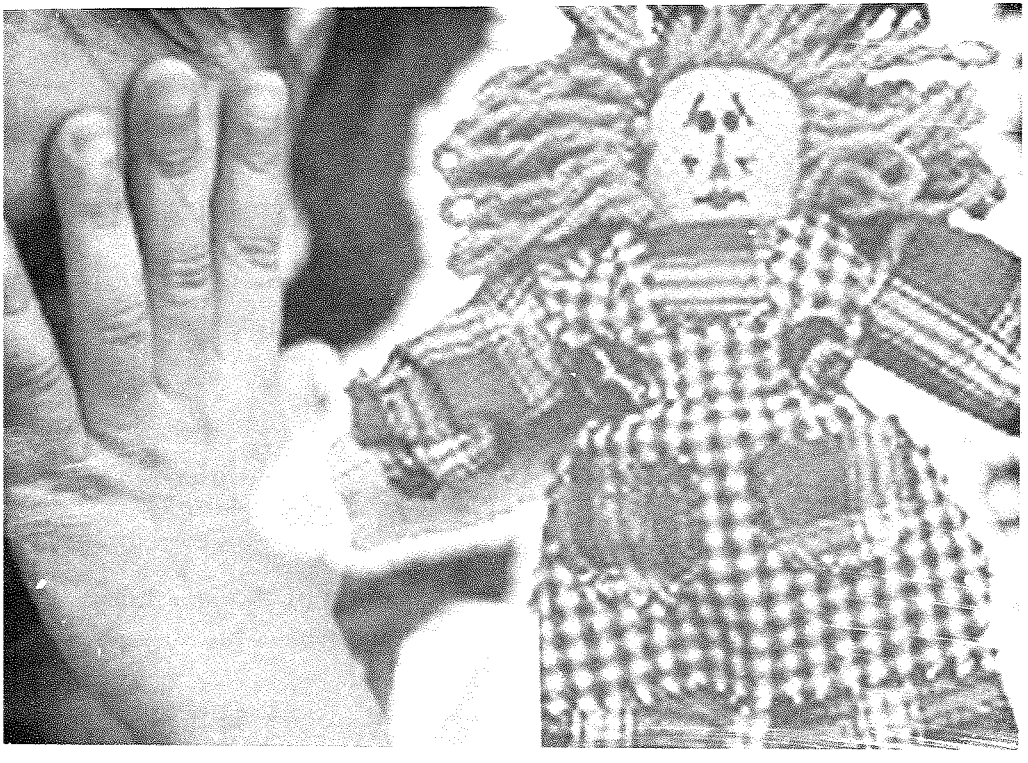
"Why? What's the matter?" Tony asked, starting to get worried.

"I've just been told by the other nurses that the room is haunted by a little girl who was killed by her kidnappers during her birthday. She was stabbed to death 26 times and the blood from her wounds had turned her white dress pink!"

According to the nurses, the property on which the hospital stands was where she was found dead.

"Today is her birthday, March 1," said Roger.

"Oh my God, that explains the visit," Tony said, uttering a short prayer that nothing bad had happened to his daughter.



"One last thing," said Roger. "The little girl was found clutching a rag doll in her hands when she was found."

Hearing this, Tony immediately rushed to Room 301, bundled up his daughter, grabbed his wife's hand and fled the hospital, leaving the rag doll behind.

That was more than a dozen years ago. Maritoni is now married and has two lovely children. She hasn't had bronchitis since.

The rag doll was last seen by an orderly being taken out by another little girl who was accidentally confined in Room 301. The haunting stopped after that.

# SCHOOL OF SPOOKS

By Jherry L. Barrinuevo

**Here's one for the school books.**

Schools and churches are by far some of the spookiest places in the country. And one of the spookiest is an all-girls school somewhere in Quezon City.

This exclusive institution is one of the oldest in the area. Its buildings are old, and its tomb-like silence when one enters its doors evokes visions of cathedrals—or cemeteries.

Like many old schools, it has had its share of urban legends. But this story, related to me by a friend who teaches elementary classes at the school, is guaranteed to be true.

According to my friend Jonathan, the school has many resident ghosts.

One of them, a certain spirit named Kit who haunts the ladies' dorm was already written about in one of the earlier books of *True Philippine Ghost Stories*. He said several of his co-teachers have had their own encounters with her.

He also said one of the most haunted rooms in the school is the kindergarten classroom on the ground floor. At

first he was skeptical about this.

But one day, he heard a commotion in front of the old, unused comfort room inside the kinder classroom on the ground floor. It was recess and several pupils were gathered around the door, which had been locked for several years now.

When my friend asked what the commotion was about, many of them spoke up:

"Teacher we heard someone crying inside the CR," they said in unison.

"What? Who could be inside? That room has been locked for years," said a fellow teacher who was also passing by.

Thinking that a pupil may have accidentally opened the door and got trapped inside, the teachers immediately called the janitor to jimmy the lock open.

It took a while for the janitor to open the door because it had a rusty lock. All this time the crying inside seemed to grow louder and louder with each passing minute.

The minute the janitor opened the door, the crying stopped. When he pushed the door open and turned on the light, they found no one inside the bathroom!

Everybody shrieked—including the teachers—and fled the classroom. They never used that classroom again.

* * *

Jonathan has had his share of spine chilling experiences in that school.

"One of my own weirdest encounters was during the World Youth Day celebrations here in Manila in 1995," he recalled.

The school was being used as one of the halfway houses for some of the delegates. My friend was tasked to take on the

night watch.

He took up his station at the main entrance lobby, together with a high school teacher, a college professor, and a security guard.

Joining the watch was his best friend, Leo, who taught at another school. Members of several student organizations (not from the school) likewise volunteered to patrol the school grounds for added security.

