

GH**OST**BUSTERS

Tobin's Spirit Guide

A Supplement for use with the
Ghostbusters-International Roleplaying Game



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A S U P P L E M E N T

Tobin's Spirit Guide

by Kim Mohan



Additional Entries: **Robert S. Babcock**
Development and Editing: **Jonatha Ariadne Caspian**
Graphic Design and Graphics: **Bernadette G. Cahill**
Cover Art and Interior Art: **Timothy Mullen**

Publisher: **Daniel Scott Palter** • Associate Publisher: **Richard Hawran** • Assistant Publisher: **Denise D. Palter**
Editorial Director: **Bill Slavicsek** • Associate Editors: **Greg Gorden, Douglas Kaufman, Paul Murphy**
Editors: **Jonatha Ariadne Caspian, Michael Stern, C. J. Tramontana** • Art Director: **Stephen Crane**
Graphic Artists: **Rosaria Baldari, Bernadette G. Cahill, Jacqueline M. Evans, Cathleen Hunter, Sharon Wyckoff**
Production Manager: **Steve Porpora** • Sales Director: **Martin Wirted** • Sales Manager: **Fitzroy Bonterre**
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RD 3, Box 2345
Honesdale, PA 18431

INTRODUCTION TO THE MODERN EDITION

A Dream Come True

You might not believe this, but Spengler says I should write it down anyway.

I had a really interesting dream about two months ago. I saw myself from the back, like I was following me around. I was walking along the street when I saw a wrecking crew. They had one of those big iron balls, and they were about to smash this building back into its component parts.

I stopped to watch, and suddenly a real strong feeling came over me: I had to get inside that building. I rushed up to the foreman and gave him a story about how my grandfather used to live here, and could I look around one last time?

The guy looked at me like I was nuts. I stared him straight in the chest. He held his hand out, I slapped a twenty into it, and he said, "Ten minutes." I took off for the front door.

Somehow I knew exactly where to go, even though I didn't know what I would find when I got there. I headed for a basement window at the end of a long grimy corridor. One little beam of sunlight was shining through it, hitting the side of a crate. I opened the lid and looked inside, and I got very excited. I couldn't see what I was looking at, because I was behind myself, but I knew it was something good. I grabbed it, ran out of the building, and went skipping down the street. I didn't care about the big iron ball anymore.

And then I woke up. Not the weirdest dream I've ever had, but it ranks right up there.

Then two days later I was walking to the drugstore, I turned a corner—and there was one of those cranes with the big iron ball. Everything clicked—and the same feeling came over me: there was something in that building I had to get.

Everything happened just the way I had dreamed it. I ran down the corridor, flipped the lid on the crate—and there it was, on top of a stack of dusty, moldy books: *J. H. Tobin's Spirit Guide: Being a Compendium of Ghosts, Gods, Spirits, and Manifestations from Outside the Normal Realms of Existence, with a Travelogue and Notes on a Philosophy of the Occult Established by the Author*. Spengler, Venkman, and I knew that such a book existed, but we had never found a first edition before. The one I gently tucked into my jacket might have been the last one in the world.

Well, we've fixed that problem. *Tobin's Spirit Guide* is now available again in mass quantities—obviously, or you wouldn't be holding it.

Actually, this new edition doesn't include every word from the original. Some of the pages were in real bad shape, and quite a few of them were just plain missing. Maybe if we find another copy of the book, we'll be able to put out *Son of Spirit Guide*, or whatever you want to call it. (And if the same pages are missing from both copies, then we've got a different sort of problem altogether.)

* * * * *

About the book: What you have here is a slightly edited and slightly supplemented version of the parts of the original *Spirit Guide* that we could recover intact. The information on *Ectopresence*, *Power*, special abilities and Goals has been added by yours truly (after consultation with Spengler and Venkman; I don't want all the blame). In a few places you'll find Editor's Notes, which we put in when we felt that you should be aware of facts about certain spirits that have come to light since 1920. Otherwise, the descriptions of each spirit and the stories that Tobin tells are pretty much the way he wrote them. We even managed to duplicate the original illustrations.

What do we know about John Horace Tobin? Not much, because the guy didn't like to write about himself too often. But from what he did put down, and what other writers have said about him, we can tell you this:

He was born in London in 1870 or thereabouts, the only child of a very well-to-do family. His father made a fortune in business, which made it possible for him to spend much of his recorded life traveling and researching spirit phenomena.

Before he even knew what his life's work would be, Tobin had prepared himself well for it. He was educated at Oxford, where he earned two degrees: one in Obscure Ancient Languages and one in Psychology. Instead of working for his father, which he surely could have done if he had wanted to, he went out to find his own way in the world. For the last few years of the nineteenth century he worked as a record-keeper and middle-management type for a British trading company in Egypt. It was during this time that he got hooked on pyramids and pharaohs and all that stuff—and, as he describes in the Ahagotsu Affair, this eventually led him into exploration of the spirit world. He wasn't the world's first Ghostbuster—many other people had investigated paranormal phenomena before him—but he sure was one of the

most energetic. From the turn of the century until at least 1920, when his book was published, he spent practically all of his time studying spirits. Here's a rough reconstruction of where he went during those 20 years:

Late 1899 to 1900—In Egypt, tying up the

Ahagotsu Affair; miscellaneous exploration.

1901-02—Established an office in London, with Shrewsbury Smith as his assistant and collaborator. By placing advertisements in newspapers and other periodicals in and around London, Tobin was more than moderately successful in getting people to come to him with their stories of contacts with the spirit world. He must have talked to an enormous number of crackpots, and his training in psychology helped him to separate the flakes from the people who were telling the truth. Tobin made some mistakes (for example, see the introduction to the section on Eastern Europe), but for the most part he was pretty good at reading people.

1903-05—A series of short jaunts into France, Germany, and the Low Countries, sort of an extended working vacation. Shrewsbury Smith went back to London by himself a few times, presumably to clean out the mailbox and renew the lease on the office. By the time he finished his book, Tobin could read and write at least four foreign languages (French, German, Dutch, Russian) and could speak a half-dozen others well enough to make himself understood on a simple level.

1905-06—Another period in the London office.

1907-11—A long expedition into Eastern Europe and then southward through Turkey into Mesopotamia, because the extremely ancient civilizations of Egypt and the Middle East always were his first love.

1912-13—More channel-hopping, following up leads uncovered from the mail in the London office. Tobin's timing was lucky, because by the time World War I broke out he had gathered all the information he needed from the Continent. And fortunately for his work, he escaped serving in the British army because he was too old to be drafted.

1914-16—Back to Egypt, a trip he had been postponing for several years, maybe because he enjoyed the feeling of being able to look forward to it. He and Smith ranged up and down the Nile, from Alexandria to Aswan. They went by ship from Suez to Aseb, at the southernmost edge of the Red Sea, and back again. This excursion ended with a foray north to Damascus and then east to Beirut, where they caught a steamer headed for

England. The area they traveled through was occupied by Turkish forces, but since there was no open conflict at the time it was not especially dangerous—at least, no more dangerous than a camelback ride through hundreds of miles of desert is under normal circumstances. Again, Tobin seems to have had some sixth sense about not getting caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. Just months after he left the Middle East, British troops descended on Palestine and began driving the Turks back.

1917-18—Tobin stayed home until the war drew to a close, doing more research and probably composing a lot of the final manuscript of the book.

1919—Immediately after the armistice was signed, Tobin began making plans for a brief trip to the United States, to round out his research. He stayed only two or three months, never venturing far away from the eastern seaboard, and came back to put the finishing touches on the book, which was supposed to have been received by the publisher no later than mid-February of 1920. The fact that he missed his deadline by a couple of weeks does not appear to have caused any problems.

* * * * *

What did Tobin do after the book was finished? That's pretty much a mystery. All we know for sure is that he had no intention of calling it quits. He writes about wanting to make another, much longer trip to the U.S. As air travel became more sophisticated and less risky, he may have decided to head out for more far-flung places—Australia, China, South America. If he did so, he must have traveled alone or with a new companion, because Shrewsbury Smith died in 1924.

For all we know, after Shrewsbury's death John Horace Tobin vanished from the face of the earth. But he was of robust health, and he could easily have lived another 10 or 15 years. If he did continue his work, which seems almost a certainty, why didn't he publish another book? (Spengler would love an answer to that question. I would love for Spengler to stop asking questions.) The only reason I can come up with is that he died suddenly and unexpectedly, and probably in a place where the people didn't know how important he was. Maybe the notes will turn up someday—and maybe in the same way that this book did. Maybe we haven't found them yet because the spirit of John Horace Tobin is still doing research, in a place to which he could never have traveled while he was alive. And if we're really lucky, he'll deliver them personally when he's done.

Dr. Ray Stantz
April 1, 1989

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J. H. TOBIN'S Spirit Guide



BEING A COMPENDIUM

of Ghosts, Gods, Spirits,
and Manifestations

from Outside the Normal Realms of Existence,



WITH A TRAVELOGUE

and Notes on a Philosophy of the Occult

Established by the Author

GUZMAN, SCOTT, AND BONTERRE

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you, and congratulations! I resolved long ago, when I first began to contemplate the idea of consolidating my research into this book, that the first thing I would do in print was express my gratitude to you, Esteemed Reader, and give you my commendation. By the mere act of lifting this book and opening it to the first page, you have demonstrated yourself to be a person of exceptional judgment and high intelligence.

How do I know this? How do I know that you are not a skeptic, whose only purpose in reading this book is to scoff at its contents? Because I have learned over the years that people of that sort do not find it necessary to know anything about a subject in order to make fun of it—because, of course, it is much easier for them to cling to their disbelief if they do not allow themselves to be confronted by facts and evidence. Francis Grose, writing nearly one hundred and fifty years ago in "The Antiquarian Repertory," hit the proverbial nail on the head in this single sentence:

It has long been the fashion to laugh at the study of Antiquities, and to consider it as the idle amusement of a few humdrum, plodding fellows, who wanting genius for nobler studies, buried themselves in heaping up illegible Manuscripts, mutilated Statues, obliterated Coins, and broken Pipkins; in this the laughers may perhaps have been somewhat justified, from the absurd pursuits of a few Collectors, but at the same time an argument deduced from the abuse or perversion of a study, is by no means conclusive against the study itself.

I will readily admit that the world abounds with charlatans and attention-seekers who purport to have had repeated contacts with "the spirit world" and who will happily take your money in exchange for regaling you with spurious tales of what they "know."

So what separates people like them from people like myself and my colleague Shrewsbury Smith? We are academicians, not businessmen. We are givers, not sellers. You have never seen either one of us standing on a street corner, tugging on sleeves and trying to get an audience gathered for our next show. You may have seen our names and the address of our office in an advertisement, but we did not advertise in order to seek publicity. We were soliciting information—we wanted you to talk to us about events you had experienced or witnessed that might have some connection with a spirit entity.

Neither Shrewsbury nor I will realize any monetary gain from the publication of this work—and if we did, what profit we might gain would be a mere fraction of what we have spent on our research expeditions. Proceeds from the sale of this book, and any fees we might receive as the result of speaking engagements that derive therefrom, will be contributed to the West End Society, an organization of truly selfless individuals whose greatest pleasure is giving happiness to others.

So, then, what is in it for us? We will be satisfied, and will feel as though our effort was worthwhile, if we are able to make you, Esteemed Reader, more aware of the world around you—cognizant of the fact that there are forces afoot on earth not of our making. We have no control over when and where they might appear, but we often do have recourse when it comes to combating or otherwise dealing with them. This book contains not only information but advice—our best judgments, drawn from thousands of hours of research, on how to escape from or frustrate a spirit that has chosen you as its next target. Needless to say, we would be most pleased to hear from anyone who takes our advice and finds it beneficial.

It seems that as the human race becomes more cultured, more "civilized," more worldly, it becomes less knowledgeable about and less appreciative of the fact that we share our domain with entities that are intelligent, devious, often evil... and yet not the slightest bit human.

People of ancient civilizations, not yet mature enough to recognize spirits for what they were, often worshiped spirits as gods or feared them as demons. We today, with our modern motorcars and sophisticated steam engines, dismiss the earlier belief in spirits as primitive superstition—a judgment that is not only imprudent but, on an individual basis, potentially calamitous.

Even though their ability to understand was not finely developed, the ancients did have keen powers of observation. A primitive science which can derive the calculations for the construction of great pyramids may not have been as primitive as we think. Egyptian chemists could produce potions capable of preserving their mummified rulers for centuries. Babylonian astronomers were able to map the movements of celestial bodies through the heavens at least as well as we can today. We may doubt the ability of the ancients to interpret what they observed, but not the keenness of their skill at perceiving what was

going on around them. From more recent times, we have access to not only written records but oral history preserved by the Europeans of the Middle Ages, a time which apparently marked the advent of many new spirit-types—we must acknowledge, at the least, this was the time when their appearances were first preserved or recorded.

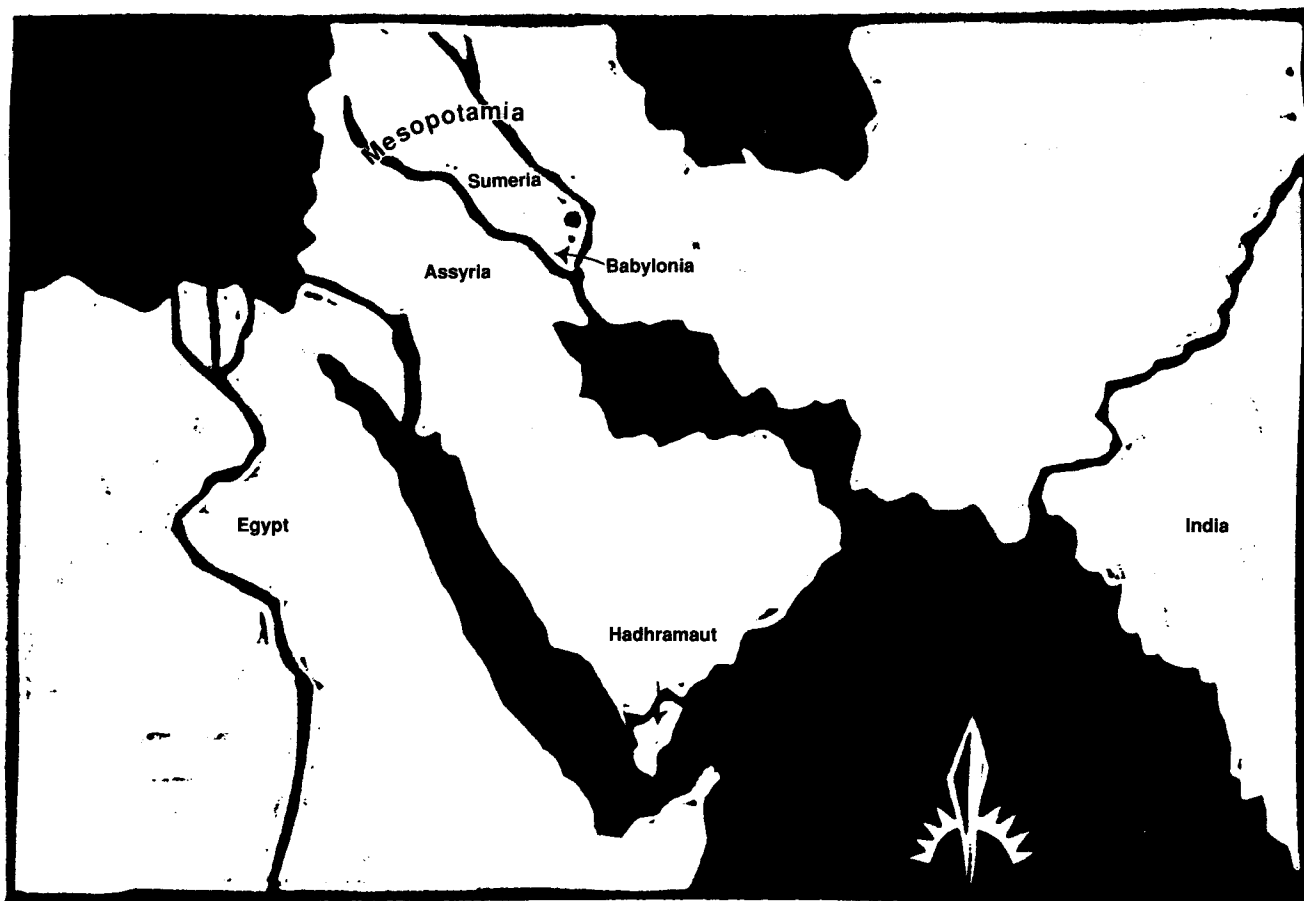
Regardless of when a spirit was "born," we should realize that since these entities are not mortal, the usual rules of mortality do not apply to them. They cannot be killed, only repelled—whereupon they will blithely disappear back into the realm from which they came, only to return seconds, hours, or years later. Perhaps someday man will develop the methodology or the technology to capture or confine these marauders; until that day, if it ever comes, we will have to be happy with managing a standoff in any confrontation with something from the otherworld.

I cannot finish before expressing my heartfelt appreciation to the redoubtable Shrewsbury Smith,

who has served as friend, confidant, catalyst, and a welcome devil's advocate during the two decades when we have collaborated, off and on, working toward the completion of this project. It is not the point of this work to chronicle the adventures we experienced on our travels, but I would be remiss in failing to acknowledge that he has saved my life on at least two occasions, kept me from suffering serious injury on countless others, and has contributed more to the content of this manuscript, substantively and in other ways, than I could possibly enumerate. We have had our disagreements, to be sure. (If you ever have the privilege and the pleasure of meeting him, ask him about his "skin theory"—but only if you have a couple of hours to spend listening to the story.) But the hatchets were always promptly buried, the differences soon forgotten—because we as a team were always more important than we as individuals. There is no spirit more powerful than the spirit of friendship.

John Horace Tobin
March 6, 1920

L Spirits of Egypt and the Asian Continent



Egypt
Sumeria
Mesopotamia
Assyria
Babylonia
Hadhramaut
India

We must begin where man began, in the cradle of civilization. Here our ancestors first set down words for us to read, and here we read of man's first encounters with unearthly spirits.

The two great river civilizations of the ancient Middle East, those of Egypt and of Mesopotamia (literally, "the land between the rivers") developed at roughly the same time in human history and under somewhat the same conditions. They also developed adjacent to one another, and thus may have encountered the same spirits.

I have spent much of my time and space in this volume on Egypt, as I have a fondness for and an intellectual delight in that culture particularly, but I have taken pains to find room for singularly impressive spirits beyond the banks of the Nile. The Mesopotamian empires of Assyria and Babylonia are represented, as well as ancient Sumer, and I have

gone so far afield as India for a contrast. But let us start where my heart belongs.

Egypt

The land of Egypt has had a long and glorious history. Many, many different peoples have conquered and ruled it over the course of time, and thus men of many different nations have encountered the spirits of Egypt. Some have come under their spells. Some have been seduced by their powers. These may make it possible for the spirits of ancient Egypt to travel to other lands and exercise their powers there. Thus can Sebek appear in the streets of Paris. Thus can the mummy of Ahagotsu haunt the music halls of London. From Europe, who knows where these unearthly things might be able to go: to Australia? To Asia? Even to America?

Sebek

In the summer of 1798, so the story goes, a lieutenant in Napoleon's garrison at Alexandria, along with a companion, was strolling down a back street of that fair city when an odd figure approached from the opposite direction. The creature was no higher than four feet tall, with a stubby human body and a green-scaled head that looked for all the world like the head of a huge crocodile. "Pardon me," it said, although it had some trouble with the words because a crocodile's mouth does not shape the "p" sound easily, "but I require some directions." It then asked the lieutenant the way to eighteenth-century Alexandria's most notorious night club.

A Frenchman true to his nature, the officer replied (here translated): "Sir, you speak French abominably. Are you an American?"

The little creature opened its long, toothy mouth as far as it could and bit the officer in half. The officer's companion, who related the story, had achieved the distance of half a block before the remains of the lieutenant's body hit the ground. Neither French military investigators nor the Alexandrian constabulary ever solved the case, nor did they find the mysterious creature. Nothing like it is recorded again until Cairo, 1882, when drunken soldiers reported that they had attended a party thrown by an Egyptian dwarf in a crocodile mask who spoke only perfect French.