"At around midnight, the student patrol went to our station to ask if there were still some delegates out in the compound. We double checked all the rooms and our ledgers to see if there were delegates still unaccounted for," Jonathan related.

A quick check showed that everyone was sound asleep inside their rooms in the building.

The students said the reason they asked was because they heard some whispers and someone calling to them as they passed by the grotto.

"We were shocked. We told them the place they were talking about is a burial ground for some of the sisters and some fetuses used in the college laboratory. After we told them that, they avoided the area."

Later, at around 2 am, the teachers decided to call it a night after ascertaining that the guards would continue the watch.

The four decided to sleep at the mini-hotel (lab of HRM students). But there were only two beds in the "suite." The two teachers told Jonathan and Leo they could take the beds and they will just sleep on the sofa outside the bedroom.

Tired and sleepy, Jonathan decided to turn off all the lights except for a lampshade in a corner of the room, before

settling down to sleep.

Hardly had they laid down when they heard a soft click and the room was blanketed in darkness.

Being the nearest to the switch, Leo turned on the light to check what happened. Inspecting the lamp, he saw that the cord had been unplugged.

"Who could have done this? Didn't you just plug it in a minute ago," Leo wondered aloud.

"Maybe it was loose," Jonathan shrugged

So Leo plugged it in again and turned off the main light.

Right after he went back to bed, they heard another 'click' again and the lamp turned off again.

"*Ano ba yan? Nakakaasar na ha* (What is this? This is getting irritating)," Leo said. "There must be a mouse running in the room that keeps hitting the plug and shaking it loose."

Jonathan remembered that the school kept the mini-hotel spotlessly clean, but he kept quiet so as not to alarm Leo. Then he remembered stories about the ghost of an old nun who used to stay in the room before it was converted into a mini-hotel.

More than a little pissed at having to stand up again, Leo walked over to the lamp to check what was wrong this time. He found the plug in the same spot he found it earlier.

At this Leo freaked out. Jonathan had to confess what he knew.

"So what should we do? Stay up until daylight?" Leo asked.

"Let's just ask permission from her so she'll allow us to sleep in her room," Jonathan suggested.

So they did and spent a peaceful night thereafter.

Unknown to Leo, however, Jonathan woke up in the middle of the night to feel a weight pressing down on the corner of his bed.

"It felt as if there was someone sitting on the edge of the bed," he recalled.

Scared, because he knew that whoever was pressing down on the bed was not alive, he covered himself with a blanket and tightly shut his eyes until the "thing" went away. At one point it seemed like the "thing" was leaning over him.

Soundlessly praying the Our Father, Jonathan held his breath. After what seemed like an eternity, he sensed the being moving away.

Immediately after, he fell asleep. When he woke up, he checked the corner of his bed. Sure enough, there was an indentation in it, indicating that someone had "sat" there.

He decided never to sleep in the mini-hotel again.

# THE DRESS

**By Gianna Maniego**

**Elise had never been a firm believer in ghost stories.**

When it came to camp outs or sleepovers, friends would try their best to scare her by telling the creepiest tales.

But she never bit.

Now that she was working, she was an even bigger skeptic than before.

One day, she noticed their new next-door neighbor moving in. Being a friendly person, she greeted the old woman who was supervising the movers.

"Good morning *po. Kayo po ba ang titira sa tabi namin? Ako po si Elise* (Good morning, are you the one moving in beside us? My name is Elise)" she stuck out her hand in a welcoming gesture.

"*Kamusta ineng. Ako si* Mrs. Estanislao. *Nanay Celia na lang ang itawag mo sa akin. Oo, dito na kami titira ng dalawa kong apo. Nasa* States *ang mga magulang nila nagtatrabaho kaya ako ang nag-aalaga sa kanila* (How do you do? I'm Mrs. Estanislao, but you can call me Nanay Celia.

Yes, I'm moving in with my two grandchildren. Their parents are working in the United states so I'm taking care of them)," said the friendly old woman.

Nanay Celia invited Elise to come by after they had settled into the house and Elise agreed.

Two nights later, bringing a huge platter of spaghetti carbonara that her mom had cooked, Elise knocked on Nanay Celia's door.

"Hello *po, pinabibigay po ng* mommy *ko* (Hello, my mom asked me to give you this), " Elise smiled, indicating the platter.

"*Naku ineng salamat ha, nag-abala ka pa. Halika kuwentuhan mo ako* (Thanks, you shouldn't have bothered. Come in and chat)," Nanay Celia said.

Elise felt right at home with Nanay Celia. She was a kindly old woman who had lots of stories to tell.

In the next few days, they became close and sometimes Elise would babysit Nanay Celia's two grandchildren, Bingbong and Lilit. Bingbong was eight years old, and Lilit was a year younger.

One day, as they were having merienda, Bingbong blurted:

"*Lola, sana dito na lang tayo* forever, *para malapit lang tayo kay Ate Elise palagi* (Lola, can we live here forever so that we can stay close to Ate Elise all the time)."

"*Oo nga Lola, sana hindi na tayo habulin dito* (I agree Lola. I hope they don't follow us)," Lilit dittoed.

Elise glanced curiously at Nanay Celia, who seemed to avoid looking at her. Instead she diverted the kids' attention by shooing them into the living room to watch TV.

"*Pasensiya ka na, madaldal masyado minsan yang mga*

*yan* (My apologies, sometimes they talk too much)," she said as she cleared away the table.

"Okay *lang po yun. Bakit po, lagi po ba kayong palipat-lipat ng bahay* (That's okay. Have you been moving from place to place)?" Elise asked curiously.

"*Haynaku, mahabang kuwento* (It's a long story)," Nanay Celia answered, as she led Elise to the veranda.

According to Nanay Celia, weird experiences have dogged her and her grandchildren for the past two years—ever since her eldest granddaughter got murdered.