Sebek

the paranormal nerd

Sebek's strange appearance, strangely enough, doesn't frighten people; they just assume he's wearing a mask and trying to get their attention (which is partially true). He wants people to like him, and *takes large bites* out of anyone who makes fun of him or merely pretends to like him.

He shows up in what he thinks is a popular locale; unfortunately, he's always just a little (at least) behind the times. When he's in New York, he looks for a good time at Studio 54; in Texas, he wants to ride the mechanical bull at Gilley's; in Small Town U.S.A., he stands on a street corner and checks out the girls. Being a nerd, of course, he'll never be really popular—but that won't keep him from trying.

Brains	3	Recognize Ridicule	6
Muscles	2	Take Large Bites	5
Moves	3	Manipulate Slide Rule	6
Cool	1	Make Small Talk	4
Power	3	Bore to Tears	
		Read Mind	

Goal: Popularity

Tags: Physical, intelligent; crocodile head, pocket protector, slide rule attached to belt, other paraphernerdlia

Mertseger the Silence-Lover

There are few Egyptian spirits more terrifying than Mertseger the Silence-Lover. Patroness of the necropolis (the cemetery; literally, "the city of the dead") of Thebes, goddess of libraries and of honest political speeches, Mertseger demands absolute silence from the world around her. She has appeared on this planet several times since the fall of the Egyptian civilization, and each time she has been more displeased at the tumult and din that marks our modern world.

From 1551 B.C., Mertseger was worshiped by the grave diggers and caretakers of the necropolis near Thebes. She appeared to them sometimes as a woman, sometimes as a giant cobra. Thebes was sacked by the Assyrian king Assurnasirpal in 663 B.C. We have very little in the way of records for this period, but we do know that Assurnasirpal sent one of his generals into the necropolis on a scouting mission. A fragment of the clay tablet that is his report survives. Below is a reproduction of the hieroglyphics on that fragment, and a rough translation:



Translation: We went into the necropolis. There were lots of graves there. And then we heard a noise. SNAKE! BIG SLIMY SNAKE!!

There is no record of a sighting of Mertseger after that until the fourth century B.C. Alexander the Great had conquered Egypt, founded Alexandria on the Nile delta, and built a tremendous library there. Scholars came to the library at Alexandria from around the known world. One of these was the Greek chronicler Zippedes of Dougga¹. No Greek edition of Zippedes's work survives, but in a late Latin translation entitled *A Zippede Douggae Ad Zippedem Dei* ("From Zippedes of Dougga to Zippedes of God"), we read of a friend of Zippedes who returned a book late to the library. The librarian "turned into a giant snake and bit the head and shoulders of my friend clear off his body, leaving little but a headless, armless corpse oozing blood and venom."

Modern scholars believe that Zippedes had embellished the story a bit, because no one in fourth-century Alexandria would buy a book about life in a library unless something interesting occurred in it. I disagree. I think that what had clearly happened is that Mertseger had moved north from Thebes in the intervening centuries and had settled down in the library. Alexandria was a thriving port in those years, and from there this silent spirit could have sneaked away to any place in Europe.

¹Ancient Thugga, a city in North Africa.

Mertseger

the silence-lover

Mertseger doesn't necessarily intend to kill her victims, just to shut them up. She normally appears as a cranky old woman, but can peel away her skin and bones to make herself look like a cobra. Her *Ectopresence* is lowest when she's in a noisy place (a rock concert, the floor of the stock exchange) and highest when she's in a place she really enjoys (a cemetery, the principal's office during detention, or the middle of a forest, whether a tree is falling or not).

Brains	3	Detect Whisper	6
Cool	2	Ignore Disturbance	5
Power	3	Creature Feature (G)	
		Materialize	
		Terrorize	

Ecto-
presence 5*

* variable

Goal: Silence

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; skin like a snake (even when she's not one); often wears ear-plugs or big, thick hoods



Hatshepsut

Other women before her had been called queen, but (as we Britishers well know) when a king and a queen rule at the same time, the latter is always subservient to the former. Hatshepsut was the first female to consolidate the power that made a pharaoh a pharaoh, the first woman to be recognized (as were all pharaohs) as a deity in the form of a mortal.

A scene painted on the wall of her temple, damaged but still discernible, shows Hatshepsut in what is obviously a warlike stance, opposing a figure with the body of a man and the head of a pig. This latter image is thought to be a derogatory rendering of the obscure deity Shovanisti, the god of domination.

One of Hatshepsut's most significant achievements was the reopening of traffic to and from the land of Punt, the area of Africa and Arabia bordering the southernmost part of the Red Sea, and the source of the most fragrant and pungent incense in the world. (Both of these facts are quite relevant in light of the anecdote I will relate.)

Correlate this with the intelligence that Hatshepsut's tomb was just recently breached, and you can see why we have arrived at our conclusion:

The woman who initiated the drive for equality between the sexes is out to finish the job she started nearly four millennia ago—and I, for one, am not about to suppose that she will not succeed.

Hatshepsut

world's first feminist

Men are not immune from Hatshepsut's visits. *Intelligincense* is an odor of any sort—whatever gets the person's attention. A woman might enjoy the sweet smell of success, or might decide that her present situation stinks. The second ability causes the victim to clip articles from *I Am Woman* magazine and tape them to the refrigerator, put her husband's dirty socks under his pillow, or open a separate checking account. The first ability, which is every woman's prerogative, never fails.

Brains	9	Identify Injustice	12
Cool	4	Persuade Chauvinist Pig	7
Power	6	Change Mind ERAise Consciousness Intelligincense	
Ecto- presence	10		

Goal: Equality for Women

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; fragrant, single-minded

Questions for a Colleague

I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting my esteemed colleague Howard Carter. Although both of us have spent many years exploring the antiquities along the Nile, our paths have not crossed. If they do (perhaps as a result of the publication of this work), I shall be sure to ask two questions that have long been preying on my mind.

It was Dr. Carter who, only a few years ago, led the expedition at Der-el-Bahri that unearthed the tomb of Queen Makare Hatshepsut. The record is clear and complete concerning the treasures the tomb yielded, but that is not where my interest lies. I want to know whether Dr. Carter smelled any unusual odor when the tomb was breached. And I want to know if, subsequent to the opening of Hatshepsut's tomb, he noticed a change in his attitude toward the women in our society.

Strange questions to ask of a renowned Egyptologist? No—not if one knows the history of the Queen and relates it to our world today.

I am convinced that Hatshepsut's spirit, after many centuries' repose, is with us again, exerting influence over women (and some men) to bring heretofore unparalleled vitality to the campaign for women's suffrage. Although social reformers have been campaigning for scores of decades, it is only now, in the wake of Dr. Carter's discovery, that the movement has become a real force in our culture.

A man came to us not too long ago, asking for our help in expunging an evil force that had taken over his wife's mind. He was quite disappointed that our line of work did not extend to that sort of activity, but shared his story with us nonetheless. He and his wife had what he called a perfect relationship, which is to say that she provided for all his needs and he was kind enough to keep coming home to her after work every night.

Then one day, a week before he sought us out, she became lackadaisical about her chores, voiced her opinions about things that women weren't to be concerned with, and she began an unsettling habit of wrinkling up her nose at him whenever she was in the same room.

Finally her discontent erupted into outright rebellion. She packed her things and said she could no longer stand to live this way, and further, she simply could not stand the smell of him anymore. She went off to live in a mission sponsored by the Women's Social and Political Union, and has refused to see him ever since.

The Guardians of the Canopic Jars

The Egyptians practiced the most bizarre and disgusting rituals of death. We know much about them because the mummified corpses of their princes have survived for our archaeologists to examine. For a royal burial, the Egyptian undertakers removed the internal organs of the human body and buried the body in a coffin. The liver, lungs, stomach and intestines of the deceased they stored in separate jars which were interred with the coffin. Selkis, Isis, Neith and Nephthys were the spirits in charge of guarding the organ containers, called the Canopic Jars.

Selkis Who Cools Throats is perhaps the most troublesome of these guardians because it is she who is most often summoned by evil men. Not only does Selkis guard the entrails of the embalmed dead, she is also Mistress of the House of Books, the Nubian patroness of magic. I myself have encountered the Throat-Cooler, and she is a terrible thing to behold. If you see a beautiful woman across a crowded dance floor, and if she has a giant living scorpion curled around her head, she is probably Selkis Who Cools Throats, and she will not know how to waltz.

Selkis appears as a gorgeous African Negress in stylish clothing. She possesses incredible knowledge of lost Nubian magic, which she teaches in very small doses to those who follow her. She holds great power over the organs of the body that are in the jars she guards, and her followers' magic also affects these organs. Selkis controls the functions of the upper and lower intestines. Legends tell that she also can summon the scorching heat of the desert, and the combination of the two powers must adversely affect one's sense of smell. Finally, there is that scorpion atop her head....

Isis is another of the guardians of the Canopic Jars, as well as the Egyptian spirit of wifely fidelity and maternal care. Somehow, this spirit has gained a reputation for seduction and beauty. My research indicates that this is not warranted; in fact, she is quite bovine, even down to the cow's horns which sprout from her forehead. If the curse of Isis falls upon a man, she dotes on his every need. No sneeze takes place without the spirit appearing and forcing the poor man prone under the nearest available covering. One may detect the presence of the spirit, even if she is invisible, by the sickly odor of chicken soup that follows her everywhere.

Isis guards the jar of the liver, and must control the function of that organ. I have no independent confirmation of that hypothesis, however; my colleagues who began research into this matter each became utter alcoholics and abandoned the work.

Neith guards the Canopic Jar that contains the stomach. One of the reasons for her having this responsibility may be the fact that in some renderings she is depicted as the earth-mother cow who nurses Re, the sun-god, to keep him fit and healthy

as he makes his daily journey across the sky. The cow, like other ruminants, is unusual in the respect that it has a sophisticated, four-chambered stomach—something the ancient Egyptians must have been aware of just as we are. Neith is also known for her role as an arbitrator in the battle for control of the world between Horus and Set—the sort of job that most people (and, presumably, spirits) do not have the stomach for. When she chooses to become visible, Neith appears as a tall woman with a bow and a sheaf of arrows slung over her shoulders, and a shield clutched in both hands in front of her abdomen. If a person's stomach looks like it needs help—in particular, if it is distended from overindulgence—she hands him her shield, and then she and the object vanish. Thereafter, for as long as her control lasts, the victim feels disgust at the thought of eating, and if he actually ingests some food, he becomes nauseous, perhaps to the point that the food refuses to stay where he has put it.

If she is in the mood for a prank, she can cause one's stomach to growl as though one has not eaten for days. Or she can make her victim's trousers unbearably tight, so that he or she immediately loosens them (with predictable results).

And finally there is Nephthys, the guardian of the lungs, who is also the sister of Isis. In fact, this familial connection is apparently the only reason why Nephthys was afforded the responsibility of being the fourth guardian. Everything we know about her suggests that she was something of a misfit, who could not succeed at anything more complicated than jar-guarding.

During the early period of her existence, Nephthys was the antithesis of what her sister stood for, that being wifely fidelity and maternal care. In some respects, it seems as though Nephthys still has not changed her ways. When she appears before a victim, she is in the form of a strikingly beautiful woman, sufficiently attractive to take a man's breath away even from across a room. When Nephthys departs, it is usually because Isis has come to fetch her little sister—or so I must surmise from the frequency of reports that once the beautiful woman is out of his presence, the man she bewitched begins consuming liquor and does not stop until he is thoroughly intoxicated.

During the time of the New Kingdom, the custom of removing organs from the body of the deceased fell out of fashion. The Canopic Jars were an empty (literally) formality for years afterward, and finally their use was discontinued altogether.

It seems to have been around this time that the guardians, looking for something else to do, started visiting the mortal realm and, each in her own way, making people aware—sometimes painfully aware—of how important their intestines, livers, stomachs, and lungs can be.

Selkis

guardian of the intestines

If she's feeling mischievous, Selkis *animates* the victim's lower tract (making it uncontrollable). If she's really nasty, she *possesses* his mind and makes him do what he ordinarily wouldn't have the guts for—and neither she nor he (in his *possessed* state) care about the consequences.

Brains	4	Power of Persuasion	7
Cool	5	Charm Scorpion	8
Power	6	Animate Cut the Cheese Materialize Possess	
Ecto- presence	7		

Goal: Intestinal Fortitude (or lack thereof, depending on her mood)

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; when materialized, real live scorpion turban, smooth dancer (most of the time)

Isis

guardian of the liver

Isis's *material* form is that of a matronly nurse (wearing a cap to hide her horns). Once she has selected a "beneficiary" for her care, she *summons pests*: pills that appear before the patient every four to six hours, not to exceed six doses in twenty-four hours.

If he protests too much or gives her a hard time in some other way, Isis uses her ability to *dematerialize* the contents of an alcoholic beverage and makes the liquid reappear inside her victim's stomach. The "beverage" may be anything from a swallow of beer to a half-gallon of vodka, depending on how offended she feels.

Brains	5	Determine Dosage	8
Cool	4	Ignore Protests	7
Power	6	Animate Dematerialize Object Materialize Summon Pests	
Ecto- presence	8		

Goal: Tender Loving Care (almost to the point of Killing You With Kindness)

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; when materialized, white uniform or apron, horns under hat, smells like chicken soup

Neith

guardian of the stomach

Neith's ability to make someone repulsed by the thought of food, and nauseous if he does eat, is a variation of *control mind*. (How often have you been told, when you felt sick to your stomach, that it was all in your head?) The degree of nausea varies by how much food the victim swallows, ranging from I'm a Little Queasy to Where's the Bathroom? She can use *ventriloquism* to make the victim's stomach growl so that it's always audible at least ten feet away. Neith can *animate* clothing, causing it to fold and buckle and making the garment feel much smaller than it actually is.

Brains	7	Guess Correct Weight	10
Cool	7	Cast Iron Stomach	10
Power	6	Animate Control Mind Materialize Ventriloquism	
Ecto- presence	8		

Goal: Abdominal Awareness

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; bow & arrows, stomach shield, growling stomach (yours, not hers)

Nephthys

guardian of the lungs

Nephthys uses *read mind* when she sashays into a room, trying to pick out the best subject for her to approach. When she settles on a target (usually either the biggest nerd in the bunch, or a guy who thinks he's a real Casanova), she *possesses* the person and makes him pant like a bloodhound that has just run 10 miles. Then she uses an obscure version of *terrorize* to make the poor sucker freeze in his tracks, unable to do anything but sigh.

Brains	1	Small Talk	4
Cool	9	Seduce	12
Power	6	Materialize Possess Read Mind Terrorize	
Ecto- presence	10		

Goal: Take Men's Breath Away

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; makes Bo Derek look like a five

Sphinx

This is one of the most unusual, familiar, and fearsome creatures of all of those that divide their existence between the physical world and the realm of the ether. We have the ancient Egyptians to thank for statues of what the earliest sphinxes looked like, and the somewhat less ancient Greeks to credit for the first meaningful glimpse into the sphinx's distinctive personality.

Most Egyptian sphinxes had a simple, if bizarre, anatomy: the body of a lion and the head of either a human being or of one of the sacred animals (usually a ram, ibis, or bull). When the sphinx had a human head, it was usually meant as a representation of a pharaoh. We know what these sphinxes look like because of the many images the Egyptians left behind in wall paintings and sculptures. In every such case, the position and placement of the images affirms that sphinxes in Egyptian times were guardians—strong, stolid, and silent. The spiritual entities that corresponded to these earthly representations certainly had some kind of consciousness, but no anecdotes have survived as to the wit or sensibilities of the sphinx in these early times. All of that changed

with the rise of the Greek empire, in which these manifestations from the ether figured prominently. A guardian the sphinx still was (and would always remain)—but now it was a guardian that kept others on *their* guard. The sphinx in Greece still had the body of a lion, to which were affixed the head and upper body of a human female plus a pair of wings. As such, it is the embodiment of some of the best attributes of the animal kingdom: the intellect and “heart” of homo sapiens, the physical strength of the lion, and the ability to fly.

I repeat here two tales which lie at the extremes, one showing the sphinx capable of doing a deed that was basically good (except from the tavern keeper's point of view) and the other demonstrating how sinister and unfeeling the spirit can be. Perhaps it has its reasons for everything it does; since it is apparently impossible to converse with the spirit aside from the strict question-and-answer dialogue that it initiates, we may never know any more about the inscrutable sphinx than we do right now.

In the popular Greek legend, a sphinx guards the entrance to the city of Thebes—which, not coinci-

The Sphinx In Action

Obadiah Richards, a tavern keeper in the lower-class section of Manchester, came to his place of business one day to find the door chained and locked. Also barring his way was a burly woman, the wife of one of his best customers, who said that she would not unlock the chains until he could tell her how many mugs of good ale he had sold in the past month. (As sphinx-questions go, this was quite an easy one.)

Every time he guessed a number, the sphinx repeated the question. He went through every number from one hundred to two thousand, then threw up his hands in exasperation. In the meantime, the dialogue between the man and the woman had attracted quite a crowd, all of whom were having fun at Obadiah's expense.

One of the onlookers shouted, “I never had a single mug o' good ale in yer place.”

Obadiah turned to the woman, swallowed hard, and said, “The answer is zero.”

To the cheers of the audience, the woman unlocked the chains and strode away. She later professed to know nothing about what she had done, and many folk thought she had been temporarily possessed. But Obadiah never forgave her, because from that day on he was forced to lower his prices in order to get people to drink his “good ale.”

Louis Bechere was a good and kind man who

lived outside a small village in France. He was known for his morning walks through the large briar patch near his home; he liked to tell people that when he started the day surrounded by thorns, nothing he encountered after that could be so bad. There was a path twisting across the patch, widening to a fairly large clearing in the center. Everywhere else the patch was impenetrable. Louis would walk to the clearing, sit and rest for a few seconds, and then start back out.

One morning he raised his head after his respite and saw before him, completely blocking the path, an enormous porcupine—a porcupine that could speak!

The animal said to him, “What is the price of tea in China?” Louis knew about prices, and he thought he knew what tea was, but “China” was foreign to him. He panicked and turned to take the other path, but there stood another porcupine—or perhaps the same one; he could not be sure, since he could not see in both directions at once. At any rate, it asked the same question, and Louis was so befuddled he did not even try to answer. After turning this way and that several times and seeing no way out, he lay down and sobbed himself into exhaustion.

That was how his neighbors found him three days later; when they heard his story, they became convinced that he had gone quite mad.

dentally, is also the name of a city in ancient Egypt. She stops travelers to ask them a riddle, and if they do not know the answer, she kills them.

The riddle, which has become known worldwide in one form or another, is this: What has four feet in the morning, two at noon, and three at night?

The answer, as given by the hero Oedipus, is Man: he crawls as a baby, walks erect as an adult, and uses a cane when he reaches old age. Legend has it that when Oedipus supplied the correct answer, the sphinx was so mortified that she killed herself. What actually happened is that she flew off in search of another place to guard. Man's proclivity for security and secrecy being what it is, she has had no trouble finding things to do in all the centuries since Oedipus wrecked her joke.

Sphinxes seem to have changed their appearance many times over the years, and don't use the same tactics all the time. One may appear as a real guard—that is, someone who is performing the seemingly legitimate and important function of preventing unauthorized entry. Or a Sphinx may show up in a place where a person would never expect a guard to be; in front of the door to his bedroom, for instance. Sometimes, instead of appearing, a sphinx remains invisible and does its work by controlling the mind of a living person.

No matter how or where it manifests itself, the sphinx gives away its presence to the perceptive observer (Esteemed Reader, someone who has read this book) by what it says when one approaches it. It asks its victim a question that victim can't possibly answer. It leans toward one and, in a conspiratorial whisper, recites a phrase that obviously requires a response—which is just as obviously unknown to the victim. If the auditor fails to give the correct response (and how could he not fail?), the sphinx refuses to let him pass and uses any means at its disposal to keep him from going where it thinks he doesn't belong. Trying a different door or gate or climbing in through a window won't work, because the sphinx can get well ahead of its target and might be angry at one who has shown himself to be a sneaky person. In all the cases of sphinx visitation we have chronicled, no one has ever been able to get the spirit to go away before it wanted to—unless, by some amazing stroke of luck or tedious process of elimination, he manages to guess what the sphinx wants to hear.