They were still living in Parañaque at the time. The house was practically new and her daughter Luisa and Luisa's husband Dante had bought it for a song. The two were working as nurses in the States and yearly, they would spend 11 months abroad, so they asked Nanay Celia to stay home and take care of the kids.

The place was ideal in that it was very near a school where both Bingbong and Lilit could study and it was just a street away from their paternal uncle Ernie and his family.

Their house was also very near a park where *yayas* would often bring their charges in the afternoon, and teenagers would often hang out at night.

Eighteen-year-old Tintin, the eldest, was the same age as Laarni, her cousin. Both of them studied in a university in Manila, so everyday, Tintin would walk to her uncle's house to hitch a ride with her cousin.

To make the trek shorter, Tintin would cut across the park and enter through the side gate of her uncle's property.

One day, Tintin didn't come home at her usual time. Nanay Celia got worried because rain or shine, Tintin would always be home before 6:00 p.m. to catch her favorite soap

opera on TV.

Nanay Celia called up Laarni's house and asked if Laarni had arrived home. Upon learning that Laarni wasn't there yet, her anxiety lessened a bit.

Maybe they were just caught in traffic, she thought.

But by 8:00 p.m. Tintin still hadn't arrived. Really worried now, she called up Laarni's house to check.

Laarni herself answered the phone.

"Hi, Lola, what's up? *Kamusta nga po pala si Tintin? Me sakit po ba siya* (How is Tintin, is she sick)?" Laarni asked gaily.

"*Bakit, hindi mo ba siya kasama?* (Why, isn't she with you)?" Nanay Celia asked, panic creeping into her voice.

"*Hindi po siya sumabay kaninang umaga. Akala ko po me sakit kaya nag absent. Wala pa po ba siya diyan?* (She didn't hitch with us this morning. I thought she was sick, that's why she was absent. Isn't she there yet)?" Laarni asked, worried herself now.

"*Wala! Kaninang 6:30 ng umaga pa siya umalis dito. Ang alam naming sumabay sa inyo pumasok. Naku! Nasaan na ba ang batang yan* (She's not here. She left this morning at 6:30. We thought she'd be hitching a ride with you as usual. Oh, where could that child have gone)?" said Nanay Celia.

Laarni promised to call some of their mutual friends to see whether Tintin was with them.

By 10 P.M. Nanay Celia was hysterical. Laarni called and said Tintin was not with their friends.

Ernie began going door to door, asking the neighbors if they'd seen Tintin. Some of them mentioned they'd seen her that morning cutting through the park.

A group was formed and they searched the park. Within

the hour, they discovered Tintin's broken body hidden under a pile of garbage at the far end of the park. She'd been raped and stabbed to death!

The whole neighborhood mourned the death of Tintin. Her parents rushed home from the States and tried to help with the funeral preparations, but it fell to Nanay Celia to arrange most of it.

A few nights after she was laid to rest, the day after Dante and Luisa flew back to the States, Nanay Celia decided to go to bed early.

"I was so tired, I immediately fell into an exhausted sleep. But then I had a strange dream—or so I thought."

At about 3:00 A.M. she heard a knock on the door. She got up to answer the door, and when she opened it, Tintin was standing in the doorway wearing the dress she was buried in.

Tintin said:

"Lola, I've come home. I knew you'd be worried. I'm home Lola".

Nanay Celia woke up in tears. She thought her dream was an offshoot of her grief. She still had to come to terms with her granddaughter's death.

The next morning, she was preparing breakfast for Lilit and Bingbong, who were only around 5 and 4 at the time.

Suddenly she heard a loud shriek and the two kids rushed out to her.

"*Lola, Lola, ang damit nasa cabinet* (the dress is in the cabinet)!" they both shouted.

"What dress?" she asked.

Bingbong explained that they were playing in their sister's room, and one of them opened the closet. When they saw what was hanging in the closet, they rushed out.

Not knowing what they were talking about, Nanay Celia went with them into the room. There, hanging in the closet, was the dress that her granddaughter had been buried in a few days before! The same dress Tintin was wearing in her dream!

Spooked by the incident, Nanay Celia had the house blessed. But the day after it was blessed, when she opened the closet, the dress was there again!

Nanay Celia said they decided to sell the house and transfer to another place. The house held too many sad memories and, it seemed, it was determined to constantly remind them of it.

But the same thing happened in the new place that they got, an apartment in Makati. After a few days of quiet, Nanay Celia opened the cabinet in Lilit's room to put away the clothes, and there, hanging in the closet was Tintin's burial dress!

They've transferred houses several times in the past two years, but the dress kept following them around.

At one point, they tried to burn it, shred it, donate it to the poor, have it blessed...but the day after, the dress would be back in its hanger.

They figured it was because Tintin's murder hadn't been resolved and her restless spirit was reminding them to seek justice for her.

But shortly before they moved to their current house, Ernie called and said one of the carpenters confessed to the murder.

He had been working on a house near Ernie's and had seen Tintin walk through the park everyday. On the day Tintin was killed, he was high on drugs and thought he could get away with raping Tintin, since she was always alone. But Tintin

fought back and he was forced to hit her on the head with a stone. He left her to bleed to death.

After hearing this, Nanay Celia offered a short prayer that Tintin's soul would be at peace.

Sure enough, so far, in their current house, the dress hadn't made an appearance yet.

At first Elise was skeptical about Nanay Celia's story. But the old woman showed her the pictures that they took of the funeral. There were several shots of Tintin in her coffin right before they closed it. She pointed out a smudge where the funeral parlor assistants stained Tintin's white dress near the collar. The morticians put too much foundation on her neck, so when they dressed her, there was a ring of makeup on the collar.

Then she showed Elise another picture of the same dress hanging in a closet. She pointed out the same makeup smudge on the collar!

Although she didn't want to believe it, Tintin's story disturbed Elise. She didn't know why.

She was still thinking of Tintin as she left Nanay Celia's house that night.

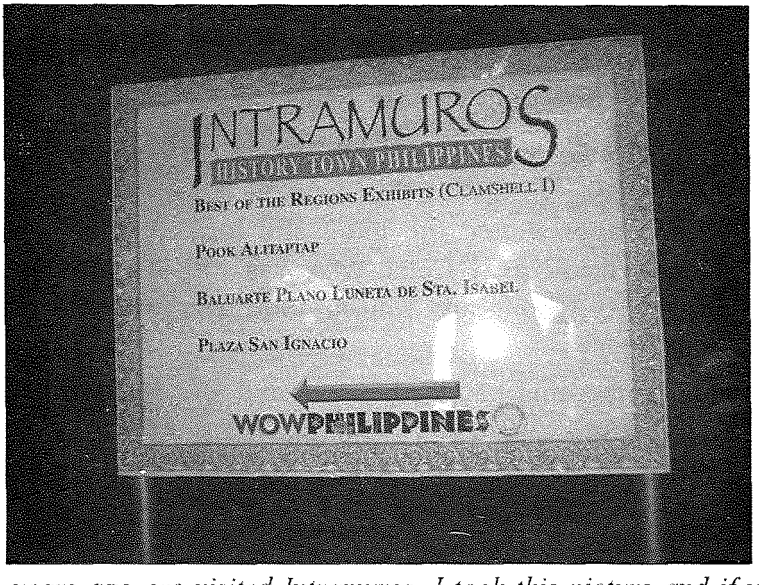
As she approached the gate, she looked back at the house and waved to Nanay Celia, who was still in the veranda. She could hear Bingbong and Lilit arguing over what to watch on TV.

Then something caught her eye and she looked up.

There, in the second story window, was a figure. A young woman was smiling and waving back at her.

She looked exactly like Tintin, and she was wearing the burial dress.

*This picture was taken at PMA, Baguio City last summer. I was very surprised to see a headless cadet beside the entrance sign.* - Amy




*Two years ago, we visited Intramuros. I took this picture and if you'll notice, a lady silhouette is reflected on the sign. Spooky!* - Andre

# THE FILM

**By Gianna Maniego**

**Part One**

A group of Broadcast Communication students from the University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication had a class project to film various areas of the university.

The project took longer than expected and by the time they'd gotten back to their college, it was already dark and the campus was practically deserted.

"Oh no, I forgot, we still have to take footage of the area behind the annex," said Alicia.

So she and her other groupmates lugged the camera to the back of the CMC building to shoot their last footage for the project.

As they were setting up, Alicia felt something tap her on the arm. Looking back, she saw no one behind her.

She shrugged, thinking one of her groupmates was playing a trick on her or was trying to creep her out.

Ha, I don't scare that easy, she thought.

"Psssssttt..." she heard next. It came from the direction of the trees in a shadowy corner of the college grounds.

"Ano ba Gerald, stop it. I don't scare easy so you're wasting your time," she said.

"Who are you talking to?" Melissa asked, as she and Gerald set down the light they got from the building.

"Oh, I thought Gerald was trying to play a trick on me. It must be Jekjek," Alicia said referring to their other groupmate.

"Jekjek went back to the car to get the spare film. We ran out," Gerald answered.

"Oh," Alicia kept quiet after that. The parking lot was all the way in front of the college building. No way that Jekjek could have returned without her seeing him first.

Who could that be? She wondered, annoyed and vaguely disturbed.

"Guys, let's hurry it up. I need to get home by 9:00 P.M.," said Melissa.

They immediately set about their task. In 15 minutes they were done.

"Psssstt..."

There it was again, that sound.

Alicia looked at Melissa to see if she heard. Melissa was worriedly looking left and right.

"You heard that, right?" she asked Melissa.

"Yeah. Let's hurry up and get out of here. It's giving me the creeps. My classmate who lives in Kalayaan tells me there are lots of spirits on campus that come out after dark," her friend said, hastily putting away the equipment, her fingers working agitatedly.

"Right," Alicia replied skeptically, "although if you ask me, I'm more afraid of muggers and rapists. There are a lot of them too on campus-or so I've heard."

Calling out to the guys, they immediately packed up and left.

A few days later, they were back in the building. This time they were editing their film. It was about 6:00 P.M. and students were already going home by the time they came to the footage they shot behind the Masscom building.

Alicia wanted to leave the editing till the morning, but Gerald, who was seated at the editing console, said they might not be able to reserve the room in the morning and deadline was only two days away.

So they decided to finish it that night, by hook or by crook.

In the beginning the film was too dark, full of shadows So Gerald, who was doing the editing, decided to adjust the TV and set it to its brightest. The images became clearer after that.

"Wait! Stop! What's that?" cried Melissa.

Gerald paused the tape.

Frozen on film was the distinct image of a woman, crouching behind the trees.

"Who's that?" asked Jekjek. "Was there anybody else with us that time?"

Nope, Gerald, Melissa and Alicia shook their heads in unison.

They blew up the image on the screen. It looked hazy, but they thought it was probably because it was dark. But when they looked at the eyes, they all began getting goosebumps.

The eyes had no pupils! They didn't even look human.

Creeped out, Gerald played the film again and the scene changed. Jekjek had shifted the camera to the building. All four watched the next scenes closely to see if the girl would make another appearance.

But when the camera panned again to the spot, she was no longer there! Instead, there looked like a disembodied head peeking from behind the *talahib*.

"Oh sh___t! What IS that?!!" Jekjek shouted.

"Stop! *Ayoko na, takot na ako! Bukas na natin i-*edit *yan, pag marami nang tao sa paligid* (That's enough, I'm already freaked out. Let's just finish editing that tomorrow, when there are other people around us)." Melissa said.

They didn't even bother to take the tape out of the player. They simply turned off the power, locked the door, and fled the building.