Sphinx

the ultimate guardian

The sphinx has incredible physical power—but fortunately (as Oedipus showed us), it can be outsmarted. Sometimes (as in the Obadiah Richards story) it asks riddles that aren't very hard to answer—and if the victim does guess the right answer, the sphinx loses its *Cool* and immediately *teleports* away.

Brains	2	Create Riddle	5
Muscles	10	Immovable Object	13
Moves	2	Catch Escapee	5
Cool	1	Never Take No for an Answer	4
Power	12	Creature Feature (G) Invisibility Physical Immunity (L) Possess Teleport	

Goal: Get In Your Face and Stay There

Tags: Physical, intelligent; any kind of obstacle you can't get over, around or through

Ka

We have the ancient Egyptians to thank for the earliest recorded commentary on a phenomenon of the spirit world that is unequaled by any other, both in the frequency of its occurrence and in the effect it has on the human race.

From what we know of genetics, even though that science is still in its infancy, we have good reason to believe that no two people living on earth, even so-called identical twins, look exactly alike. From there it is a short jump to the theory that each of the thousands of millions of human beings who has ever lived is in some way visually distinguishable from all the others.

Yet, every person *does* have a double—an absolute duplicate of himself or herself in appearance and mannerisms. This “other person” spends at least some of its existence in the realm of ether. If and when it travels to the physical realm, it can produce a remarkable, perhaps pivotal, change in the life of the mortal being whom it mirrors.

The Egyptians used the word “ka” to refer to the essence of each individual human being—those qualities and properties that set the person apart from all others.

Through the ages, this type of spirit has been given many names by many cultures, and a myriad interpretations have been attached to the significance of its appearance. In Scotland this spirit is

called the fetch; in Germany, the doppelganger, and in both of those cultures it generally has a negative connotation—a person who sees his double is soon destined to die. Jewish lore, on the other hand, maintains that to see one’s double is good luck because it endows the person with the ability to know his own future.

The truth of the matter seems to be that encountering one’s double produces a result that is as unpredictable as the fact of whether or not the double will appear to begin with. The result of a meeting between a person and his other self depends on uncountable variables. All we can do to prepare ourselves for the possibility is to believe that the possibility exists—and that is the only purpose that this essay can hope to achieve.

A double may try to communicate with one either vocally or through gestures. It may remain mute and motionless, leaving its victim to imagine or deduce why it has come. It may appear not before its victim but before people who know him, and it may do or say something that he benefits from or suffers for at a later time.

Do not go looking for your ethereal ka, for whether or not you find it is not up to you. Do not try to predetermine what will happen when it does appear, because you cannot dictate the circumstances under which that might occur. Just be aware that it could happen, and live your life accordingly.



Ka

double trouble

If one sees a ka that isn’t his or hers, one might not know it’s a ka or what model ka it is. (Late-model kas all seem to look the same.)

If a person ever meets his own ka, he or she has to be very *Cool* not to be frightened out of his or her skin. If he tries to drive his ka away, it *reads his mind* (which is, after all, its mind) and knows exactly what the person plans to do. The real problem is that in addition to the victim’s mind, every ka has a mind of its own. It does what it thinks is best for itself—which may or may not be best for the person.

Brains	Just as Smart as Victim
Muscles	Just as Strong as Victim
Moves	Just as Quick as Victim
Cool	Just as Cool as Victim
Power	10 Read Mind Terrorize to the Max

Goal: Be Just Like Victim

Tags: Physical, intelligent; just like victim

The Benu Bird

The human tendency to associate birds with time goes back, I am persuaded, to the Benu Bird.

The first water, called Nun, flowed like a river through nothing. The world—and time—began when a bird, the Benu Bird, flew over Nun, landed on a rock in the middle of the water and let out a piercing call—which broke the silence of Nun. Light shone for the first time. Life came into the world.

The priests of the Benu Bird gave thanks for the 24 hours of the day, for the 365 days of the calendar year. They thanked the Benu Bird for the 1460 years between the time when the calendar year and the solar year began and ended on the same day. They corrected anyone who miscalculated any measurements of the calendar or the clock.

Even after the last priests died, the Benu Bird continued its work. Witness the lament of a Roman sculptor who erred in his dating of a monument to Caesar Augustus in 28 B.C.:

*Avicilla avicilla in caelo
Cur illud fecitis in oculo meo*

(Roughly translated:

*Little bird, little bird, in the sky
Why did you do that in my eye?)*

The spirit's punishment for inaccurate dating is swift and messy. Statuary is regularly inscribed

with dates. Is it any wonder that statues and monuments are regular targets of the Benu Bird? It should not surprise us that many historians to this day spend more time indoors than do normal people, or that when they venture out they usually wear hats. The Swiss and the Germans seem particularly susceptible to this spirit's spell.

Benu Bird

Egyptian spirit of time

The bird's *Ectopresence* is strongest where it doesn't have a lot to do, such as the Greenwich Naval Observatory, and weakest in places where nobody seems to care about exact time, such as a sleepy Mexican village (where the only measure of time is "mañana") or a baseball game (which, in theory, can go on forever).

Power	8	Flight	
		Time Slime	

Ecto- presence	9*
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* variable

Goal: Make People Respect Time

Tags: Ectoplasmic, mindless; piercing cry

Caligorant

In the earliest days of Egyptian civilization, Caligorant waylaid travelers. We know that the spirit was originally personified as a cannibalistic giant who would ensnare voyagers with an enormous net. It is probable, based on what we have learned from cultures since the days of the pharaohs, that Caligorant is actually an ethereal being, and that the spirit is not technically cannibalistic or murderous—although its influence can injure or kill its victim.

What Caligorant does, in simplest terms, is to cause people to become lost en route from one place to another. Caligorant can be a thick fog that conceals the path its victim should have taken. It can be an oasis or some other sort of illusion that disappears when the traveler reaches the spot.

There is no way to ward off the spirit if it succeeds in insinuating itself into a traveler's mind. The best a victim can do is admit to himself (and to any fellow travelers) that he is lost, and stay in one spot until help arrives or until the feeling of disorientation and hopelessness passes (evidence Caligorant has tired of the game and moved on). The worst he can do is continue to insist that he knows where he's going, for the unhappy traveler may find his new destination is a place from which there is no return.

Caligorant

tormentor of travelers

If an *illusion* of a bogus street sign or a broken-down bridge doesn't get the victim to change direction, then Caligorant uses *control mind* to make him or her think left is right and east is north. If he resists that, the spirit *murphies* his compass into giving a wrong reading, or turns the road map into such a mess that no matter how he or she folds it, the victim can never find the section he needs to see.

Brains	2	Ingenuity	5
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Cool	6	Perseverance	10
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Power	7	Control Mind	
		Make Illusion	
		Murphy (L)	

Ecto- presence	13
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Goal: Confusion

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; feeling of disorientation, clumsiness, bad luck

Ahagotsu

My first experience with an Egyptian spirit in fact took place in England in 1899. I was a clerk in the Alexandria office of my company, but I had returned to London when my father took ill. As fate would have it, he died two weeks after my arrival. I took a leave of indeterminate length because, as the man of the family, I was obliged to settle my father's estate. During this time I became involved in what I have since referred to as the Ahagotsu Affair, and, as well, made my first acquaintance with that intrepid adventurer and my good friend Shrewsbury Smith.

Properly grieving for my father, I had not paid much attention to the newspapers, so I did not know of the terror that was taking place in the East End of the city. But what a terror it was! The poor pantomime troupe at the Hobb's Lane Music Hall were not only receiving bad reviews from the critics but were being stalked by some hideous East End phantom. Was this a reappearance of Jack the Ripper (or someone like him), the nefarious murderer of young women, turning his attention to other victims? Thus the papers speculated, and thus I believed, until a mysterious stranger called upon me in the middle of a rain-soaked night.

The visitor stood six feet tall, square-shouldered and square-jawed, with the rugged good looks that one generally attributes to an Eton man. He wore a long wool overcoat and a battered brimmed hat, both of which had seen better days. When he spoke, I was amazed to hear the lilting, Celtic sound of the collieries instead of a clipped, well-bred English accent.

"Will you be Mister Tobin, then?" he asked politely. "Late of Alexandria in Egypt?"

"That is correct," I replied.

"Then I am in desperate need of your assistance. May I come in?"

I let the visitor into my house, and so began my long friendship with Mr. Shrewsbury Smith. He quickly told me his story. He was in fact a Welshman, though born in Shropshire and rather well-educated. He had seen service in India and Africa, and only recently retired from the army. He knew one of the women who had vanished at Hobb's Lane Music Hall, and he could not be satisfied with the conduct of the police in that matter. He had something to show me—evidence that he believed Scotland Yard had overlooked. He reached into his vest pocket and pulled out several paper pages.

On each page, drawn in an irregular hand, were signs and symbols which I recognized instantly. I demanded an explanation. He explained. Shrewsbury is like that. He does not waste words.

The company at Hobb's Lane was not a particularly talented one. If the music hall's regular audience had demanded talent from the performers, in fact, the members of this company would probably not be working there. But the regular audience was uncouth and hard-drinking. Bawdy songs and unso-

phisticated humor, limericks and liquor were enough to satisfy the normal crowd at Hobb's Lane. Even this degree of entertainment stretched the talents of the troupe to their limits.

The papers I held in my hands had first appeared at Hobb's Lane some weeks ago, mysteriously delivered to the desk of the troupe manager, Mr. Sears Wornwell. To Wornwell, they were just crude pictures on paper. He mentioned them casually to some members of the troupe (from whom Shrewsbury subsequently learned about the incident), and threw them in his wastebasket. Indeed, Wornwell received another such "gift" a few days after the first—and two days after he crumpled and discarded the second message, Sears Wornwell disappeared. Witnesses saw him go into his office, but no one ever saw him leave.

Life went on at Hobb's Lane; since Wornwell was neither very popular nor very efficient as a manager, no one thought much of his absence. Many patrons were heard to remark that the show was better off without him, while others observed that any change in the troupe would have been an improvement.

Papers with similar drawings next appeared on the dressing room table of Polly Porter, the woman Shrewsbury had known. I assume that she was a friend of his sister's, or perhaps someone whom he had met in church. The symbols on these pages must have meant little to Miss Porter, and like Wornwell she apparently mentioned them in passing to others in the troupe but thereafter ignored them. A day later, on the stage at Hobb's Lane, as she began the second chorus of "The French Floozy's Lament," Miss Porter was abducted.

Both of the sober witnesses in the audience that evening told police the same story. Miss Porter had trouble with breath control, and she had to draw a second deep breath in the middle of the word "turpentine" in the third line of the chorus. The witnesses remember this, because for them it was the high point of Miss Porter's performance, if not the high point of the entire show, and they waited to begin drinking until after it had taken place.

But I digress.... The witnesses told police that suddenly a hideously deformed creature dropped onto the stage from somewhere in the rafters above. It could have been human, for it had legs and arms where those limbs usually are placed. It moved slowly and awkwardly, and it was dressed in tattered rags which clung grotesquely to its body. Miss Porter stopped in the middle of her second breath and stared dumbly at the creature. It bent forward, apparently in some sort of a bow, first to the audience and then to Miss Porter. It then began to shuffle its feet in an odd manner, as if it were having trouble standing up. The audience began to throw things onto the stage. The creature made a deep, unearthly growl and swept Miss Porter into its arms. The

witnesses think that she fainted as it ran offstage with her. She has never been seen again.

"That thing has come back twice now," Shrewsbury told me. "It's taken two more people, and one of them is the only clown the troupe had. He's not very funny, but there's supposed to be a clown." He pointed to the papers I held. "Trash never gets thrown away at Hobb's Lane. These are the strange messages that each person received before he or she was abducted. I think I know what they are, and I have been told that you will be able to read them."

Of course I could read them. It was not for nothing that I had taken a degree in Obscure Ancient Languages at Oxford. The symbols on each page were ancient hieroglyphics, the crude system of writing that developed in Egypt thousands of years ago. What I held in my hand was not ancient writing, however. Some of the symbols were drawn on newspapers with last month's football scores on them!

I went to my study desk and lit the lamp there. Shrewsbury followed me, and on my desk we arranged the messages in order of their appearance. Painstakingly I began my translation. The results were astonishing. The first, received by Mr. Wornwell, read as follows:

*There once was a Kushite from Edfu
Who had trouble assembling his tutu.
From ballet it detracted
And on his body it acted
A lot like the Nile cataracted.*

"My God, that's awful," Shrewsbury said. "It's worse than the limericks the troupe uses. Are you certain that's what it says?"

"Yes, quite." My mind raced as I nodded to Shrewsbury. The Kushites were an ancient people who lived in the region of the Sudan. Edfu was an ancient city in southern Egypt. A cataract was a point in a river where the water spilled over a large cliff or precipice. Today we call it a waterfall. What performer in his right mind would include these words in a limerick? More importantly, who on Earth would think this was funny?

I translated the second message. My horror grew.

*The third skit is too subtle. When the dragon
declares his love to St. George instead of the
princess, the audience may not see the joke.
Have the dragon build a giant stone tomb for
George. That should make it clear.*

I heard Shrewsbury gasp behind me as he read the translation over my shoulder. I knew how he felt. I remember distinctly the cold perspiration on my brow as I began the next translation. My hand could barely hold the pen steady as I wrote.

*The joke about government is wonderful. An
opposition political party is a hilarious idea.
May I use that joke in my routine?*

This affair had become about something much

more important than the disappearance of a few bad actors and the dwindling attendance at a mediocre East End music hall. Whatever wrote this had aspirations to the stage. If Shrewsbury and I could not somehow stop this thing, the entirety of British humor as we understand it could be in danger.

There were further clues on the pages, clues not connected with the translation, clues that only someone trained such as I could detect. Just as we English no longer spell our words the way that Geoffrey Chaucer did in the fourteenth century, so the Egyptians of different eras used different symbols to refer to the same thing. These hieroglyphs were particularly distinctive, because only during the brief reign of one Old Kingdom pharaoh was the depiction of a ram-headed man kicking another man in the buttocks the symbol for the word "hilarious." Whatever had written these horrible messages had learned to write hieroglyphics as they were written in the reign of the pharaoh Ahagotsu.

Smith and I rode a cab to Hobb's Lane Music Hall, determined to look for more clues to this baffling mystery. The theater was dark and deserted, but Smith forced the door open and our lanterns provided us with adequate light for our search. As we worked our way past the dressing rooms, we heard a strange sound coming from the stage. Smith and I exchanged nervous glances. Neither of us could recognize the odd moaning. Smith reached under his overcoat and pulled out a pistol. I felt better, and we cautiously advanced toward the stage.

We entered at the rear of the room, behind the theater seats. Down on stage was a horrifying sight. The thing that the witnesses had described, this thing that perhaps had once been human, stood on the stage wrapped in rags, wearing a black top hat and a clown's round red nose. It shuffled its feet in some kind of hideous dance and spread its arms wide as if it were receiving applause. And then it bowed to the empty seats. It's a mummy!" I whispered to Smith. "It's an Egyptian mummy!"

"That is what ran off with Polly!" he declared. He took two strides forward and aimed his pistol, firing a shot that clearly penetrated the mummy's chest as the creature rose from its second bow.

The bullet had no effect whatsoever. The mummy removed its top hat and pulled out of it a large white rabbit. If the bullet had done any damage, the thing could not have accomplished that trick.

The mummy ran off stage right. The rabbit exited stage left. Smith and I ran after the mummy. We followed it backstage, always able to hear the sound of its stiff, worn rags sliding across the dusty floor. Then suddenly we heard nothing. Our lanterns showed us only tantalizing shadows of prop guillotines and clothing mannequins. Smith shot one of the mannequins, just so the others would not get any ideas. It seemed reasonable to me at the time.



"Look," Smith said. I knelt to shine my lantern on the ground. The marks where the mummy's feet had slid through the sawdust were clearly visible. We followed them and turned a corner. Smith shot another mannequin. Then we reached a place, in the middle of what appeared to be an empty storage room, where the mummy prints just stopped. They didn't lead anywhere, and they gave no clues. It looked as if the mummy had vanished in mid-flight.

Smith strode to the point in the floor where the tracks stopped and shot it. I was mildly startled. Smith fired once more into the floor and then knelt to inspect the damage. "The light, Tobin," he said to me. "Bring me your light."

I did as I was told and together we saw that the bullets had not imbedded themselves in the wood of the floor. Instead, they had gone neatly through, leaving two clean holes in the planks. "It's hollow underneath there," I exclaimed. Smith nodded and stamped his foot hard on the wood. The floor planks splintered and broke away, revealing a shallow passageway that dropped below the theater.

Smith lowered himself into the passage and held his lantern out. "I see several more," he said. "There are tunnels in all directions down here. Two men alone will never be able to search them."

That was it, then. We left the theater and called on Scotland Yard. We told the detectives there that Sears Wornwell, Polly Parker, and the other missing

troupe members, if they were still alive, were being kept in the network of tunnels underneath Hobb's Lane Music Hall. I began to explain what it was that had abducted them, but Smith stopped me. Over breakfast, he explained why.

"That thing is from a world outside of their experience, Tobin," he told me between bites of kippers and stewed tomatoes. "The police are good men, but not educated men. Do you think they would take us seriously if we explained to them that a two-thousand-year-old mummified Egyptian who wanted to break into show business had kidnapped Polly and the others? I'm having a bit of difficulty with the concept myself, and I went to public school²!"

I quite saw his point. Bullets hadn't halted that thing. I rather doubted that anything we modern people understood was likely to have an effect on it, either. It was then that I hit upon the idea of researching the situation in the family library. Perhaps the ancients themselves had anticipated such a problem, and discovered a way to solve it.

After what seemed like hours of poring over the collection of transcriptions from Old Kingdom Egypt that my father and I had amassed over the years, I believed I had hit upon the solution. The Egyptians then were not, by and large, as concerned as we are

²In England, a public school is an exclusive private school, and the public goes to Comprehensive school. Where comprehensives go....

today about mummies coming back to life. But there was one mummy of one pharaoh that the sources all show greatly concerned the ancient Egyptians. That pharaoh was Ahagotsu, the clown-king of Egypt.

The ancient Egyptians buried their pharaoh with all that they thought he would need in his life after death. They buried warrior pharaohs with chariots and spears, for instance. They buried their pharaohs with food and gold, and in some cases with mummified servants to attend the kings in the afterlife. The records of the building of the tomb of Ahagotsu show that he was buried with large, messy, cream-covered pastries, with hollow, bladder-like cushions that emitted an embarrassing sound when sat upon, and with other such odd, unkingly things.

For reasons not entirely clear in the chronicles, though I suspect they were as worried about the future of Egyptian humor as we were about our own, the priests and people of ancient Egypt were very concerned that Ahagotsu never return to the land of the living. At the conclusion of one of the accounts of the pharaoh's reign, a scribe had written:

Should the body of Ahagotsu ever again walk the banks of the river Nile, take heart, for there is a remedy. Deep in the pharaoh's own tomb we have placed a scarab made of charmed sardonyx. Place that scarab on the body of Ahagotsu's mummy, and he will give you no problem.

After nearly a full day of searching through seemingly endless, dusty, stiff-paged books, I had found the solution! Archaeologists had partially excavated the pyramid-tomb of Ahagotsu near Memphis. Shrewsbury and I could book passage on a ship to Alexandria, travel to Memphis, find the scarab charm, and return to England to put an end to the mummy menace in a matter of months.

A gentleman from Scotland Yard called that afternoon. His men had found Wornwell, Polly Parker, and the other missing members of the troupe in the tunnels beneath the music hall. They were alive, but nearly deranged from their ordeal. They had been forced to endure joke after joke, prank after prank, comedy so horrible and unfunny that only an American could have endured it and emerged unaffected. The mummy of Ahagotsu was nowhere to be found. He remained hidden in the dark hallways under London. Shrewsbury and I still had a job to do.

I had originally planned to return to Egypt anyway, to continue with my business career. The search for the scarab charm and the hope of ridding London of Ahagotsu now gave the journey a greater purpose. I spent my time reading all the literature that I could about Egyptian amulets and charms. The work of Dr. E. A. Wallis Budge proved particularly fascinating and, I hoped, would be useful.