The next day, when they met up again, Alicia said:

"I told my mom what we saw. *Sabi niya marami talagang multo diyan sa likod. Kasi nung panahon niya, meron daw aksidenteng nangyari sa lugar na yun. Me sumalpok na bus ang daming namatay. Tapos hindi na nila ni-*cleanse *yung lugar, kaya siguro marami pang* spirits *na nagkalat.* (My mom said there really are a lot of ghosts in that area. She said during her time, there was a bus accident and a lot of people died, but they didn't bless the place to cleanse it of spirits. That's probably why a lot of them still hover around the place)."

**Part Two**

Those weren't the only apparitions they saw on the film.

In the footage they took of the gym, they heard voices of children running around inside. But the weird thing about this was, when the tape was playing at normal speed, nothing

happened. But when they played it while it was being fast forwarded or rewound, they could distinctly hear voices shouting and laughing, and running footsteps in the background.

But the creepiest incident of all happened after they finished editing the film.

Alicia and her groupmates decided to drive to Katipunan to grab a bite and celebrate their accomplishment.

As they were driving out of campus, along Tandang Sora, as they were laughing and swapping stories, Alicia, who was driving, distinctly heard the sound of running footsteps.

But there was no one on the street, not even on the sidestreets.

"Oh my God, I can still hear those eerie footsteps in my head!" she said laughing. Silence greeted her remark.

"You can hear it too?" Gerald and Melissa asked at the same time.

Alicia turned the car stereo off and listened carefully. She noticed that every time she slowed down, the footsteps would grow softer, and every time she accelerated, the footsteps would get louder and faster.

All this time, Jekjek was oblivious to what was happening as he had fallen asleep in the backseat.

All of a sudden he bolted awake.

"What's the matter Jek?" Gerald asked, looking at his friend's pale and sweaty face.

"I'll tell you later," he said.

By this time they had reached Shakey's in Katipunan and decided to get down from the car.

At first, Gerald, who was in the backseat with Jekjek, couldn't open his door-as if someone was pulling it closed.

Uttering a short prayer under his breath he pushed with all his might on the door and finally got it open.

Inside the restaurant, Jekjek told them about the strange dream he had in the car.

"I dreamt there was a little boy sitting beside us in the car, in between me and Gerald. He was about 7 or 8 years old. At first his face was turned away from me. All three of us were not minding each other.

"Later, I heard someone whimpering. It was the little boy. I asked him why he was crying. Then he turned to me and stared at me straight in the eye. There was a big gash in the middle of his face, running diagonally from the left part of his forehead to his right cheek and blood was pouring from it. His left eye was gouged out and the socket was bleeding. He held out his hand to me. When I looked, I saw it was bleeding and cupped in the middle of his palm was his eye, the tendons hanging down. It was then I woke up!"

"Oh no," Alicia cried. "We brought one of them home with us!"

# THE MISCHIEVOUS STUDENT

By Jherry L. Barrinuevo

**Death can strike anytime. It doesn't choose race, age, or social status.** Death comes like a thief in the night. It is a silent attacker. It attacks when you least expect it.

This is why some believe that those who have died suddenly or unexpectedly are sometimes unaware that they no longer belong to this world.

One of these is a student at one of the exclusive girl schools.

Death reportedly came to this student so swiftly that she didn't realize she was already a spirit until several years after.

The incident happened in 1995.

"I was teaching in Grade 4 and Grade 5 that year. I had a student who was a 'repeater.' Her real batch mates were already in Grade 6 and she was left back in Grade 5. That time when she was my student she was again in danger of repeating grade 5. Her name was Reggie," Romy, one of the teachers in the school recalled.

One morning, Romy was discussing to them the dangers of playing with water.

"I told them as a precaution not to play around in it because they might slip and fall. I also told them not to play pranks on people while they were drinking because even a spoonful of water may clog a person's air passage and cause drowning."

Reggie, who was always playing practical pranks, jokingly replied, "Sir, *totoo ba ito? Sige, pag ako nalunod, aalamin ko kung totoo nga ito* (Is this for real? Okay, if I drown, I'll confirm this)."

Romy quickly warned Reggie not to try it because it was really dangerous. But Reggie merely laughed.

Little did they know that what Reggie remarked would be a premonition.

"It turned out to be that Reggie was already bidding us farewell then," said Romy

About a week after this discussion, they heard disturbing news from one of the students.

The student said that one day, after class, they went to a classmate's house in Sta. Mesa Heights to swim.

They did not ask permission from any school authority since it was already after school, and it happened outside the school.

Nobody thought there would be an accident. Or that Reggie would drown in the pool. She and another classmate were playing with a ball when one of them accidentally hit it towards the deep end of the pool.

Reggie volunteered to get it, but she wasn't really a good swimmer and halfway through began to sink. She tried to cry for help, but by the time others went to her aid, she was

already floating lifeless on the water.

Another classmate, Lisa, who also came to her aid, almost drowned with her. Fortunately, her classmates were able to revive her.

After Reggie's death, unexplained and eerie things started happening in Romy's class.

One morning during their final exams' week, some of Reggie's schoolmates were out in the campus garden, when one of them looked up at their second floor classroom.

"Who's that? It looks like Reggie," she said.

Several of them looked up and sure enough, there was a figure peering through their classroom window and it looked like their dead classmate.

They ran to the classroom to see who was there. But when they checked the classroom they found nobody in the room. As they looked around, they noticed that the temperature in the room dropped several degrees until it became absolutely chilly when it was almost summer.

As time passed more and more students and even teachers reported sightings of Reggie.

Some reported experiencing odd and weird things while in class. Curiously, this all happened only inside Reggie's former classroom.

"At the end of the school year, my co-teachers told me to just give Reggie a passing mark so he would peacefully leave the class," Romy related.