Every society in the world seems to have its own version of amulets, charms or talismans, little pieces

of jewelry which people believe possess some kind of magical power. These charms are made of simple natural materials, but are usually distinct in some way such as color or texture. Stones with unusual colors or markings are very often made into charms and talismans. The ancient Egyptians liked to carve their charms into distinctive shapes, and one of the most common shapes was that of the scarab beetle. The scarab beetle was important to the Egyptians because they believed that the god Khepera rolled the sun across the sky just the way that the scarab beetle rolled a ball of dung across the earth. I put aside Dr. Budge's notes and left my cabin to take a stroll on the deck. Standing there, watching the familiar European shore grow ever smaller in the distance, I felt a twinge of—how shall I put this?—foreboding about our upcoming adventure. I pulled out the translation that I had made of the ancient chronicler's instructions and looked at it again.

Place that scarab on the body of Ahagotsu's mummy, and he will give you no problem.

I was reassured.

After a long journey over sea and land, Shrewsbury and I arrived at Memphis. We faced the unknown, the deadly and mysterious spirit world. My blood raced through my veins as we plotted the strategy of our assault on Ahagotsu's pyramid tomb. Shrewsbury thought that the more people we took into the coming conflict, the more likely that some number of them would survive, and the more likely that some of them would be us. I chided him for his gallows sense of humor and explained that I could not in good conscience endanger innocent lives.

So we stood, two men alone, on a windswept, dusty desert plain outside Memphis. Before us rose a majestic stone structure, pointed at the top and broad at the base. Here, in this pyramid, the terror beneath the Hobb's Lane Music Hall would meet its match. Here the Ahagotsu Affair would end!

"How do we get in, then?" Shrewsbury asked.

Our spirits only slightly dampened, we rode back to Memphis in search of a local guide. An archaeological team had partially excavated the site, and over the years the tomb of Ahagotsu had been plundered by grave robbers. There must be someone in this city who could locate the entrance. Shrewsbury found a small boy who—for a modest fee—would show us a secret passage in the tomb wall.

So we stood, two men and a boy, alone on a windswept, dusty desert plain outside Memphis, once again ready to put an end to the earthly existence of Ahagotsu. The boy pressed a secret stone in the wall of the pyramid, and a door reluctantly groaned open to reveal a narrow passageway. Shrewsbury lit a kerosene lantern and handed it forward to me. I stepped into the ancient passage, and almost immediately a small form hurtled out of the darkness at my head.

I quickly ducked, and whatever it was flew past me and into the sunlight. I heard an unpleasant thud, and when I looked back I saw Shrewsbury lying unconscious in the sand. The boy guide ran off toward the city in the distance, crying out prayers in his native tongue. I scrambled to my friend's side. The flying object had struck Shrewsbury squarely in the face, and a thin trickle of blood now lined his forehead. His eyelids flickered, and I realized that he was only stunned. I searched for the object that had flown out at us. There it was—some kind of stone. I scrambled over to it, and Shrewsbury crawled on his belly to see what had struck him. It was stone all right, but only become so by the ravages of time. Once it had been light and sugary and no doubt sticky and sweet. We could make out the hardened crust and the petrified filling.

"A custard pie," Shrewsbury muttered, wiping blood from his face and murmuring words to himself that I dare not repeat. "A no-account custard pie!"

"A trap that was never sprung," I said. "A practical joke waiting all these centuries to be played."

My intrepid friend sprang to his feet. "You're sure that what's in this tomb will get the bugger?"

"All we have to do is place the scarab on his body, and then he will give us no problem."

"Then let's get on with it, mate."

We strode into the secret passage with renewed determination. The way was dark and treacherous, a narrow, winding corridor with surprises at every turn. Around one corner we found a strangely pleasant garden full of bright flowers. The sight was so unexpected that we stopped in our tracks. "They can't be real," Shrewsbury said, and he was right. When he bent to examine one, it shot a brief stream of dark dust into his face. He stood, unable to grin but unable to get fully irate. That dust, of course, had been ink before the passage of time had dried it up. After tribulations too numerous to mention, Shrewsbury and I finally reached a large room filled with stone furniture. Tomb robbers had of course long ago removed any valuables from the room, but the open, empty case that had once held the mummy Ahagotsu told us that we had at last found the room we sought. Shrewsbury sank down into one of the oversized stone chairs. The chair made a rude bathroom sound, and a cloud of dust blew out from beneath my friend's rump.

"So, Tobin," he growled. "Where is this scarab amulet, eh?" Frustrated, I shook my head. We moved along the far wall, tapping lightly. I found a loose brick and pressed, and the whole wall gave way. We stepped back and avoided the cascade of petrified pies and cakes that fell down, breaking into tiny pieces of rock on the floor. The wall slid completely aside, and we saw the room that it had hidden. We had found what we were looking for!

Shrewsbury lifted the kerosene lamp high above his head, so that its light shone on the entire room.

It was empty save for one thing in the middle of the dusty floor: a rose-colored stone carving of a scarab beetle! How could the tomb robbers fail to make off with a treasure such as this? Simple—the scarab was some five feet long and three feet wide. Shrewsbury set down his lamp and walked over to it, and the thing came up nearly to his waist. He bent to push it, to try to move it in any way, but he was unsuccessful. "Tobin, the thing must weigh a ton," he finally said. "If we could set this on the mummy's body, of course it would give us no problem—it'd crush the thing into dust!"

My new friend Shrewsbury and I spent many years in each other's company thereafter. I never did report back for work as a lowly clerk—now that I had found my true calling. And Shrewsbury likewise needed no prompting to continue along the path his life had taken. Since both of us were men of independent means with a desire to make our marks on the world, we formed a team and resolved to spend our lives researching and, if necessary, combating the denizens of the spirit world who had made their way onto this mortal coil.

And we further resolved, each in his own mind, never to give up the ghost, as it were—never again to admit to failure in a quest as we had been forced to do at the end of the Ahagotsu Affair. Shrewsbury never mentioned this incident again, but I have a feeling he never forgot about it, either. He shared the remorse that I feel because we were never able to stop the mummy of Ahagotsu—never able to save British humor from the fate which it has met today.

Ahagotsu

clown pharaoh of Egypt

His jokes might have been funny once (and only once), but Ahagotsu doesn't know how unfunny he is—and his victim had better not break the news to him. He lives (in a manner of speaking) to cause laughter. He can *poltergeist* anything ever thrown by the Three Stooges, and when he wants some tips on delivery and timing he might *summon pests* in the forms of the world's most awful burlesque comedians.

Brains	6	Embarrassing Pranks	9
Muscles	5	Throw Things Accurately	8
Moves	2	Break Dance	5
Cool	2	Interview	5
Power	5	Poltergeist (G) Summon Pests	

Goal: Make People Laugh

Tags: Physical, intelligent; ragged clothing, shambling gait, red rubber nose, squirting corsage, whoopee cushion... you get the idea

Enbilulu

The ancient Sumerians never failed to appreciate the wonderful location their gods chose for them. The fertile land around the rivers Tigris and Euphrates made a better territory than the mountains to the north or the desert to the west. For the boon of living where the weather was pleasant and crops grew lush and healthy, the people of Sumer gave thanks to the creator-deity Enki and one of Enki's chief assistants, Enbilulu.

Also known as the "canal inspector," Enbilulu's chief responsibility was the proper functioning of the two rivers. Today, the land around the Tigris and the Euphrates is still fertile, thousands of years since the Sumerians passed into history.

But when the Sumerian civilization declined, Enbilulu was deprived of the homage his worshippers had heaped upon him. The spirit was not heard from, or very much thought about, for more than 40 centuries.

But the construction of dams, the excavation of farm ponds and reservoirs, the very march of progress—these stirred the water-stirrer at last.

Enbilulu does his work nowadays by possessing the bodies of human beings—and these people, when encountered and questioned, are not in the least reticent about who they are and what they are here to do. The basic speech, pieced together from accounts related to us by several witnesses to these possessions, runs something like this:

"I am Enbilulu, who makes the water flow and thereby brings fertility and life. Water that does not move becomes stagnant and putrid, just as a person too long in one place stagnates and falls under the sway of the evil deity Kachpo Tato. People are responsible for themselves, but only I, Enbilulu, have the duty of seeing that water does not pool or puddle. Now I have work to do. You will be so grateful when you see how good I am!"

Enbilulu's work consists of locating the nearest source of standing water and setting that water in motion somehow. He continues this activity for as long as possible—until the puddle evaporates, until the well runs dry, until the person being possessed falls unconscious from exhaustion. If the victim is physically restrained, preventing him from doing Enbilulu's work, the spirit simply leaves the body and goes off in search of another helper.

Another way to cause Enbilulu to abandon a possessed body is to give him the praise he so desperately seeks. A simple "thank you" will not suffice—he is not that desperate—but if he is lavished with compliments for a minute or two, he pauses in his work and says something like, "You are wise to appreciate Enbilulu. Will you be my disciple and take over my work here?" If the supplicant answers yes, Enbilulu departs the body he is occupying.

The Wine Seller's Possession

One day in Baghdad, a man named Seeko Fanta came upon a wine dealer kneeling before his stall, running his fingers through a large puddle and humming softly to himself all the while. Everyone else avoided the man, thinking that he was balmy or besotted. Fanta, a kind and curious man, approached the merchant and conversed with him.

He tried to get the man to stop by holding his arms, but the merchant broke free and went back to his task. Then Fanta thought about what the man said in his speech and hit upon the idea of giving him praise for his work, so as to humor him. As Fanta described it in his journal, "I thanked and praised the man for a short time, but he kept on wallowing in the puddle. I was about to give up on this approach, because I did not want to be carried away to the asylum, too, when suddenly he lifted his head and thanked me for my kindness. In the next moment his eyes seemed to clear, and he grinned sheepishly, apologized for the disturbance, and backed into his tent." The man was the talk of the neighborhood for weeks afterward, but his business prospered as never before. Everyone who heard about the incident decided that his wine must be very fine wine indeed.

Enbilulu

water wheel

After Enbilulu *possesses* a person, he puts that person to work. Some tasks are more difficult than others; it's really easy to run from house to house turning on every faucet, but it's pretty tough to dig a hole in the dam that's keeping Lake Whatchamacallit from gushing down into Happy Valley subdivision—and pretty dumb, if that's where your house is.

Enbilulu only likes water when it's moving. A glass of water sitting still on a table, or water trapped inside a pipe, is a bad thing. Rivers, wide-open faucets, and fountains are good things. Waterfalls are just terrific.

Brains	2	Find Water	5
Cool	4	Soak Up Praise	7
Power	2	Possess	
Ecto- presence	4		

Goal: Cause a Stir

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; dripping faucet, playing in puddles, leaky hose

Nebo

I am able to trace this spirit back to its origin for the simple reason that I myself have been visited by Nebo, and I have been able to establish one vital fact about this supernatural entity that has heretofore been undiscerned.

Nebo's sphere of influence in the pantheon of ancient Assyria was communication, particularly writing. He has been described in some scholarly works as the "scribe of the gods." He was quite popular among the Assyrians, to the extent that he eventually boasted almost as many followers as his father Marduk, one of the prime creators in the Assyrian and Babylonian cultures.

It is now clear to me, however, that Nebo never wanted the job his father foisted upon him, and to this day he persists in trying to give it away. Here I relate, from personal experience, the time that Nebo came into my life.

In the waning years of the nineteenth century I was laboring—and that is truly the correct word—as a clerk in Alexandria. I enjoyed my location, since I have always had a particular love of Egyptian culture and history. But although I did not fully realize it at the time, I did not enjoy my occupation.

One day I was nearly asleep at my desk, having been given an especially dull job on a day when I was not in the best of spirits to begin with. I let my chin drop toward my chest, and may have actually dozed off for a few seconds, when I was shocked back to wakefulness by a man clearing his throat. Immediately thinking that my supervisor had caught me slacking, I began conjuring up a suitable excuse even as my head was snapping back to an erect position. Much to my amazement and confusion, the person I beheld I had never seen before: a young man of unhappy aspect, dressed in robe and sandals, holding a pointed stick and carrying a clay tablet. Before I could speak, he addressed me:

"Do you want to be a serious writer?" he asked.

In fact, I had often envied the authors and scholars whose works I had read, thinking how wonderfully satisfying it would be to share my thoughts and findings and have them received by others with the same sort of enthusiasm that I, as a reader, had shown. But at this point in my life, I could not be sure how to honestly answer this strange person's question. I had an instinctive feeling he would not take no for an answer. And so... "Y-yes," I stammered.

"No goal has ever been achieved by he who does not strive for it," the figure responded, launching into what sounded like a prepared speech. "If you wish to emulate me, you must work, not just dream. I am a serious writer by birthright, but you have no such advantage. You must work." He looked down, made a mark on his tablet, and said, "I will be back to check on your progress."

Then a terrible, heavy drowsiness overtook me. I wanted to continue the conversation, to ask this odd-

looking person what he knew about being a serious writer, but before my lips could form the words I had lapsed into a stupor. It seemed to me that I was only asleep for a second, but when I next looked up, the figure was gone.

I did not know if what I had just experienced was a dream, or if it had been a tangible manifestation. But I decided that the answer to that question was immaterial. What had happened was that the flame of desire within me had been ignited. It was on that day that I resolved to begin actively working toward being a writer, to pursue that goal no matter how long it took. If the work I am composing continues to inform and inspire readers after I have passed from this existence, then I—and you, Esteemed Reader—will have Nebo to thank.

In the course of my travels and my conversations, I have encountered hundreds of other people who have professed to be working toward such status. Many of them have related to me stories not dissimilar to my own experience, but with considerably more unhappy consequences.

There is the case of Tyrone Preider, an American whom I interviewed while he was in jail in Paris, charged with damaging private property. The gendarmes put no stock in his story, but I believe it implicitly. He was sitting alone in his hotel room, penning a brief letter to his sister back in New Jersey just before retiring for the night.

Nebo appeared before him and said, "You have a good name. Do you want to be a serious writer?" The poor man made the mistake of saying yes, whereupon Nebo said, "Then you must write—write at every opportunity!"

The man, who may have been a bit unstable to begin with, took the instructions literally. He began writing down every thought that came into his head—anything, just to keep writing. He ran out of ink and paper at the same time, but he was not dissuaded. He unsheathed the small dagger he kept for protection and continued to write.

When the proprietor of the hotel let himself into the room the next afternoon, he found Ty Preider sprawled on the floor in an exhausted slumber—and snippets of gibberish crudely engraved on every available square foot of wall space.

Just as tragic, in its own quiet way, is the tale of a woman who agreed to tell me her story but would not give me her true name. She had no formal education, but was quite happy in her life as a seamstress in a small village outside London. Then the urge to write struck her, and in the space of a few agonizing years turned her into a broken woman. She was just barely literate, but when Nebo came to her, she said yes to him because she thought he was going to teach her how to become "a serious writer." Instead of instruction, he left her only with the usual obsession.

She began to prepare manuscripts of all sorts, keeping up her trade as a seamstress only enough to afford her the barest of necessities. She offered her writings to anyone who would receive her. She started with owners of book publishing companies, newspapers, and literary journals. In every case she was turned away, at first politely and later not so politely. As time went on, she became more and more dejected and panicky, fearing the day when Nebo would come back to "check on her progress" and she would have no progress to report.

Finally, something inside her snapped. She threw away her pen and ink, changed her residence, and adopted a false name in hopes that Nebo would not find her. Unless death has mercifully taken her to a better life by now, we assume that she is still hiding in fear and misery.

I feel most sympathetic toward this woman, and I am terribly full of regret because I cannot locate her again now, almost 10 years since she told me her story. If I could, I would tell her that she has no need to fear Nebo's return. In the hundreds of cases I have examined—including my own—Nebo has never appeared to the same person more than once, and I believe I have at last puzzled out this odd behavior. In all of his visitations, Nebo is described as worried or disturbed of countenance. His primary motivation is *not* to encourage authors, but to find someone who can take his place!

If Nebo ever looks down from his unearthly van-

tage and discovers someone dressed in a tunic and sandals, drawing arcane symbols on a clay tablet with a sharp stick, then he will finally have found someone who can replace him as Assyria's writer.

Nebo

indescribably simple

After he *materializes*, Nebo exercises his other special ability by asking his age-old question. *Project compulsion* is a sophisticated, specialized version of *control mind*, lasting for long after Nebo has gone away and concerned with only one thing: making the affected person want to be "a serious writer." If you answer no to his question, Nebo simply disappears. But if you misunderstand the question (which invariably happens to anyone who hasn't read this book) and answer yes, then the compulsion kicks in.

Power	6	Materialize
		Project Compulsion

Ecto-	
presence	9

Goal: Finding His Replacement

Tags: Ectoplasmic, mindless; victim keeps pencil behind ear, notebook in pocket, writes to pen pals who have never heard of him

Siliman

"Laugh, and the world laughs with you," writes poet Ella Wheeler Wilcox. A century before she penned that line, Friedrich von Schiller observed that "The joke loses everything when the joker laughs himself." Those two bits of philosophy—opposed as bits of philosophy often are—illustrate the range of mortal reaction to the irrepressible sprite known as Siliman.

The spirit is believed to have originated in India, possibly as the result of the Black Hole of Calcutta tragedy. Records indicate that one of those that perished on the night of June 20th, 1756 was Johannes Siljermann, a jovial Dutch merchant. The survivors tell that Siljermann tried, even to the last, to cheer his fellow prisoners in their cramped, subterranean cell, telling puns and riddles and repeating bawdy rhymes.

The similarity of moniker and the description of this brave man's personality leads me to conjecture that it is his spirit that travels the ether, trying to bring good cheer and laughter to the darkest moments of mankind.

Certainly, not all men and women respond to laughter in the same way. Many folk find them-

selves joining in with a merry chuckle even if the conversation is not their own—when they hear laughter, they cannot help but laugh themselves.

On the other extreme, some few individuals of grim mien find mirth beneath their dignity in even the most informal situations. It is this indifferent response that seems to goad the spirit into inducing laughter without care for the consequences—and results in those infrequent sorry tales we have recorded in Siliman's name.

Siliman was not easily discouraged (a trait, it must be noted, that is shared by every would-be humorist this writer knows of), but even the spirit's irrepressibility had its limits, and the Indian continent cannot have been the most comfortable place for a spirit of mirth and humor.

It is virtually certain that Siliman left India in April of 1875, bound for Portsmouth aboard the *H.M.S. Vawdevil*. Siliman must have been greatly gratified at the reception it got aboard the *Vawdevil*, notwithstanding the fact that the crew comprised a captive audience. Buoyed by its newfound success, the spirit went merrily on its way and found the Western world to be truly a land of opportunity.

Captain's Log—*The Vawdevil*

"May 4: High spot of the journey so far. As per my instructions to first mate, the crew gathered for an extemporaneous celebration of my birthday. Speech by bosun's mate was short but touching, calling me 'best cap'n we've ever sailed under.' Mood slightly spoiled when one man in back of group snickered at that statement. Six suspects flogged simultaneously; three of them confessed." Capt. Esau Skowlin

"May 16: Journey still bedeviled by unseemly mirth and levity among the crew when my back is turned. Have ordered prayers recited two hours after the end of each watch to stem the frivolity, but giggling continues. Have threatened to revive the stocks." Capt. Skowlin

"June 12: The limit of my tolerance has been reached. Let them cackle. No longer will I suffer loss of dignity—and, in truth, I can ill afford to lose any more crew. So let them laugh, because I will not be listening. Time to end this entry now; ship's surgeon has just arrived to puncture my eardrums. Those fools think they've got the best of me, but they'll soon see who's in control here." Capt. Skowlin

"July the 17th: All survivors overjoyed at making port; 'tis good to be home. Have sent to Bedlam for a carriage for the poor Captain, and have turned the *Vawdevil* over to the Portsmouth Harbourmaster for disposal. God willing, she'll put to sea in better spirits next time." First Mate and Acting Capt. Drew Grinsom

When we hear a laugh, we instinctively assume that it came from a person—even if we can't see anyone who could have made the sound. From all the accounts written by and about persons who have been visited by Siliman, one intriguing fact becomes clear: the spirit can be audible to one person in a group, or several, but not necessarily all of them. From this fact, we deduce that Siliman's laughter is not sound per se, but rather some form of impulse that affects the brain directly without passing through the ear. In this respect Siliman is quite different from other spirits that do emit actual sound (see "Noises From Nowhere" elsewhere in this work). The concept of "soundless sound" is admittedly only a theory—but a theory that, in light of the available information, seems to have some validity.

Rather than dismissing it out of hand, I urge you not to be constrained by ordinary concepts of what is real and what is not. If you remain firm in your resolve, then I am quite confident that you will have the last laugh... whether it comes from you, or from some other source.



Siliman

spirited humorist

Siliman's special ability of *ventriloquism* enables it to project a sound of laughter at any volume and in any form it desires. It can make a single laugh (perhaps imitating a particular person), or conjure up a cacophony not unlike the silly-sounding laugh track of a bad T.V. sitcom.

Brains	1	Understand Joke	4
Cool	8	Sense of Humor	11
Power	4	Ventriloquism	
Ecto- presence	8		

Goal: Spread Laughter

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; giggles, guffaws, and chuckles at all the wrong times

Nasnas

Tales of this monster-spirit originated in the exotic land of Hadhramaut, at the extreme end of the Arabian peninsula. Those of us in the Western world were forewarned of its existence by an esteemed countryman of mine, Edward William Lane, who devoted much of his life to the study of Oriental legends and spirit phenomena.

In the first volume of *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, Lane gives a description of the creature which is at the same time straightforward and subtly terrifying. It is, he says, "half a human being; having half a head, half a body, one arm, and one leg, with which it hops with much agility."

The monster is capable of speech, but it has never been known by observers in the Western world to utter more than a single syllable. Perhaps this is because it has only half a mouth; however, the theory I have developed postulates that what it says is directly related to the purpose it is trying to achieve through its visitations.

I submit that at one time, the creature had a whole body, a whole head, a full face, and that through some supernatural calamity it was cleaved in two. Nasnas is, technically, the name the entity went by before it was divided and turned into a monstrosity. Now it prowls (more properly, hops hither and yon) through the world of men, crying over and over again, "Nas! Nas! Nas!"

The poor creature, you see, is searching for its other half. By itself, it is Nas. Only when it finds the other Nas will it be reunited as Nasnas and then be able to return in peace to the realm whence it came. (For the sake of conformity with prior usage—and in recognition of the fact that this theory is, after all, only a theory—I will continue to use the full name in reference to the half-creature which is described herein.)

Where its other half is, and whether the monster can rejoin into a whole creature after finding it, are questions we cannot answer. It would be good for us mortals, and for Nasnas itself, if there were some way of putting the creature out of its misery, but we have neither the technology nor the methodology to attempt such a task.

Inside its half-brain, Nasnas seems to have some sort of warped empathy for objects that have suffered a fate similar to its own—things that have been cut in half, or one of a pair of items that has been separated from its mate. If Nasnas spies such an object during one of its visitations, the creature touches or snatches up the thing, apparently intending to take it along and search for the object's missing half as well as the rest of its own body. The affected object disappears, never to be seen again... at least, not in this world.

An Encounter with Nasnas

A well-to-do matron was interrupted by Nasnas while getting dressed for an evening at the theatre. She had just picked up one of a pair of enormously valuable earrings. When she saw the spirit, she screamed and fainted dead away. In doing so, she must have dropped the earring on the floor or otherwise caused it to be separated from its companion, which was still in her jewelry box amid many other baubles.

When she regained consciousness after what must have been only a minute or so, she was relieved to see that the Nasnas had vanished. But her shock at what she had seen was nothing compared to the emotional trauma she suffered when she discovered that the earring she had been holding had mysteriously disappeared. The woman did not go to the police—who would believe a story of a one-armed, one-legged jewel thief?—but did come forth in response to one of my many advertisements soliciting tales of unexplained occurrences.

Nasnas

halfhearted hobbling goblin

Nasnas is not evil—it just wants to keep together things that belong together. The spirit is easy to overcome, because all the victim has to do is yell at it and tell it to go away (poor Nasnas has no *Cool* whatsoever), but this isn't always easy because it looks so awfully terrible. However, Nasnas may not be easy to notice, because it doesn't always *materialize*—so be careful not to leave unmatched socks lying around, and hurry up and finish the other half of that pizza before something else does. Nasnas usually only *dematerializes* things that are small enough or light enough to be held in its one hand. It is more difficult, but not impossible, for Nasnas to *dematerialize* something by simply touching it.

Brains	2	Matchmaking	5
Cool	0	Tingle Spine	3
Power	4	Dematerialize Object	
		Materialize	
		Terrorize	
Ecto- presence	6		

Goal: Make Halves Whole (especially itself)

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; found wherever one thing (out of two) has been used up or lost—one Twinkie, one contact lens, the first game of a doubleheader

Humbaba

At some point in mankind's unrecorded past, some nameless individual discovered that wood could be used as a building material. This revelation changed the course of civilization; nevermore would man have to content himself with huddling in caves or piling up stones to form the walls of an enclosure. Wood was easier to carry than stone, easier to work with, and could be found in great abundance in places where natural stone shelters were not available.

But, the world being what it is, very seldom does a good thing occur without a negative aspect. To this day, man continues to harvest trees and use the lumber for the good of society—to make houses, ships, packing crates, match sticks. And to this day, every time a tree is cut down, the offender risks incurring the terrible wrath of Humbaba.

This spirit was first named and described in the great Gilgamesh Epic composed in ancient Assyria. The Epic stands today as probably the oldest, and one of the longest, poems ever written. It treats of many subjects, but here we are concerned with one small section, wherein is described the awakening of Humbaba, the great giant who guarded the mountain cedars. The spirit first appeared before a powerful man named Enkidu, who strode into the virgin forest and, with one swing of his massive axe, felled a majestic cedar. As big and strong as Enkidu was, he was as a babe compared to the form and power of

the entity whose attention he had unwittingly attracted.

As the sound of the tree falling to earth began to reverberate through the forest, it was drowned out by an angry voice: "Who has entered my forest and cut down one of my trees?"

The voice belonged, of course, to Humbaba. His body, manlike in general form, was as tall as most of the trees in the forest he oversaw. But at the same time, it was the body of more than a man and less than a man. He had the paws of a lion at the ends of his arms, the claws of a vulture in place of human feet, the horns of a wild bull atop his head, and a snake's head at the end of a massive tail that protruded from his lower back. All the other parts of his body were covered with thick, horny scales, making him both invulnerable and immensely powerful. The poem does not relate what became of Enkidu, at least not in any parts of the epic that have been discovered and translated to date. But we do know, from subsequent sightings of Humbaba, that the giant is not especially fast or nimble, and when he attacks he must do so in a very careful, deliberate fashion so as not to knock down or damage any trees. Thus it is quite possible that Enkidu himself managed to escape the giant's wrath and share his experience with the scribes who set down the text of the Gilgamesh Epic.

It is apparent that when Humbaba became aware

The Giant Attacks

A man in the north of France needed the wood from one more small tree to finish the roof of a cabin he was building. He went into the glade near his soon-to-be new home, from which he had harvested many trees already, and plied his axe one more time. He had trimmed the smaller branches, hitched the trunk to his horse, and was pulling it toward home when Humbaba's voice rang out. The man was petrified when the giant appeared, and could do no more than stand open-mouthed and stare. Humbaba, apparently enraged at getting no answer to his question, bent down and raked his paws along the sides of the horse, killing the beast instantly. Then he stood, looked off into the distance toward the man's cabin, and stooped down again, this time to pick up an enormous boulder. With no more than a flick of his wrist, he cast the stone through the air in the direction the man had been traveling. Finally, the giant gave out a hideous laugh, took two steps away from the man, and was gone.

When the man got his wits about him once more, he did the only thing he could: trudged back

to his cabin, leaving both horse and tree where they lay. All the way back, he feared what he would find, and when he arrived after dark he found that his fears had been justified. His carefully constructed cabin was nothing more than a pile of splintered rubble scattered beneath and around a boulder fully twice as tall as he was.

When travelers came by the next day, they found the disconsolate settler sifting through the debris, trying to salvage what he could of his possessions. They listened to the man's tale and were gracious enough to give him transportation to the nearest village. Before they continued their journey, they suggested to the mayor of the village that the man be watched carefully. It was terribly unfortunate, they said, that the man's horse was killed by wolves, and worse yet that in his absence a boulder had come loose from a nearby hill and destroyed his cabin—but would it not be better to face the truth of what happened instead of concocting some outlandish story about a horned giant that disembowels horses and tosses boulders through the air?

of what had happened to the cedar, he then looked down from his mountaintop abode for the first time and realized that men had been chopping down trees for quite some time. Taking it upon himself to put an end to this depredation, he descended into the realm of men and became what we might describe as the world's first conservationist.

When Humbaba materializes, his visual form is always preceded by his voice, asking a rhetorical question identical with or similar to the one that the giant posed to Enkidu. No one whom he catches in the act is immune from punishment, but Humbaba does tend to go easier on those who own up to what they have done. If the offender identifies himself and admits to his mistake, Humbaba reaches out with one of his vulture-clawed feet and snatches away the tool that was used to do the cutting or chopping. His grasp cannot be resisted, and anyone who tries to do so is fortunate if he comes away from the encounter with only a dislocated shoulder. With the axe or saw or wedge or whatever firmly in his talons, Humbaba booms, "No more!" and then disappears, taking the implement with him.

If the offender says nothing (the usual response of someone speechless with terror), denies Humbaba's accusation, or tries to turn and run, Humbaba gets angry. Reports of what he does at this juncture vary widely, suggesting that the giant is quite intelligent and capable of employing any tactic that fits the situation.

Humbaba

big on conservation

Humbaba doesn't seem to care about protecting dead wood—but be careful about cutting a tree that only looks dead; after all, one can't exactly take its pulse. The only way to be sure is to take a chunk out of it, and by then it might be too late.

Humbaba usually only cares about trees, but on a slow day he might decide to cruise suburbia looking for hedge trimmers.

Brains	6	Originality	9
Cool	1	Accept Good Excuse	4
Power	12	Dematerialize Object	
		Materialize	
		Murphy (G)	
		Poltergeist (G)	
		Terrorize	
Ecto- presence	18		

Goal: Protect Trees

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; when materialized, horned giant, vulture's feet, vicious temper



Shamash

The Babylonian sun-deity Shamash was revered for centuries. He brought the light every morning—the light without which there could have been no life. He was not an evil-minded spirit when he was first called upon to do his work, but even spirits have their flaws. In Shamash's case, his biggest flaw was a self-importance as huge as the sky he was credited with illuminating.

If the truth be told—and it certainly was not told to the people of that long-gone culture—all Shamash did all day was lounge (probably in some sort of ethereal hammock). He did nothing to contradict the people's assumption that he was responsible for the movement of the sun across the sky—which was probably all for the best, because the Babylonians of 1700 B.C. were neither intellectually or psychologically ready for the realization that it was the sun that stayed in one place and the earth that did the moving.

It was for the preservation and strengthening of his own self-image that he did not protest when the Babylonians also deemed him responsible for the healing of disease, the dispensing of justice, and the protection of the downtrodden and underprivileged. It seemed to make the people happy to think that there was one spirit who could do so many good things—and Shamash, basking in the glow of all this unwarranted adulation, had quite a pleasant existence for many centuries.

Then, as must happen to every civilization made up of mortals, the ancient Babylonian culture declined and was supplanted. When it passed from the scene, Shamash too fell into decline. But he did not disappear; he simply bided his time in his celestial lounging spot, waiting for the day when another group of people would single him out for praise. That plan began to unravel in the mid-sixteenth century, when Nicholas Copernicus had the brilliance (and the audacity, from Shamash's point of view) to propose that the celestial bodies were configured differently from what men had believed since the dawn of civilization. It took some time, but eventually people around the world, scholars and common folk alike, came to see that the sun, not the earth, was the center of the solar system.

Shamash was furious when he realized that never again would he ascend to a position of prominence. So he decided to come to earth and manifest himself in a way that would force people to pay attention to him whether they wanted to or not.

Because he was originally and primarily associated with the sun, Shamash made light and heat his areas of specialty. Because he is annoyed with modern people for accepting the truth of the Copernican theory, he is determined to make a nuisance of himself in as many ways as he can imagine. Shamash is the sliver of light that slips under the door

of a photographic darkroom and destroys images made on film. Shamash is the unseen force that causes lamps and lanterns to be lit in a room that is unoccupied. Shamash is the wave of heat that sweeps over a person for no apparent reason, causing him or her to feel faint or ill. Shamash is the gust of warmth that inexplicably causes an icebox to fail, so that the food kept inside it spoils and rots.

If you have ever witnessed or heard of a strange and unfortunate occurrence concerning light or heat or both, the chances are good that Shamash had something to do with it. Shamash never appears visually, except as some form of pure light—a soft glow, a sharp beam, or whatever suits his purpose.

He cannot be detained by any method or device known to us, for he moves with the speed of light. He may stay in one location for quite some time, such as when he appears in the night sky as a floating ball of light and allows himself to be viewed by dozens or hundreds of bewildered onlookers. Or he may leave someone's presence as quickly as he arrived, staying only long enough to terrify his victim with a sudden burst of light or a wave of heat that first causes the person to perspire uncontrollably and then, with its passing, to curl up in a ball and shiver with cold. Truly Shamash is one of the most elusive, versatile, and devious spirits that has ever haunted our world!

Shamash

sun worshipee

Shamash's first two special abilities are pretty self-explanatory. It's Very Little trouble for him to appear as a floating sphere of light, A Good Amount of difficulty to create a huge glowing area on the horizon in the middle of the night ("Gladys, does this mean that Borington has just been nuked?"), and More difficult Than You Can Imagine to light up the entire night sky.

He uses his *poltergeist* ability to turn on light switches, turn up thermostats, and manipulate other devices that create light or heat.

Brains	3	Conceal Presence	7
Cool	1	Self Importance	4
Power	6	Make Heat Make Light Poltergeist (L)	
Ecto- presence	11		

Goal: Heat and Light

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; unexpected sources of light, like night baseball at Wrigley Field

Rabisu

The ancient Mesopotamians blamed "demons" as the cause of anything bad, uncomfortable or unfortunate—accidents, toothaches, quarrels between friends. Every demon had a specialty, but with few exceptions the demons were not given names.

One of those exceptions was Rabisu, who was most likely singled out for identification because, at one time or another, he visits everyone.

This spirit appears before a person who has committed some transgression or indiscretion. Rabisu takes a visual form that brings to mind what the person has done, sometimes augmenting and embellishing that image with sounds and illusions, so that the victim knows exactly why the visitation is occurring. In all but the most hard-hearted of persons, the effect is to leave the viewer overcome with anguish and guilt. He or she may deduce, correctly, that the way to get rid of Rabisu is to somehow negate or offset the act that caused its visit. In modern parlance, this phenomenon is known as easing a guilty conscience.

On rare occasions Rabisu inadvertently does a good deed, say, in causing a robber or a murderer to confess his crime. But in the vast majority of cases Rabisu's deeds are far more sinister than those of the people it visits.

All sane people know the difference between right and wrong, although we sometimes conveniently

forget where the line separating them is drawn. The spirit of Rabisu is here to remind us—and to him, there is no such thing as a gentle reminder.

Rabisu

the conscientious spirit

Even leading an exemplary life cannot keep a man or woman safe from a visit by Rabisu—in fact, trying to be perfect can get a victim in a lot of trouble, guilt-wise, because anything he does that's just the teeniest bit wrong could attract the spirit's attention. Who decides what's right and what's wrong? Rabisu does, of course—and there's nothing that says he has to make exactly the same decision twice.

Brains	4	Pass Judgment	7
Cool	6	Deviousness	9
Power	4	Control Mind Make Illusion	
Ecto- presence	5		

Goal: Send Everyone on a Guilt Trip

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; reminder of past sins

Tales of Rabisu

A student who neglected to prepare his lesson for class told his professor he could not study because of a headache "that felt as though it were splitting my skull in twain." That night Rabisu crept into his mind silently while he was asleep. Its form was that of the student himself—with his skull split open from the crown to the bridge of his nose. The vision was so terrifying that the student leapt out of bed and rushed to the professor's home in the middle of the night to confess his lie. In so doing, he compounded his offense by interrupting the professor's liaison with an administrative lady friend; the professor had him expelled from school on the spot.

A woman spoke very kindly of her peers in their presence, but to a third party she was quick to point out the faults and flaws in the person's character. One day the woman was gossiping when she was suddenly struck speechless. There, standing behind the person to whom she was speaking, was the person she was talking about!

The image vanished as quickly as it had appeared, but the woman was sufficiently unsettled that she changed the subject and began talking

about yet another "friend." Lo and behold, the image of *that* person suddenly appeared before her view, as though the object of her gossiping had been listening to everything she said.

The woman was shaken to the core. She excused herself and went home to ponder the meaning of what had happened to her—and from that time onward, she spoke her true feelings in front of every person. Human nature being what it is, in a very short time she lost all her friends.

One especially pitiful case involved a precocious babe about three years of age who took innocent delight in pulling on the ears and tail of the family dog. The animal was docile and quite forgiving, no matter how much pain the boy inflicted upon it. The young boy's mother tried and tried to discipline him away from these actions, but the lad persisted.

One day, the boy's shrills of delight turned to shrieks of terror. His mother found him in the corner with his hands over red, pinched-looking ears. The child's garbled story accused the sleeping dog of great maliciousness—and to this day, that child has never touched a dog again.

The Three Fastidious Men

The tale associated with these spirits comes from India, where fastidiousness and the striving for perfection are a way of life among those schooled in the Hindu religion and traditions.

In the story, the three men are brothers, although this seems to be a convenient contrivance. In their spiritual manifestations, the men do not act as though they are related, and in fact it is almost unheard of for two or more of them to visit a certain person. The spirits are conceited, devious, and each is totally devoted to its purpose—to the exclusion of all other things. They are not specifically named in any of the literature concerning them, but to distinguish between them here we shall call them the Sensitive One, the Gourmet, and the Hypocrite.

Each one manifests itself by controlling the mind of its victim, making that person do, say, and think things that are utterly atypical of the way the person behaves normally.

The Sensitive One is on a never-ending quest for perfect physical comfort. When this spirit takes over the mind of a victim, that person is frustrated by an inability to find any chair, bed, or article of clothing that does not pinch, sag, or chafe.

A person possessed by the Sensitive One does not necessarily offend those around him, but he is certainly seen as a complainer and a nuisance. The victim actually does feel physical discomfort, and for this should be pitied.

The Gourmet is absolutely particular about food. A person visited by this spirit refuses to eat anything that has not been prepared and presented with perfection. Vegetables can be neither overcooked or undercooked, and they must have been harvested at precisely the moment of optimum ripeness. Bread can be neither too doughy nor too dry. In short, it is impossible to satisfy the Gourmet. A person controlled by this spirit would rather starve than eat something prepared by an anonymous third party.

The Hypocrite seeks perfection in people—and, people being what they are, never finds it. A man who has believed for years that his wife is beautiful suddenly sees her in a new light. Her hair is not perfectly coiffed; she is either wearing too much perfume or not enough. The same attitude prevails if a wife is afflicted. All of a sudden, her husband is either too flabby or too musclebound; if he is clean-shaven, he should wear a beard, and vice versa.

The person possessed by the Hypocrite sees himself as the one that everyone else should emulate, is quick to come up with a myriad ways in which a particular person fails in that endeavor, and expresses his opinions in no uncertain terms.

Once a person has been taken over by one of these spirits, it is impossible for that individual to force the spirit to leave. As far as the afflicted person knows, he or she is acting quite normally. ("I've never liked the way you look, and I've told you that

a thousand times before!") When the spirit does leave, either of its own volition or because it is compelled to do so, the victim retains no memory of his personality change and no recollection of any words or actions prompted by the spirit.

These spirits do not usually stay for long in one person's mind, generally leaving after a day or two, or soon after the outbreak of a quarrel or fight directly related to their presence. They can be made to leave much more quickly, if a friend or family member knows just what to do.