At the time Romy was debating whether to follow his fellow teachers' advice, because Reggie's standing in class was really low.

And besides, he thought, would I pass a student just because she scared the life out of me?

But towards the end of the schoolyear, Romy noticed that the weird occurrences were happening more often and lasted longer than before.

He tried to ignore them at first, thinking that the weird things would stop eventually.

But an incident while Romy was computing the grades of his students changed his decision.

"While I was computing their grades at home, (around 11:00 P.M.) a drop of water suddenly fell on my class record when I was about to put a grade on the slot for Reggie, blotting the ink," he said.

At first he thought his father, whose room was directly above the area where he was computing the grades, might have toppled the pitcher of water he always kept by his bedside.

But when he looked up, the ceiling was completely dry.

And he remembered there was nobody in his father's room either, since his parents spent the night at his sister's house.

Chills ran up and down his spine as he remembered the bit of conversation he and Reggie had about water, a few weeks before she died.

"I asked myself, 'Can this be Reggie trying to contact me and tell me that I let her pass my subject?'"

He gathered up his courage and spoke aloud:

"Okay Reggie, I'll be passing you in my subject, just rest in peace and be happy where you are now. Just guard your friends and schoolmates."

After that, the haunting stopped.

"To this day I don't know if it stopped because Reggie had heeded my request to rest in peace, or she was just happy to finally get a passing grade."

# THE OTHER SIDE

**By Jherry L. Barrinuevo**

**Many of us have a healthy curiosity about the world of unknown.** We want to know what's in there. Some of us may have even tried to peek inside the realm of the unknown to explore and discover what creatures lurked within.

Only a few, however, actually get the chance to experience and see the other side.

One of the chosen few who have experienced and seen the other side is a friend of mine who works for a civic organization in Capitol Homes, Quezon City.

Romy says there's something creepy about their headquarters in Capitol Homes. He believes it's not only haunted, but it's also as a doorway to the world of spirits.

How does he know?

He's been there. And he almost didn't make it back.

"It's a mind-boggling experience that I was lucky to escape," my friend recounted.

According to him, their group leader, who was a priest, acquired the headquarters not knowing the place was haunted.

The group uses the house as a dorm for students who are studying in nearby schools. It also doubles as a meeting place to plan the civic org's activities.

"As soon as we moved in, we immediately suspected the house was haunted because of the strange things that began happening. We would hear glasses and mirrors crashing and doors slamming. We would notice mysterious shadows in the garden," recalled Romy.

But Romy said these strange experiences were nothing compared to what happened one day.

This happened sometime in the middle of 2000.

"Our head priest brought over some scholars to our temporary headquarters in Scout Chuatoco to watch an educational and spiritual movie. I chose to remain at our Capitol headquarters to man the phone and be housekeeper. I had a lot of paper work to do and the peace and quiet would help me accomplish this," he said.

Romie said he grew hungry at around six in the evening.

"My stomach began growling so I decided to have an early dinner in the kitchen. The monoblock table where I took my meal was right beside a glass window, allowing me to see outside into the garage."

The garage was separated by an old glass door and a short flight of stairs — about five steps. The upper portion of the door had iron grills.

"As I was eating, I noticed a movement in my peripheral vision. I turned in that direction and almost yelped in surprise. Standing in the shadows was an old man. A mestizo. And he was looking right at me!"

At first, he thought an intruder had gotten in. But when he looked again in that direction, there was no one!

"My mind must be playing tricks on me," Romie said, admitting that he was jumpier than he originally thought.

After a while, he went back to eating dinner.

"But I started having this strange sensation in the back of my neck—you know that feeling when you think someone is watching you behind your back? So I raised my head and looked outside. Sure enough, there he was again, staring at me! Then when I blinked, he was gone again!"

This time, he knew it wasn't his mind playing tricks on him. He was positive he saw that old man!

"The third time I saw him standing and staring outside, I felt brave enough to call out to him, 'If you want to eat just come in.' He just turned around and walked away."

Romy immediately picked up his plate and utensils, dumped them in the sink, and fled the kitchen, all the time wondering who the strange man could be.

Keeping to the front part of the house, Romie went back to work, trying hard to concentrate on his paper work.

"After around 30 minutes, I heard a commotion at the gate. When I came out to look, I saw our priest leader, together with the others, knocking. I unlocked it and let them in."

As the priest, who was in the lead, came into the garden, he looked in the direction of the grotto near the garage and asked who the old mestizo was.

"I didn't tell him that I too saw the old man in the garage. I just told him that I didn't see anybody there."

That was just the first of many manifestations of our "housemate".

* * *

One of the creepiest, and should I say dangerous things, that happened to Romy in that house was in early 2002 when

he was left alone with the househelp and some scholars.

"It happened in the extension of our headquarters. The extension houses the gym as well as the quarters for three of the scholars," Romy related.

He was sitting on an old chair on the patio near the extension, when he heard the househelp, Manang Linda, called to him from the main house.

"I could hear her approaching the patio to look for me. I did not bother to answer her because I knew she would find me there anyway.

"But to my surprise she walked past me on to the extension. She kept on calling me at the top of her voice. I thought since she didn't see me I could make fun of her by surprising her. But as I was about to get off the chair, I was the one who got the surprise of my life! I could not move from the seat. It was like something or somebody was holding me down to the chair."

Soon the other scholars, who heard Manang Linda call out to Romie, joined in the search. One of the boys said, 'Maybe he went out to buy something in the supermarket'."

"I again tried to moved out of the chair, as they passed in front of me. I shouted and waved my hands to attract their attention, but they didn't even glance in my direction. I struggled harder to get out of the chair but I didn't budge even an inch!"

It was then he began praying to God for help.

"I prayed harder and harder and finally after 15 minutes of praying I succeeded in getting up from the chair. I immediately ran inside the house to be with our housemaid and the scholars."