To the Sensitive One, say nothing at all. Do not be apologetic or sympathetic; do not even acknowledge verbally that the victim has made a complaint. But at the same time, make it quite clear that you have heard the complaint—you are simply choosing to ignore it. This is the one thing a complainer cannot stand. When the Sensitive One perceives that its moaning and groaning are falling on selectively deaf ears, it gives up and looks elsewhere for someone to pay attention to it.

To the Gourmet, say something like "Eat it anyway—it won't kill you!" As soon as the afflicted person tastes the smallest morsel of the "tainted" food, the spirit flies off in search of another host. In extreme cases, physical restraint and force-feeding may be required, but the result is the same as if only verbal coercion had been necessary.

To the Hypocrite, respond not with a pained look and quiet indignation, but with the most vitriolic and well-deserved insults you can muster: "So I'm unappealing, eh? Well, when I stand next to you, I sometimes wonder what kind of dead animal you're keeping inside your shirt, because nothing alive could smell that bad!" In other words, pretend that you are possessed by the same spirit. If the victim is more shocked and more insulted than you were, then you have done the job properly. The Hypocrite will go away, looking for easier prey.

The Sensitive One

wimpiest of wimps

This spirit might be able to *ignore pain* for a few minutes, but when he's finally had all of the agony he can stand, his auditors hear some of the most *creative complaints* ever.

Brains	3	Creative Complaining	6
Cool	1	Ignore Pain	4
Power	5	Control Mind	
		Possess	
Ecto-			
presence	5		

Goal: Perfect Comfort

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; whiny voice, incessant sighs

The Gourmet

good taste, bad attitude

The Gourmet has a short fuse; don't be misled by his talent *endure imperfection*. Putting up with bad food is an ongoing struggle for him, and it gets harder and harder for him to keep his patience with every passing minute. He (or more accurately, the person he *controls*) might eat a few bites, might even finish most of a meal. But sooner or later, he spits out whatever is in his mouth and follows it with a stream of insults that would make an army cook cover in fear.

Brains	4	Identify Ingredients	7
Cool	1	Endure Imperfection	4
Power	3	Control Mind Possess	
Ecto-presence	5		

Goal: Perfect Food

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; drawing tone, mincing manners

The Hypocrite

fault-finder extraordinaire

The Hypocrite's talent *make tactless suggestions* might not seem all that powerful—but it's usually pretty easy to find something to complain about in another person, if one is looking. A person with a lot of *Cool* might be able to resist these uncalled-for insults for a while, but no one's skin is thick enough to keep the Hypocrite from getting under it eventually.

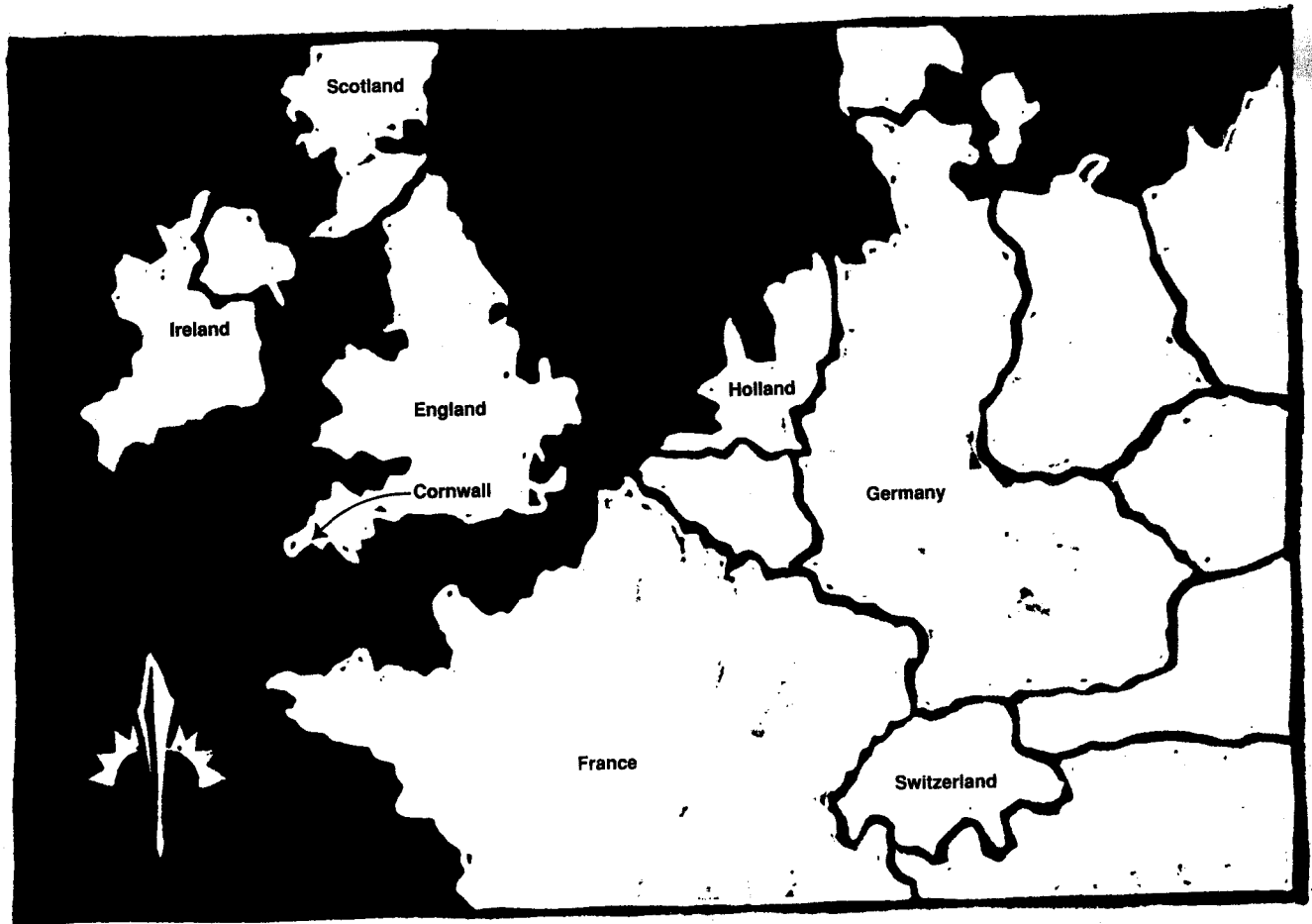
Brains	2	Make Tactless Suggestions	5
Cool	1	Accept Criticism	4
Power	4	Control Mind Possess	
Ecto-presence	5		

Goal: Perfect People

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; disgusted tone, meddlesome eye



2 Spirits of Great Britain AND Western Europe



England
Scotland
Ireland
Switzerland
Cornwall
Germany
France
Holland

Readers of this section who are subjects of the Crown can save themselves a bit of time by skipping over the following two paragraphs. For others, a little explanation is in order.

It is all too easy, scientific objectivity notwithstanding, for a researcher into spirits to assume that the legends associated with his native country are somehow more rational, more plausible, and at the same time more interesting than the stories handed down among the people of other cultures or countries. If one is not careful this prejudice, no matter how strongly it is suppressed, can creep into the tone of a journal entry as surely and insidiously as the spirits themselves creep into the lives of deserving and undeserving victims.

With that prefatory note, I acknowledge that the research Shrewsbury and I have done into the spirits of Great Britain and Western Europe may be unavoidably tainted by our innate British perspective. I assure the reader that we will strive to keep all such coloration from our characterizations of others' accounts. We will strive... but nonetheless, we will fail.

Accounts of the appearances of spirits in Western Europe have two significant characteristics in common. They are stories told by simple, unassuming

folk—the sort who have no pretensions, no need to falsely impress the listener. And the subjects of these stories follow oft-repeated themes—themes that are heard in places hundreds of miles apart and removed from one another by years, if not decades. The general conclusions that one logically draws from these facts are likewise twofold: One, the stories are as real as the sackcloth from which a farmer's wife makes her dress and as true as the plain countenances—unembellished by wigs, cosmetics, and other trappings—of the people who tell them. And two, the spirits are very active in this part of the world. They hop from person to person the way a flea might frolic in a crowd of dogs, and in this fashion can cover a large stretch of territory in a very short span of time.

That observation leads us to a point of speculation: With emigration across the Atlantic to the milk-and-honey land of America growing in popularity among Europeans almost by the day, I should not be surprised to awaken from the sleep of the grave many decades hence and discover that those United States (if they are still, at that point, United) are beset by the same hauntings, annoyances, and depredations that have plagued the Old Country. Will it still, then, be a Mecca for those who think themselves downtrodden or oppressed? Time will tell... as it always does.

The Four-Eyed Cat

As one story attempting to explain this spirit goes, a haughty lass lured an impressionable young fisherman away from his betrothed. She did it only for spite, and not out of enmity for the other girl, whom she didn't even know.

The young man, smitten and having a hard time controlling his palpitations, invited her to come along the next day on the fishing boat. At daybreak she hid beneath a tarpaulin. She was still there six hours later, sweating and fretting because her paramour had not got away from his duty to dally with her.

But alas for the lass, her adventurer never got the opportunity. A furious storm blew up, and the ship and all hands (including the feminine ones) were lost without a trace. When the grieving townsfolk noticed the girl's absence, they guessed that she had been a passenger on the unlucky vessel. They put two and two together and came to the only logical conclusion: if the girl had not been aboard, the boat would not have sunk.

The spirit of that girl, in the guise of a four-eyed cat, is liable to be found in any body of water. Since her human incarnation did not survive, reasons the spirit, then neither shall any woman who goes along for the ride ever see the safety of port again.

Most fishermen to this day will not take a woman aboard. And at the end of the day's work, before the

catch is weighed and sold, the crew throw a few morsels back overboard. "For the cat," they explain if a landlubber asks. And then they say no more.

The Four-Eyed Cat

anti-feminist feline

If nature is not forthcoming, the cat can *summon a storm* to do the job, or maybe *murphy* a boat into developing a leak or hitting an iceberg. If it's in a really bad mood, it *materializes* and uses a temporary *Muscles* talent to gouge holes in a hull though no obstacle be in sight. How to keep the Cat from wrecking a vessel? Just throw it some fish.

Brains	7	Predict Weather	10
Cool	9	Minimum Effort	12
Power	5	Materialize Murphy (G) Summon Storm	
Ecto- presence	10		

Goal: Sink Boats with Women Passengers

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; large cat's face with four green eyes

Grateful Ghosts

As will be apparent to the student who reads this work, and perhaps delves into some of the books written by my esteemed colleagues, not all denizens of the spirit world are evil-minded. In fact, some of them, which we refer to here collectively as the Grateful Ghosts, have nothing but the best of intentions toward the humans with whom they consort.

Unfortunately for them and for us, it can be quite difficult to tell when a spirit is trying to be helpful, so a lot of their efforts go unappreciated.

We have never heard tell of a Grateful Ghost that explained itself, or even spoke for the purpose of reassuring the beneficiary of its good deed; apparently, these spirits are content to let their actions speak for themselves. The problem, from our mortal point of view, is that their actions can be very difficult to decipher.

If a ghost appears before a person in a posture that seems threatening, is it trying to put terror in his heart—or is it trying to warn him that if he proceeds along his path, he will come to trouble?

None of this is meant to suggest that one should try to attach an honorable motive to anything a spirit might do—but neither should one assume that every ghost, specter, wraith, or unseen force is set on scaring, embarrassing, or hurting one.

Grateful Ghosts

they aim to please

Each of these spirits can *read minds* (to figure out how a victim needs help, if that isn't obvious), and *materialize* if necessary (so they can use *Muscles* or *Moves*). Each Grateful Ghost has specific talents related to the way it gives help. The victim may not want a ghost's help. Okay, fine. All he has to do is make a *Brains* roll that's lower than the ghost's roll for the *Trait* or talent it's using—thereby proving he doesn't know a good thing when he sees it (or doesn't see it, as the case may be). The ghost won't get angry or feel bad, but word does have a way of getting around the spirit world, and no Grateful Ghost will ever again try to do a good deed for that person.

Brains	6*	
Cool	2*	
Power	4	Materialize Read Mind
Ecto- presence	7	

* *variable*

Goal: Helpfulness

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; silent, perhaps incomprehensible help

A Favor Returned

We relate here the story of a coachman in northern England. In the distant past, he had rescued a woman from the side of the road, and seen her safely to the nearest village free of charge. The woman was most appreciative, and hoped they would stay in contact. When the coachman tried to look her up on his next trip, he was shocked to discover that she had died of a brief but virulent illness.

He quickly got over his grief (for, after all, he hardly knew the woman) and soon forgot her. Then one day he was hired in Durham. Four men needed to get to York by eight o'clock that evening, and they promised a fee of 10 times his normal rate if he could accommodate them. He knew he would need to drive the horses hard, but he accepted the fare.

Seven miles south of Durham the coach ran into a vast expanse of dense fog, and the driver had to slow the horses to a trot. The wind was driving the fog in their direction, so that the coach might well go all the way to York without ever breaking free of it. The prospect of the eight o'clock deadline seemed bleak indeed.

Suddenly a ghostly figure appeared on the seat beside the driver and grabbed the reins from him. It was the woman he had helped years earlier! She snapped the reins, and the horses broke into a gallop.

A normal driver, even the best one, could not have sustained such a speed through the fog without incurring a terrible mishap. But, as the coachman quickly realized, this was no ordinary driver next to him. The fog did indeed persist all the way to York, but she guided the coach unerringly, and brought the passengers to their destination with minutes to spare.

The driver was petrified, and if the coachman was afraid, we can only imagine what the passengers must have been thinking. But when all was said and done, the four men were extremely thankful, and they spoke well of him to potential customers every chance they got.

The coachman was not about to admit that it was not he who had done the driving. "They'd've thought me a fool," he said, "and even if they believed me, it'd've been bad for business. So I kep' me mouth shut." And at some later time, before he related his story, he put the final piece of the puzzle into place. The woman had returned to repay him for his service to her. She accomplished something he never could have done by himself... even if her methods were rather unorthodox.

The Boggart and the Pantry Spirit

These spirits seem to be related to The Restless People (see elsewhere in this section) in terms of their capacity for mischief, but boggarts are a breed unto themselves. They do their work indoors, for the most part, and appear to be motivated by nothing other than the great glee they receive from tormenting their poor victims.

When a boggart first insinuates itself into a household, it wreaks its mischief in innocuous ways, so that its presence remains undetected for quite some time. This is the stage during which, for no apparent reason, a child's bowl of pudding tips and spills its contents on the head of the family dog. The animal rises up and scurries frantically around the room, all the while sending gobs of pudding in every direction. The episode ends when the dog gets underfoot and trips the master of the house, or when it careens into a table and sends a family heirloom crashing to the floor.

Is all of this the child's fault? Of course not—but parents seem to need to attach a cause to every effect, and so they punish the child for committing the original sin of not holding tightly onto his bowl. The boy is caned, or sent to bed, or both; perhaps, for good measure, the poor dog is whipped and thrown outside. And the boggart crouches invisibly in a corner, cackling silently to itself.

The longer a boggart remains undetected, the more sure of itself the spirit becomes—and, indeed, there is evidence to suggest that its ability to avoid expulsion becomes stronger. At some point when the boggart decides that it can move beyond the stage of innocuous pranks, it begins to perform trickery for which there can be no logical explanation.

Actions that fall into this category include causing the father's and mother's bed to shake back and forth in the middle of the night; "redecorating" a home while the family is asleep, so that upon awakening they discover chairs on top of tables, pictures hung upside down, the fireplace impeccably clean and its ashes strewn everywhere but where they should be; or setting the shutters of every window in the house to flapping and banging, even though the woman of the house is positive that all the shutters were closed and locked before she came to bed. It is at this point that the members of the household should start to suspect that something strange and supernatural is afoot. They still have a chance to be rid of the boggart—but only if they do not voice their suspicions, and do not show any extreme emotion (fear, anger, despair) at what is happening to them and their home. The boggart thrives on being noticed, you see; if one does not give it the attention it seeks, it eventually becomes bored and disenchanted, and departs to seek out someone who reacts "properly" to its trickery.

A Tale of Woe

The home of a farmer in Yorkshire was plagued by a boggart. The man, apparently somewhat familiar with how these spirits were said to operate, told his wife in secret that they should not appear to be distressed by any of the calamities that were befalling them. Instead, he said, they would begin packing and making plans to move, as though this had been their intention all along. He was sure that as soon as they vacated the property, the spirit would be convinced that they were gone for good—whereupon it would go away, and they would be able to reoccupy their home.

The farmer made but one terrible mistake. Just as he and his wife were loading the last of their belongings into a wagon, but before they stepped all the way off their plot of land, the man was approached by a neighbor, who expressed surprise and sorrow that the two of them were leaving. Thinking that he would not be overheard because he was outside the house, the farmer explained the truth of the matter: they really had no place to go, but were pretending to leave so as to trick the spirit into abandoning them. All of a sudden the air was split by a harsh giggle and a single statement that chilled the farmer to the bone. "Well, well," the disembodied voice said, seeming to come from a point just behind the man's shoulder. "If ye're not really leavin', then neither am I." Then came another peal of laughter, fading into the distance as the spirit moved back toward—and into—the house.

The Pantry Spirit seems to be a sort of specialized boggart, whose interest and influence is limited to the places in the home where food is stored. Like the boggart, it begins with covert actions—gobbling half a loaf of bread or half a pint of rum, so that the next time the owner goes to the breadbox or the bottle, he or she may not even notice what's missing; or, if he does, he thinks nothing of it.

From there it proceeds to pilfering the entire contents of some container and leaving the empty sack, bottle, or box behind as its signature. Locking the cupboard does no good, of course, since the spirit is insubstantial as well as invisible. Hiding food is equally fruitless (no pun intended), for the spirit can sniff it out no matter where it is put.

If the home owner fails to conceal his anger, fear, or apprehension, the spirit launches a full-scale attack on all of the edibles in the house. It cannot consume anything while that object is observed, but

behind the victim's back the spirit may be rapidly and silently gobbling his entire store of vegetables.

When is its appetite satisfied? At the moment when every bit of food on the premises has disappeared, when the cupboard is as bare as bare can be, the spirit lets loose with a loud, disgusting belch and goes away.

But perhaps not very far away. If the larder was stocked with anything other than the most mundane of staples, it might remain in the vicinity for a day or two to see how the shelves are replenished. If the victim returns from the market with exotic liquors, pastries, and other sorts of delicacies, the spirit lets itself back in and starts the process all over again.

Boggarts and their gluttonous cousins are not life-threatening spirits, but they can do more to disrupt and disintegrate a household with their long-term visits than a truly horrific spirit can do with one brief, blood-curdling appearance.



Boggart

a real homebody

Using any of its special abilities (some spirits might not have all four of the ones listed), a Boggart can make a real mess out of any house. Boggarts are pretty devious; they won't turn a showplace into a slum overnight (whenever this happens, human vandals are probably the reason). But over the passage of time, they are very good at simultaneously ruining a house and driving the occupants crazy... kind of like what kids do to their parents.

Brains	7	Creative Vandalism	10
Cool	9	Torment Victims	12
Power	5	Grime Slime Murphy (L) Poltergeist (L) Summon Pests	

Ecto-
presence 9

Goal: Entropy

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; dust tigers, muddy footprints, cracks and chips

Pantry Spirit

ghostly gobbler

The Pantry Spirit isn't very brainy—which is why it can be outsmarted pretty easily—but it often does have enough good sense to eat from each of the basic food groups: the crunchy group (raw potatoes, stale marshmallows), the gooey group (molasses, peanut butter), the chewy group (beef jerky, salt water taffy), and the chuggable group (anything liquid).

Brains	2	Eat Balanced Diet	5
Cool	3	Crave Attention	6
Power	4	Dematerialize Food Poltergeist (L)	

Ecto-
presence 8

Goal: Gluttony To The Max

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; sticky fingerprints, trail of crumbs

Foundation Sacrifice

This kind of spirit is found throughout the civilized world, because the practice that spawns it is not unique to any geographic area or culture. However, nowhere has the presence of such a spirit had more effect on people's lives—and deaths—than in the village of Klosters in extreme eastern Switzerland.

In the mid-fifteenth century, Hans Upp was the village idiot of Klosters. An inoffensive sort, as most idiots are, Hans had no family and no real friends, and he was considered expendable when the time came for an... expenditure.