They asked where Romie had been, and he told them

everything. At first the others would not believe Romie, until he gave them a detailed description of how they searched for him, where they checked and what they said.

Then they realized someone was trying to hide him from them.

"You're lucky you were able to get off the chair. If you hadn't been able to do that you might never have gotten the chance to come back to our world."

Romy says that after that incident no one dared to sit in that chair especially at night.

* * *

Romy thought that would be the last time he would encounter the other side, but apparently the spirit world still wasn't through with him.

A few days after the chair incident, Romie was strolling around the subdivision. He went up a street that led to the top of a hill.

"I was enjoying the view, overlooking the houses below, the grassy landscape with a lone acacia tree in the middle of the slope. All of a sudden, the view changed, like I was watching a special effects movie.

"The houses suddenly disappeared and what was left was just an open field, where there were lots of people and all of them mestizo. They were all wearing glittering, colorful turn-of-the-century clothes like in old movies. There was also a merry-go-round and colorful tents."

The view was so enticing, he decided to go down there and watch the proceedings from up close. "I was so engrossed in their world, I almost joined them."

But just as he was about to enter their world, a loud honk from a car brought him back to his senses.

And just like that, the scene disappeared.

"Alone in the house I felt goose bumps when I suddenly realized what may have happened if I went to that other place."

*Here is part of my room that is being readied for renovation. After removing the big cabinet next to the door entrance, we found an image of a man that seems to be begging on the wall.*

*We examined it and found it just to be ordinary dust (ash). We removed it using soap and water. Of course, after saying our prayers. - Gene*

# THE UNEXPECTED GUESTS

By Jenny Chua

**Melissa thought she was having a dream when she heard noises in the kitchen of the small bungalow they had been renting.**

It was about 7:30 in the morning and she was still in that dream state (half asleep and half awake). She was alone in the house. Her husband, a policeman, had left for work early, taking the kids with him. He was going to drop them off in school on his way to the precinct.

Thinking she was just dreaming, she debated whether to get up and check the disturbance downstairs or just go back to sleep because it was impossible for anyone to get into the house as it had a double deadbolt.

Only her husband, who has a key, would be able to get in. In any case, he would go up and peep in on her.

All of a sudden she heard a loud bang, like the sound of a screen door banging.

Someone WAS downstairs, she thought.

Next she heard sounds of the door being locked, and

some dogs barking.

That's funny, no one in the neighborhood had dogs, as far as she could recall.

Then she heard someone go into her kitchen apartment and she heard the dogs whining.

Next came footsteps walking into the kitchen and then water running in the sink. She heard the dogs give little yelps as if they were playing with one another.

Then the voice of a man spoke softly, seeming to address the dogs, who seemed to be excited as she could hear the tapping of their toenails on the linoleum floor of the kitchen.

Melissa was sure they were intruders because her husband would have called out to her by now.

"I tried to get out of bed so I could hide in my closet, or something, but I couldn't move my arms or my legs. I couldn't cry out or scream. I was paralyzed! I told myself this usually just happens when you are dreaming, so don't be afraid. This will pass, you WILL wake up.....but I couldn't shake myself awake," she said.

She heard the dogs coming down the hallway and head towards the bedroom. Helpless to do much else she shut her eyes as tight as she could and pretended to be asleep.

She heard the door open and seconds later felt the weight of a very heavy paw or two press into the bed by her side. She sensed the dog moving closer to peer at her face.

"I felt the hot breath of the dog on my face as it sniffed me. Then, the dog breathed out hard through its nostrils, disturbing the bangs on my forehead. I was scared to death and I could hear my heart pounding so very fast and feel the blood pumping inside my ears," she related.

She realized that the intruder whose voice she heard

earlier could easily come into the bedroom and maybe rape or kill her, and she wouldn't be able to stop him.

Suddenly she heard a piercing whistle and then she again heard a man's voice calling out to the dogs from the front of the house.

She felt the weight lift and later scuffing noises as the dogs scurried out of the bedroom. The door opened and then closed. They were gone.

The house was completely silent. Melissa realized she could move again.

She got up shakily and went to the bathroom and got a glass of water.

She was too scared to go and investigate the living room or the kitchen right then so she decided to go back to sleep.

Finally she got up at around 11:00. She'd overslept and the sun was high in the sky. It was almost time for lunch.

Remembering what happened earlier, she bolted out of bed and checked the deadbolts on both the front and kitchen doors. They were both locked tight.

That's strange, she thought. Maybe I WAS dreaming.

She looked to see if there was a bowl of water on the floor in the kitchen but there was nothing.

"See, you idiot! It was a stupid dream." she berated herself. So she promptly forgot about her early morning experience.

Later that day, as she was setting up the ironing board in the kitchen, she saw something under the table. She didn't know what it was so she looked closer.

It was dog poop!

Where could that have come from, she wondered.

She fetched a broom and an old dustpan to scoop out the poop but when she tried to sweep it into the dustpan, the dog poop crumbled and turned into dust.

Almost as if it was old and petrified....as if it had come out of the body of a dead dog.

Maybe that wasn't a dream after all.

*In our subdivision, there is an urban legend that a white lady haunts one of the streets. One evening, my attention was caught by what I thought was a college girl. I slowed down thinking that she would like a ride with me. Believe it or not, as my car was approaching her, I could see right through her! I took a picture using my camera phone and quickly stepped on my accelerator. - David G.*

# MIDNIGHT BATHROOM EXCURSIONS

**By Cat Maniego**

*"Ate... ate..."*

Len refused to be awakened. After all, Brad Pitt was just about to beg her to be his girlfriend. Never mind that he was already married with kids in reality. According to her dreamworld, Brad Pitt was still single and eagerly awaiting her answer.

"*Ate, naman o...*"

"Five more minutes, Mee," Len mumbled incoherently.