The village fathers authorized construction of a new government hall—the fourth such building that the village was forced to erect in 10 years. The earlier three had all fallen apart within months after they were finished, for sundry deficiencies in their construction.

One of the council members, a well-traveled man who had settled in the village after the erection and destruction of buildings two and three, advanced an idea that rapidly won acceptance. In addition to all the physical safeguards they could build into this new project, he suggested that they needed some spiritual insurance.

In his journeys to exotic lands such as Bulgaria and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the man had seen many majestic structures that had stood for longer than any of the town residents could remember. He learned that, grisly though it sounded, the townspeople firmly believed the reason the buildings remained strong was that, to appease the Earth for building such a large and unnatural structure, a human being had been interred in each one during its construction—a live human being!

The village leaders, desperate that some malady should not befall their latest attempt to house themselves in splendor, agreed that they had nothing to lose. Hans Upp's designation as the sacrificial lamb was the result of a logical, if cruel, line of reasoning. Klosters could indeed get along without him, but (in a sadistic way) the villagers would miss him. The perfect sacrifice.

Of course, the councilmen resolved, the deed would have to be kept secret from all except a few of the workers (who would be paid handsomely for executing the task... and the man). Not everyone in the village would agree that Hans had to die this way.

Ground was broken for the new structure. Hans visited the site every day, fascinated by the excavation work for as long as his attention span would allow. Stone blocks were hauled from the quarry, and the foundation was laid—save for one corner, which had been set aside for Hans's tomb. But how could the workers induce Hans to stand in that corner while they built stone walls all around him?

The foreman accosted Hans one night and invited him to help with an important part of the job.

"Stand here," the foreman said, indicating the unfinished corner. "We need you to tell us whether the stones are fitting together tightly on your side of the wall. If you see any light coming through between stones, tap on the wall and tell us. Otherwise, stay quiet."

Those instructions may have been almost too complicated for Hans to comprehend. Nonetheless, he did stand where he was told. The wall went up quickly; the three men working on it certainly wanted to get this unsavory task over with as soon as they could. The stone blocks, each weighing as much as a man, were lowered into position and snugged up against their neighbors.

When the wall was as high as his chin, Hans spoke for the first time.

"Dark," he said—meaning, of course, that the workmen had done a perfect job fitting the stones. No light... and no air... could penetrate between them. The final row of blocks was laid; now the wall was barely higher than Hans's head, and it was time for the denouement. The hoist ropes were slipped around an enormous slab that would serve as a one-piece ceiling for the tomb.

Before he saw the slab, Hans raised his arms over his head and grunted. To the anonymous workman who witnessed the gesture (and from whose journal the details of this account are taken), Hans was clearly asking to be lifted out of the hole.

Then the slab was moved into place above him, and the two workers on the ropes played them out slowly, lowering the stone. Hans looked up and, according to the eyewitness to his final moments, a look of awareness—of recognition—came over his face for perhaps the first time in years.

Poor Hans gave up. He dropped his arms and lowered his gaze, looking directly into the eyes of the workman who would be responsible for making sure the slab was properly positioned when it finally came to rest.

If Hans spoke any final words or sounds in the last instant before he was entombed, they were drowned out by the crash of stone on stone when the guide-ropes were slipped away and the slab was allowed to fall the last inch or two into place.

A few seconds after the tomb was completed, the rapping began. Hans was knocking against the wall, looking for attention or pity or both. But he would get neither. The workers stayed for another four hours, unable to ignore the plaintive, muffled rapping but equally unable—and unwilling—to undo what they had done. The tapping grew fainter and less frequent. Then it stopped, and poor Hans must have expired soon after.

The building, it should be noted, was completed three months later. It stood for almost 200 years, presiding grandly over Klosters—as that village fell into a terrible decline. For no reason that anyone could (or would) identify, bad tidings began to befall villagers and newcomers alike.

The erection of new buildings and the maintenance of existing structures, both of which are so important to any community hoping to avoid stagnation, proved to be not only unwise and fruitless but downright dangerous ventures.

The tale survives of a farmer who put a new roof on his barn, only to have the walls collapse the day after it was finished, killing all his livestock.

A merchant wanted to improve his establishment, adding fresh paint to the storefront. On the night after it was completed, a fire of unknown origin destroyed the shop and killed the owner (who lived on the second floor) without charring a timber of the neighboring stores on either side.

It didn't take long for the villagers to deduce that they were living under some sort of curse that struck whenever they tried to repair or improve their homes, shops, or outbuildings. Many people left, spreading the word of the curse as they dispersed, and a phenomenon arose that can only be described as Klostersphobia. For years and years, no new residents settled in the village. Soon only the stone village hall stood tall and straight.

Around the year 1652, the leaders of Klosters made a desperate plan to revitalize the near ghost-town. Unlike their predecessors of two hundred years before, these were good folk, members of families who had lived in the village for untold generations, and without realizing it, they found a way to subvert the curse of Klosters.

Selecting a new plot of land in a valley several miles away, they financed the construction of several buildings to serve as homes and shops. Then they had the old village hall torn down and its components carted to the new location, where they were reassembled. The skeleton they were astonished to find under one corner of the structure they buried with all pomp and circumstance in the new graveyard. New Klosters was born and began to flourish.

It is altogether likely that the demolition of the old village hall spelled the end of Hans Upp's period of revenge. The reason for his death was now dead itself. Perhaps the kindness of the elders in interring his bones made him look upon New Klosters in a favorable light.

But over the centuries, countless numbers of people have been used as foundation sacrifices. The spirit of each one of these unfortunates may yet be active today, taking out its anger on anyone it encounters who is in the process of building or fixing something.



Foundation Sacrifice

one-entity wrecking crew

A spirit is weakest (having the statistics given below) when it is far away from the place where its body was interred. The closer it is to the site of the sacrifice, the stronger it gets. At its worst, the spirit's *murphy* ability can make an entire building come tumbling down (a hairline crack in the foundation suddenly becomes a gaping crevice). At its weakest, the ability can be used in a cruel and sadistic way—snapping off the main mast just as the victim finishes a ship in a bottle. The most sadistic spirits manifest themselves on Christmas Eve, when Dad is trying to assemble that expensive new toy that Junior just had to have.

Brains	1*	Find Weak Spot in Structure	4
Cool	1*	Perseverance	4
Power	2*	Murphy (G)	
Ecto-presence	3*		

* *variable*

Goal: Break Things

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; tapping noises, demolition

Hudkin

Ever since early *homo sapiens* became aware of the concept of "tomorrow," man has been preoccupied with the future. Everyone wonders what tomorrow, or next week, or next year, will bring, and everyone thinks it would be wonderful to know what is going to happen before it occurs—everyone, that is, except for those few unfortunates who actually have been vested with the power of precognition.

This spirit goes by many names, and frequently does not identify itself at all. We use here one of the names by which it was known in medieval Germany and Holland. In England and Scotland during the same era, the spirit of precognition often introduced itself by the friendly-sounding name of Robin Goodfellow. Nowadays it seems to prefer being called by whatever name (if any) a person elects to attach to it.

By studying the many documented accounts of soothsayers in history, we can presume several facts about how Hudkin functions and what the spirit's motivation is. Its pronouncements are not always specific or laden with detail, but they are unfailingly true; thus, it is apparent that Hudkin travels through time as easily as a bird flies through the air. The spirit is somehow able to move into the future, observe a happening, return to the present, and convey its information to whichever human it has chosen to associate with.

Hudkin is not a hostile spirit; it does not attempt to mislead or deceive, and it does not couch its statements in riddles. Why, then, is the spirit loathed by most of those whom it has visited?

The answer lies not in the nature of the spirit, but in the nature of man. The world is full of fraudulent soothsayers—people who proclaim themselves able to see into the future, but have all the visionary ability of a sack of oats. They have given true diviners a bad name. With pitifully few exceptions, true visionaries have been ignored, ridiculed, sometimes even punished and, in the extreme, killed.

Historically, according to the accounts we have read about and have heard, Hudkin seems to prefer visiting itself upon females. Those of you who would scoff at the concept of women's intuition would be well advised to reconsider that viewpoint. Perhaps there is a good reason why women have a reputation for being able to foretell. Perhaps they are more inclined, physiologically or psychologically (or both), to take Hudkin's revelations for truth, and thus over the centuries the spirit has developed an affinity for those of the female gender.

This affinity, obviously, is not without its drawbacks. Many women, in return for making public the revelations that Hudkin has granted them, for trying to help others by telling what they know, have been regarded as witches. Others, in more recent times, have been politely but disdainfully scorned—because, after all, they are "only women."

If you are visited by Hudkin and you do not want

to be laughed at, shunned, thrown in jail, or worse, then the only thing to do is keep quiet. In the words of an earlier researcher on this subject: "Hudkin is a very familiar³ spirit, who will do nobody hurt, except he receive injury, but he cannot abide that, nor yet be mocked." In other words, the thing to do is not resist, not argue, not question. Appear to be receptive while the spirit is in your presence.

There are right ways and wrong ways to go about this keeping quiet. Do not, for instance, acknowledge and address the spirit by saying something like "Oh, you're that Hudkin character that Professor Tobin told me to ignore." All that will do is get both of us in trouble. Hudkin is not normally malicious, but the spirit does have a lot of pride—and if you injure that pride by consciously, outwardly disregarding the spirit and what it has to say, then you risk bringing down its not inconsiderable wrath.

Listen to what it has to say, be properly grateful for the information—and then, when the spirit has left, erase the entire incident from your memory.

Hudkin

soothsayer spirit

Hudkin's motives are kind, even though sometimes it reveals information that the victim would rather not have known. A daughter might not be happy to discover that Uncle Fred's will is at the bottom of a shoe box in the attic, since she's also discovered that Uncle Fred left everything he owned to the Women's Christian Temperance Union. But that's not Hudkin's fault, now, is it?

Hudkin only uses *control mind* if it gets angry—at someone who makes fun of it or who tries to get rid of it by using verbal or physical force. (If physically threatened, it simply *dematerializes*.) Unless the *control* is broken, that victim is forced to spout Hudkin's prophecies to all and sundry, whether all and sundry are listening or not.

Brains	10	Precognition	13
Cool	3	Ignore Skepticism	6
Power	4	Control Mind	
		Materialize	
Ecto- presence	7		

Goal: Warn About the Future

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; Kindly, hollow voice, dire news

³Familiar in those days meant friendly, or acting as if one knows the person one is addressing quite well, almost as if he were family.

The Curse of Precognition

No one paid attention when, in 1437, a Scottish woman (whose name, not surprisingly, is lost in antiquity) prophesied that King James I was going to be murdered. She said she got the information from a spirit named "Hudhart," a statement which certainly did not help her credibility.

Perhaps she would have been believed if she had claimed to know about the plot because she was involved in it—but then she surely would have been summarily executed, which is a rather high price to pay for giving a truthful prediction.

Another tale demonstrates the fate that has typically befallen those who are visited by the soothsaying spirit. A simple and honorable woman by the name of Bessie Dunlop, residing in Ayrshire in the year 1576, suddenly began to evince an ability to locate lost items, and to foresee what the result of an illness would be. When questioned about how she came to have such knowledge, she replied that the facts were put to her by a spirit that identified itself as Thome Reid.

She professed to have no training in medicine, yet on several occasions was able to identify the nature of an illness and even concoct poultices and herbal remedies to help afflicted people or livestock recover from their ailments. For these and other services she rendered, she steadfastly gave credit where credit was due, telling all who cared to know that in fact the spirit Thome Reid was responsible for these betterments, and she merely served as the earthly conduit through which the ghost's knowledge was passed.

Bessie Dunlop was good-hearted, soft-spoken, and modest. But none of that seemed to make any difference to the village elders. On November 8, 1576, she was officially accused of sorcery and witchcraft. The trial (if it could be called that) took place promptly. As for the outcome of the proceedings, the last three words of the official record speak for themselves: "Convict and burnt."

But not all of Hudkin's visits cause tragedy to its auditors. Consider Maggie Pyle, proprietress of The Swan, a posting house in Dover. Her native politeness, while it did not stop the crime she was warned of, at least spared herself from harm. In her own words:

"I was shuttin' the place up after the last Mail Coach 'ad gone, 'cause business is allus poor to none after that hour, when in walks this dandy looking gent. I wouldna thought nothin' of it, but I couldna remember 'im openin' the door. Of a sudden, 'e was just there.

"I ast 'im if 'e be needin' a room—silly question, but y' got to say somethin'.

"Thank you for asking' says 'e, and 'is voice is almost 'ollow, 'but no. I am here to be of service to you. I am here to tell you that, unless you take steps to prevent it, a dog and his master will die one week from tonight in the room at the top of the stairs.'

"'E said that real calm-like, as if 'e knew just what 'e was talkin' about. Well, I knew about loonies—my Jack, bless 'is soul, 'ad a sister that took a fever and wasn't right in 'er 'ead after. Sweet as butter, but not all there, she wasn't. And I allus treated 'er nice, so I thought I owes 'im the same. I'm just as glad 'e's not wantin' a room. So I says thank you for lettin' me know, but now I got t' get back to work.

"'Of course you do,' 'e says. "I am glad I could be of service.' I turned around for a second or two, makin' like I was busy with somethin' so's 'e'd get the idea—and when I turned back to say g'night to 'im, 'e was gone. Now that was strange; it's a good five paces from the desk to th' door, and I didn't hear the door open an' close.

"Well, to make short work of it, I come 'round t' believing I 'ad a dream of 'im, and forgot the whole of it. I don't truck with no flibberty-flabberty, usual. I'm a sensible widow.

"But then—oh, it chills me just to tell it—a week later, t' the exact night, in walks a constable. 'Is partner and 'im be trackin' a man as escaped from th' work farm, an' the trail leads right to my door.

"I tell 'im to check the rooms—what else could I do?—an' before I can say 'cricket' the partner an' a bloodhound as baggy-faced as y' please come in an' a'tearin' up the stairs. Of a sudden the dream comes back t' me, but I'm too feared t' call out. If they do run inta trouble, I says t' myself, I don't want it bein' on account of my hollerin' down th' house.

"So I heard th' whole awful thing. The first room they try, a'course, the dog sniffin' and snuffin' while th' partner knocks, it be th' one. 'Im as is in it shoots straight through the door an' takes the partner in the stomach. There's a thud, an' the door smashes in—an' the hound be howling... Oh, mercy, 'e shot th' dog, too.

"I was never so sorry, not e'en when my Jack took 'flu an' died. I swore if the gent came back t' me, I'd listen good nex' time, but 'e never stopped in agin. An' I never told a soul about all this till jus' now. Ain't th' world a strange place?"

The Restless People

As with many types of spirits, these denizens of the otherworld are known by many epithets. The one we choose here, probably coined by Sir Walter Scott in the early nineteenth century, seems to typify the behavior and motivation of these most troublesome entities. Individually, these spirits are often referred to as elves, fairies, fawns, sprites, and other terms of that ilk. Minor differences seem to exist between the types, but it has become apparent that drawing such fine distinctions is not only pointless but frustratingly futile.

Let the hair-splitters debate whether elves are more mischievous than sprites, whether fairies are more cheerful than fawns. As far as we can ascertain—and the body of information on this topic is extensive and deep—each one of the Restless People is capable of anything that any of the others can do. In this respect, they are similar to the species of man: while Orientals are different from Caucasians, Hispanics different from Negroes, we are all of us human beings, and the traits that make us men do not differ from race to race.

Just as we have a civilization and a culture, so it has been theorized that the Restless People live in a world of their own, with rules and mores that we cannot comprehend, let alone appreciate. They get married and they procreate (though it has been suggested, not always in that order). They grow old, and they die, although death for them must be something entirely different from our earthly definition of it. Is it possible for a spirit to expire and thus give birth to the spirit of a spirit? A question beyond the scope of this work, and indeed beyond the ken of present-day research techniques—although logic tells us that we cannot dismiss the possibility.

If the Restless People have a culture, a society with structure and meaning, it follows that they have professions and careers—things they do to take up their time, to give purpose to their existence. If this is true, then their professions must all involve being some kind of a nuisance to man and his world, because that is the only activity that any of the Restless People seem to indulge in.

For no reason save its own unfathomable ones, an elf might decide to appear before a man, levitate him 10 feet in the air, spin him head over heels a few times, and leave him hanging upside down from a tree branch. A favorite trick of the fairies is to cause the milk of a cow to dry up—a frustration for the farmer, to say nothing of what the cow's reaction might be.

One of the Restless People's meaner and more unsettling pranks is to cause an invisible wound in or on a victim's body, producing a sharp pain that can be quite a physical and psychological jolt to the unsuspecting person. Some researchers, seeking to attach a "logical" explanation to an illogical act, suggest that these wounds are precipitated by tiny,

invisible elf arrows that (so the theory continues) can be fired across an infinite distance with unerring accuracy. Of course, no one has ever recovered one of these arrow-heads—but then again, lack of evidence has never been a hindrance to speculation.

Perhaps the mystique about arrow-heads derives in part from the fact that most encounters with the Restless People take place in the out of doors, and particularly in or near woodlands—which is the sort of territory an archer, human or otherwise, is likely to frequent. Another fact fits neatly into this line of reasoning, that being that the fairy-folk favor dressing in the color green, which would afford them excellent camouflage in the forest. However, no one has satisfactorily addressed the question of why the spirits need to camouflage themselves against discovery by humans, since they can render themselves invisible to us whenever they want.

By taking note of the day of the week on which victims have been assailed by the mischief of the Restless People, it has long been established that elves and their ilk are most active, and especially malicious, on a Friday. Those who seek to attach religious significance to this fact point out that this is the day on which the Crucifixion occurred, and thus the day on which "evil" spirits are liable to flourish, but there is no hard evidence that would warrant making this connection. And in any event, the Restless People are not "evil" in the extreme sense of the word. They are far from harmless, to be sure, and they are not without their cruel aspects, but there is nothing in all our knowledge of them that indicates they have ever deliberately caused the death or the mortal injury of a human being. Secondary effects are another matter, though; we have heard of several incidents wherein a poor man or woman died or was grievously injured as a consequence of events following an encounter with an elf.

The Restless Folk do not read minds, so they do not know (and, it must be pointed out, do not care) when they are about to plague someone with a fragile disposition or a weak heart. We submit, based on numerous case studies, that anyone with an abject fear of heights refrain from going for a stroll through a forest. The companions of one George Bowman say they will never forget what happened to poor George one day when they were all walking through a small wooded area south of Horsham in Sussex. In the blink of an eye, George was invisibly hoisted off his feet, carried some 20 feet into the air, and suspended there, prone and face down so that he could see the ground beneath him. Even had he been dropped from such a height, the fall would not have killed him—but the thought of falling was enough to do him in. His friends relate how George's face took on an expression of utter terror. He shook his head violently from side to side, but was apparently otherwise unable to move. Then the head-shaking

stopped—and when George's inert body floated back down to the ground a moment later, the man was dead.

The other travelers had a bit of trouble explaining all of this to the authorities, but in the end they were not charged with any wrongdoing. George's body had not a mark on it, so it was patently clear that he had not come to any physical harm—at least, not of the sort that one man can deliver upon another. The case remains officially unsolved—but one might suppose that if the investigating constable ever finds himself 20 feet in the air with no visible means of support, the book on George Bowman will be closed as soon as the officer comes back down to earth.

We have no reason to believe that the unseen entity or entities that lifted George into the air intended for him to die as a result of the experience. No one save for George's closest friends knew that he was terribly afraid of falling (an affliction that he apparently acquired when, as a baby, his grandmother dropped him on his head), and not even George could have known that the prospect of taking a tumble would be sufficient to cause him a fatal seizure.

Why was George victimized and not the others? First, it is not uncommon for the Restless People to perpetrate their pranks in front of witnesses; they seem to take a perverse pride in doing what they do, and no doubt they have themselves quite a chuckle at the thought of how both the witnesses and the victim will explain what happened. Harkening back to what was said earlier about the arrow-heads (and forgetting for the moment my reservations about that theory), it is conceivable that George was singled out because of his surname—which might be good reason for caution if your name is Archer or if you are a man called Marks. The final point that bears upon this last question is a fact that does not appear in the official record, but which came out during our interview with one of the witnesses. On the fateful day, George Bowman was proudly decked out in a new jacket—of bright green—while everyone else in the party was attired in outer garments of more subdued tones. Make of all that what you will, Dear Reader. You are free to draw your own conclusions, and you need not be swayed by any judgments that you find herein. But if you elect to consider George Bowman's death a matter of mere coincidence, then please do not bother asking me to go for a walk in the woods with you.