Amy insisted, tugging persistently at Len's nightgown. Reluctantly, Len was pulled out of Brad's embrace and back into reality.

Slightly miffed, she turned to her little sister.

"What?!"

"*Ate, samahan mo ko sa banyo* (Accompany me to the bathroom)."

Len was about to say no, but she looked into her baby sister's imploring eyes and sighed. "*Bakit* (Why)? Can't you go by yourself?"

"*Natatakot ako* (I'm scared). Please go with me. Please?"

It was a lost battle.

After muttering unintelligibly under her breath, Len threw back her covers and accompanied her little sister to the bathroom. Five minutes later, her sister was happily off to bed, and she only hoped Brad was waiting for her as she dived back under her covers.

The next night, it was the same thing. And the night after that. And the night after that.

Soon, Amy got into the habit of waking her up every night around midnight to accompany her to the bathroom. Len got used to it.

One night, Amy entered her sister's room and, bleary-eyed, tugged on her sister's hand. "Ate, *samahan mo ko* (accompany me)," she voiced her familiar refrain.

Her sister's hand was kind of cold and clammy, but Amy was half asleep and wasn't really paying any attention.

She merely shrugged when the hand tightened around her own, a signal for her to pull her sister out of bed.

Amy trudged off to the bathroom, pulling her sister's hand along. When she got there, she let Len's hand go and immediately attended to her needs.

During these times, Len would usually wait patiently outside the door until she heard the flush. Then she would open the door for her sister and lead her back to her room before moving on to her own.

After flushing the toilet, Amy waited for her sister to open the door. But the door remained closed.

After waiting several moments, the door still remained closed. Puzzled, Len opened the door to look for her sister.

But the hallway was empty.

Beginning to get a little scared, Amy called out, "Ate! Ate Len, *nasan ka* (where are you)?"

Suddenly, a cold hand dropped down on her shoulder from behind. Amy whipped around.

There, in the doorway of the bathroom, stood a terrifying likeness of her sister, except this figure had blood red eyes and a menacing smile.

"*Hinahanap mo ba ako,* Amy? *Bakit mo ko ginising* (Are you looking for me Amy? Why did you wake me up)?"

Amy could do nothing but scream, and the figure mimicked her expression of terror.

A door opened behind her, and her real sister rushed out and saw her terrified sister screaming her lungs out with tears running down her eyes. Len embraced her, and begged her to be calm.

"*Bakit ka kasi nauna sa akin? Hindi moko inantay para mag-CR* (Well, why did you go ahead of me? You should have waited)?" Len joked, carrying her sister back to her bed, since her sister didn't want to be left alone anymore.

Ever since then, Amy stopped her midnight excursions to the bathroom.

# YOSI BREAK

**By Cat Maniego**

**"Gary!"**

Gary looked up and saw his fellow intern, Owie, waving at him and calling his name. It was about quarter to twelve at night, and they were just about to end our shift at a Quezon City hospital.

"What's up?" he asked his friend, as he approached Gary's assigned area.

"*Gusto mong mag-yosi muna tayo bago uwi? Sige na* (Do you want to smoke before we go off duty? Come on)!" Owie cajoled.

Gary looked up at the clock and saw it was still early. Time enough for a quick break before going home, he thought. Besides, he was also dying for a smoke.

"*O sige, sige.* Sign-out *muna tayo, tapos dumaan tayo dun sa may karinderya sa kanto para mag-noodles at mag-yosi* (Okay, okay. Let's sign out first then let's pass by that corner eatery for some noodle soup and a cigarette break)," Gary gave in.

Ten minutes later, they had left the building and were walking along a dark alley behind the hospital, the quickest way to the canteen.

They were laughing and joking around, trying to ease the cold silence in the air, when Owie suddenly stopped walking.

"*Pare,*" he looked at his friend, "*Naririnig mo ba 'yon* (Do you hear that)?"

Suddenly, Gary heard it too.

It sounded like a platoon of soldiers were marching nearby.

They looked at each other. Who could be marching at this hour?

The sound was coming from somewhere in front of them, but they could see nothing but the distant light coming from the faraway street lamp.

Curious, they peered in the darkness to see if there was any activity around the corner.

Suddenly, the sound of marching intensified, drawing nearer to them until it seemed they were marching alongside Gary and Owie.

They heard a deep voice booming out commands:

"Battalion! Ready!"

And in the next instant, they heard the sound of rifles being cocked.

At that, the two friends freaked out and scrambled out of the alley like they were running for their lives.

By the time they reached the eatery, they were frightened out of their wits and panting for breath. The marching sound was slowly fading in the distance.

"Pare," Gary panted. "Why did you run?"

"Because I had a feeling they were aiming at us!" Owie blurted, his sweat running in streams.

That was the last time they ever went for a *yosi* break during their internship.

## MURDER MYSTERY AT THE MAKATI MEDICAL CENTER

**There was this case** in the hospital's Intensive Care ward where patients always died in the same bed and on Sunday mornings at 11 A.M., regardless of their medical condition. This puzzled the doctors and some even thought that it had something to do with the supernatural or even murder. No one could solve the mystery as to "Why deaths happen on Sunday at 11 AM?"

Mr. Licauco, Fr. Bulatao and the Ateneo paranormal folks were called. They arrived one Sunday, armed with special photographic equipment, infra-red devices and motion-sensitive radar to detect any presence. So on the next Sunday morning, a few minutes before 11A.M., all the doctors and nurses nervously waited outside the ward to see for themselves what the mysterious phenomenon was all about. Some were holding wooden crosses, strings of garlic, amulets, prayer books and other holy objects to ward off evil spirits.

Just then, the clock struck 11...and then...

...Mang Joe, part-time Sunday janitor, entered the ward, unplugged the life support system and plugged in the vacuum cleaner. - *joke submitted via e-mail.*

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