The Restless People

masters of mischief

The numbers below are our best guess about what an average member of the Restless People is like—but don't dare talk about "average" when they can hear, because every one of them



has an enormous ego and thinks *he* is the craftiest, quickest, or most fun-loving elf of all. These little folk are especially interested in keeping people from wandering aimlessly through forests, making everyone stay indoors on Fridays, and penalizing anyone who's wearing green (except on St. Patrick's Day and the last day of school, when one can wear anything one wants). Not everything the elves do is related to one of these things; one of them might visit a victim in a restaurant, pick up his or her plate of spaghetti, and toss it in the face of the really big guy at the next table, just to see how good the victim is at diplomacy or how fast he can run.

Brains	7*	Make Mischief	10
Muscles	2*	Shoot Invisible Arrows	5
Moves	6*	Avoid Capture	9
Cool	7*	Hold Temper	10
Power	4*	Invisibility Make Illusion Poltergeist (G)	

* variable

Goal: Fun At Your Expense

Tags: Physical, intelligent; small stature, limber, full of practical jokes

Dujonus

The Legend of Dujonus

A long time ago, so it is told, there came to the city of Amsterdam a man who called himself Jacob Dujonus. He purchased a modest home and quickly established himself as a popular member of the neighborhood.

He took much pride in the appearance of his property: hedges always trimmed, flagstones always swept, fresh paint and fresh mortar continually applied whenever the old began to fade or crack. All of his effort did not go unnoticed, of course, and homeowners in the vicinity felt behooved to follow his lead in keeping their own tracts better maintained (so that their dwellings would not look run-down by comparison with his).

Then Jacob started to improve his property and expand his possessions. He built an entranceway outside his front door, so that visitors would not stand in the rain while waiting for him to answer the door. He had larger windows installed, so that the interior of his home was well illuminated even on cloudy days. He came home one day in a fancy carriage—the first person in the neighborhood to own any vehicle other than a small cart or a ramshackle wagon.

His neighbors did not take this lying down. In some houses, wives badgered their husbands for entranceways and larger windows; in others, husbands convinced their wives that instead of food and clothing, what they really needed was a new carriage just like Jacob's.

In one way or another, every other householder in the neighborhood tried to duplicate some or all of what Jacob was doing. No matter what Jacob did, his neighbors tried to emulate him, and as soon as they succeeded Jacob would go one step further. Families began living beyond their means in order to present a good appearance, and one by one they fell into bankruptcy and were forced to move to less expensive housing.

A year after Jacob moved into the neighborhood, his was the only house out of dozens that still remained occupied; all the others were vacant and in various stages of disrepair. The day after his last neighbor moved away, Jacob rode off in his carriage and never returned. Only after it was too late did the homeowners realize the futility of trying to keep up with Dujonus. To this day, throughout the civilized world, people are still learning this lesson the hard way.

This spirit is one of the most insidious of all that roam our world. It preys on one of man's basic weaknesses—the need to compare favorably with one's peers—and amplifies this minor frailty into a character flaw that ruins families, makes enemies out of friends, and is responsible for a new phrase in our language: conspicuous consumption.

Dujonus (only one of thousands of names the spirit has used) can appear as a single person, in the company of a spouse, or even as an average family. It moves into a peaceful neighborhood in the middle of the economic spectrum, makes friends, and then proceeds to drive its neighbors crazy with envy and frustration—buying this, refurbishing that. It does not act haughty or ostentatious, does not draw attention to itself other than by the fact of what it does, what it buys, what it rides in, or what it wears.

Other people see the kind of life it lives, and they decide that's the life they wish to live as well. Just when the victim thinks he's won the game (or at least managed a tie), Dujonus changes the rules. And instead of getting irritated at the "person" causing his frustration, the unfortunate imitator redoubles his efforts to keep up appearances.

It is possible to resist Dujonus, but only by strong force of will over a long period of time. If the tempted ever look at his house or his motorcar and think, for just an instant, that they would like to have one just as nice, then they have lost. Sooner or later, they attempt to do something or buy something that is beyond their ability to perform or afford, and that is their first step down the path to ruin.

Dujonus

the trend setter

Dujonus has the ability to *control mind*, but—man's nature being what it is—hardly ever needs to use it. Usually he can accomplish his goal by *making illusions* (snazzy clothes, fancy car, electric grapefruit slicer) of things that make him better than his victim, and then that unfortunate's natural tendency to want the same stuff takes over from there.

Brains	9	False Friendliness	12
Muscles	3	Handyman	6
Moves	4	Cocky Strut	7
Cool	12	Self-Confidence	15
Power	8	Control Mind Creature Feature (G) Make Illusion	

Goal: Create Envy

Tags: Physical, intelligent; average, ordinary joe—with the most

Mari-Yvonne

Her full name was Mari-Yvonne Helary. Her lifelong occupation, her one true love, was making linen. She never ventured from her little seacoast cottage in southwestern France except to take her linen to market and buy what meager provisions she needed—including more flax fiber for spinning. When she had enough thread, she took it to the village and had it woven into cloth. Then she reclaimed the woven material and finished it.

What distinguished it from the work of other spinners and pressers more than any other aspect was its color; or, more accurately, its lack of color. If the quality of perfect whiteness can be said to exist, then Mari-Yvonne's linen had that quality. Her eyesight must have been inhumanly remarkable, because she rejected even a single fiber of flax if she could see that it would not weave or bleach properly.

Many of the woman who tried and failed to emulate Mari-Yvonne's linen said (never to her, of course) that Mari-Yvonne's skill was equaled only by her obsessiveness; that although she seemed to prefer living alone, she also deserved that kind of life, because she was not a normal woman.

She became ill but continued to work, trimming and finishing the most recent batch of cloth she had brought back from the weaver. When a neighbor discovered her three-days-dead corpse, all of the cloth she had in her possession had been neatly pressed, folded, and stacked in her cupboard.

The neighbor, Lenan Rojou, found Mari-Yvonne's body in bed. She had a rather kindly attitude toward the old woman and was accordingly quite upset to find that Mari-Yvonne breathed no more. But her sorrow was washed away by the flood of shock when she opened the cupboard doors.

She rushed home to tell her husband, Goneri, what she had found. Her mention of Mari-Yvonne's death was made almost in passing—the linen was more important, and she implored her husband to come and carry it away for her.

Goneri agreed to do so, but insisted that they leave enough to make a shroud for Mari-Yvonne's body. Lenan saw the merit in this (or so she said at the time) and agreed to sew the shroud while Goneri carted the remainder of the linen back to their cottage. When Goneri returned, he found his wife fondling the swathe of linen he had left behind.

"Why use this beautiful piece of cloth to wrap around a dead body?" she said. "Will Mari-Yvonne not sleep just as well in a shroud made of her last bedclothes?" That was all it took for Goneri to be persuaded out of his earlier opinion.

So Mari-Yvonne was laid to rest in a shroud made of her own linen—but linen that was wrinkled, soiled and had the scent of death about it.

Two weeks after Mari-Yvonne's body was buried, Lenan and Goneri were found dead in their bed. Each of their faces was frozen in a mask of horror—

eyes bulging, mouth open, tongue stuck out and distended. They looked as if they had been strangled, but both bodies were unmarked. The Rojous were buried hastily and without ceremony; no one needed to be told that the cause of their deaths was quite probably not natural.

Their possessions were put up for auction, as was the custom in the area, but no one bought anything. Even had man and wife died under less sinister-seeming circumstances, no one cared to bid on the enormous stack of linen found in a chest at the foot of the bed—because all of it was stained, frayed, and full of worm-holes.

As so often happens with those who are robbed, swindled, or otherwise treated unfairly after their death, the spirit of Mari-Yvonne rose from the grave and will in all likelihood never be satisfied so that it can go to its final rest. As is also typical of such cases, the spirit's purpose is a gross perversion of what the person stood for during her life.

When the spirit of Mari-Yvonne shows itself—a very infrequent occurrence—it appears in the image of an emaciated corpse with tatters of dirty white cloth dangling from its body and extremities. From its fingers it spews forth a jet of sticky, repulsive-smelling stuff of a putrid green or brown or yellow color. The stuff can be cleaned with some difficulty from skin and hair, but any garment or piece of cloth that it touches is irreparably soiled so that it must be discarded or burned.

Mari-Yvonne the woman was interested in nothing so much as whiteness and cleanliness; Mari-Yvonne the spirit is obsessed with spreading filth and stench wherever it goes.

Mari-Yvonne

spiritual spinner

Sometimes, instead of spewing *slime*, Mari-Yvonne uses her *poltergeist* ability to accomplish the same objective: pulling a glob of ketchup, mustard, and mayonnaise out of a hamburger and depositing it in her victim's lap; grabbing a gob of grease from the engine compartment of the car and smearing it on the driver's seat.

Brains	5	Perfectionism	8
Cool	5	Revenge	8
Power	3	Poltergeist (L) Slime	
Ecto- presence	6		

Goal: Soiled Cloth

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; corpse in dirty tatters

Tregeagle

The name is an innocuous one, but the spirit who possesses it is one of the most terrible, vengeful, thoroughly evil apparitions this world has ever known.

John Tregeagle was a corrupt magistrate in Cornwall who, as near as we can determine, had no friends and desired none. He spent his life fighting and revenging himself on his enemies, of which he had many. His lust for vengeance was so strong that, according to quite reliable accounts, several years after Tregeagle's death, the man's ghost appeared to testify against one of his old enemies at the court of Bodmin (a municipality in the county of Cornwall).

Here occurred the mistake that loosed the malignant spirit of John Tregeagle upon the world—for not only did the court permit the ghost to testify, but it turned out that the defendant was convicted on the strength of Tregeagle's avowals, where otherwise the man would have been set free. Whether the court believed Tregeagle's testimony out of terror or because of the substance of the words is unknown and ultimately immaterial. The important thing is that Tregeagle was given credibility, and with credibility came power.

Tregeagle's ghost roams the world on a quest for vengeance. In particular, he has an insatiable hatred for the descendants of the enemies he accumulated during his life, but in general he does not hesitate to wreak havoc and misery upon any individual so luckless as to attract his attention.

Churchmen have exorcised Tregeagle on several occasions, but rather than succeeding in banishing him permanently from the material world, they have only managed to stifle him temporarily by chaining him to the completion of some never-ending task. He has been compelled to empty a bottomless pool using a leaky bucket; to sweep the sands from the British Channel into the Atlantic Ocean, while they were continually being brought back to their origin by the prevailing current; to catch a ray of light in a glass jar and keep it there for 24 hours. On every occasion when he has been kept occupied thusly, he has eventually succeeded in breaking his bonds after years of toil—and then he is free to haunt again, even more vicious and vindictive than he had been before.

When Tregeagle makes himself visible, he appears as a skeletal, thoroughly evil-looking man dressed only in the shroud his body wore when it was buried. When he manifests himself in this fashion, he speaks to his victim and identifies himself by name. Anyone who does not give him the respect and deference he demands—who does not let out a blood-curdling shriek, drop into a faint, or run pell-mell in the opposite direction—may in all likelihood not live long enough to regret his or her indiscretion.

If someone he visits professes to be, or actually is,

not horribly frightened by his presence, then it is quite possible that person will be struck dead on the spot. We make this inference because, in all of our interviews and research, we have yet to encounter a single person who claimed to have seen Tregeagle and not to have been utterly horrified. Thus, either such an event has never happened (unlikely, considering the wide range of behavior and mentality among members of the human race), or when it has happened, the victim has not survived to tell about it.

Sometimes, for no reason other than pure malevolence, Tregeagle simply reaches out from the spirit world and takes a life on a whim. All of us are familiar with stories of sudden, unexplainable deaths—the man in perfect health who keels over in the middle of his morning constitutional; the woman, likewise free of illness or infirmity, who closes her eyes to go to sleep one night and never wakes up again.

I submit, with all due respect to the members of the medical community, that there is one cause of death they will never be able to foresee or identify, at least not through their brand of scholarship. And that is death brought about by the wantonly evil act of a spirit—Tregeagle or some other one that shares his disregard for earthly life.



Tregeagle*bad to the bone*

If Tregeagle picks on a victim with a lot of *Cool* and fails to *terrorize* him, the spirit might get angry enough to use his *death grip* talent. Match the victim's *Muscles* against Tregeagle's talent; if Tregeagle beats the victim *and* rolls a Ghost, the poor guy is a goner. The safest way to keep Tregeagle from doing its dirty work on a person is for the victim to pretend he's terrified even when he's not. Tregeagle is so egotistical that it almost always believes those who act really scared.

Brains	8	Persuasion	11
Muscles	1	Death Grip	4
Moves	2	Sneak Up From Behind	5
Cool	10	Egotism	13
Power	9	Dematerialize Self	
		Terrorize (G)	

Goal: Spread Terror and Death**Tags:** Physical, intelligent; skeleton wrapped in shroud, booming voice**The Spectral Voyager**

So many accounts involving this type of spirit have been reported, and so many other incidents are theoretically attributable to its existence, that one singular fact is undeniably clear: a great number of these spirits inhabit our world. People—particularly those who live or visit in urban areas—must be constantly on the lookout for them. They patrol the streets and byways endlessly and are utterly indiscriminate about what sorts of folk they abduct, although their victims most often seem to be those who are impetuous or of low intelligence.

By way of further explanation and elucidation, I defer to my colleague Shrewsbury Smith, who claims (and I believe him implicitly) to have had an experience with a spirit of this sort. I am indebted to Mrs. Ann Tickwoodie for her skill at transcription, by dint of which the reader may be assured that the account which follows this entry is accurate down to the last syllable.

Mr. Smith's tale is typical, in most respects, of the dozens of similar occurrences we have heard about and read about during our research into the voyage. An anonymous driver or horseman approaches a solitary pedestrian and offers transportation. Those solicited are free to decline, and if they do, nothing untoward happens to them. As for those who accept, that is another matter altogether; we have never heard from a person who took a ride from such a mysterious stranger and then returned to tell about it later.

Thanks to the large body of information we have on sightings, we can draw some rather specific conclusions about the sort of people who decline the rider's assistance. They turn down the offer either because they are perspicacious enough (as Mr. Smith was) to realize the danger, or simply because they have no real need for the spirit's "services."

Conversely, we can deduce that those who do accept fall into the opposite categories. The man who

disappeared on the night of Mr. Smith's experience was at least slightly besotted, which may have dulled his judgment, and without meaning disrespect we might theorize that even when sober, he was not a man of great intellectual prowess. The barmaid may have been cautious about accepting rides from strangers—an attitude that any woman in the city is well advised to adopt—but in this case, she was in a great hurry and may have decided that the risk of danger from the coachman was smaller than the possibility of incurring her employer's wrath for failing to report to work on time.

As to the intentions and motivation of this spirit, we have a clue in the substance of what the coachman said to Mr. Smith—which, again, is similar or identical to the dialogues that other people have reported. When the driver offers to take a pedestrian to his or her "destination," he refers not to the journey of the moment but to the ultimate destination at which all of us, sooner or later, must arrive—the end of our corporeal earthly existence.

What happens to those who accept the assistance of a Spectral Voyager? Obviously, we cannot know this for sure—but just as obviously, they do disappear and they probably do die, at least in one sense of the word. The consensus among my fellow researchers, a view which I share, suggests that each victim in turn takes the place of the driver, and the spirit of the previous coachman is thereby allowed to enjoy its final and eternal rest.

Of course, this leaves open the questions of how and why the original Spectral Voyager came to be, and why this type of spirit seems to be so proliferate. Conjecture is pointless here, for there exist as many different theories as there are scholars of the subject. My friend Shrewsbury, when asked for his thoughts on these topics, evinces perhaps the most sensible attitude of all: "What difference does it make?"



Editor's Note

The years since Tobin conducted his research have seen an explosion in the number and variety of vehicles for hire. While some spectral voyagers still appear in driving capes and handsom cabs, it is not uncommon to hear tales of phantom taxis, motor boats, or even charter planes, depending upon one's location and the availability of transportation. It would be no surprise to discover a spectral voyager plying a Venetian Gondola or a rickshaw in Hong Kong.

The Spectral Voyager

destination: oblivion

These spirits are all over the place, and almost any is likely to differ somewhat from the average stats given below. Some don't have the *Brains* to spot an easy victim, and waste a lot getting ignored or turned down. (Then again, they have a lot of time to waste.) Others aren't

very glib—when they open their mouths, dumb things come out—and even a very stupid or very drunk pedestrian might not be fooled.

Once a Spectral Voyager talks or forces someone into his vehicle, he then tries to *possess* that person. If the attempt succeeds, the spirit occupies the body of that person until he or she manages to kidnap some other poor soul. If it fails, the passenger is dropped off a long way from where he wanted to go.

Brains	6*	Identify Pigeon	9
Muscles	1*	Pull In Victim	4
Moves	4*	Driving Dexterity	7
Cool	5*	Smooth Talker	8
Power	5*	Creature Feature (G) Dematerialize Self Possess	

* *variable*

Goal: Kidnapping

Tags: Physical, intelligent; dresses completely in black, offers rides

Smith's Encounter

"In London, I stayed overlong at the home of a friend one evening—don't even ask, Tobin—and when I emerged, the night was dark and starry under a new moon. I could not find a cab in short order, but the air was clear and the temperature not unpleasant, so I resolved to walk the two miles or so to my apartment.

"When one is not accustomed to traveling on foot, as I freely admit I am not, it can be refreshing to see the streets from a viewpoint of narrower scope. I was not nervous, but still my eyes darted to and fro—left, right, over my shoulder—for the purpose of taking in the details of my surroundings and at the same time ensuring that nothing and no one should approach me unobserved.

"The walkway at streetside was fraught with perils both annoying and amusing, occasionally unsettling. After nearly slipping on or stumbling over a host of obstacles, including a half-eaten chicken leg, a cobblestone that vandals had pried out of place, a dead cat, and an unconscious miscreant who reeked of wine, I decided that the street—even for someone without a cab or coach—was a safer and therefore better place to be.

"I could feel, rather than see, the quizzical looks of the other pedestrians as I resolutely stepped into the street, paced off a distance equal to half its width, and resumed my stroll right down the center of the boulevard. Of course, there is no law against walking in the street—just as there is no law against a horse-drawn conveyance trampling someone walking in its rightful path. But at this time of night, street traffic was thin to nonexistent. It was no problem to simply step out of the way when a coach driver or a cartsman demanded the space I was occupying, and it was easy to ignore the imprecations and assumptions about my heritage that were flung in my direction by the drivers whose territory I had invaded. I could have saved myself some grief of a different sort by abandoning the thoroughfare, but now it had become a mission: I was determined to make my way home along any path I pleased, so long as it did not involve intruding on private property. The street belonged to me as much as it did to any horse and driver, and the only impediments to footloose travel here were occasional piles of dung, which I assume were of equine origin....

"I'm getting to it, Tobin, I'm getting to it. A story ought to have some flavor, don't you think?... Well, I don't care what you think! This is my story, and I'll tell it in my own good time. No doubt you'll put it in your journal the way you see fit anyway, so the least you can do is let me tell it. Or maybe I should save it for my own journal, y'know?

"Shrewsbury Smith and His Amazing Adventures"—has a nice ring to it, eh?... Well, so it might be a short book, but it'd be a good one!

"All right then, back to it. I'm more than half-way home when a carriage turns the corner a few yards in front of me. Everything about it was black—a deep black that showed up even against the night. I gave way, having developed a nimble shuffling sidestep just for this purpose, and I kept the coach visible in the corner of my eye as I continued to walk in the opposite direction.

"The horse was black from mane to hooves, nose to tail. The coach was plain, the color and luster of cold pitch. The driver was attired in black hat, coat, and leggings, his face obscured—unnecessarily, I thought, considering the far from inclement weather—by the collar of the coat, which was turned up against the sides and back of his head, and the brim of the hat, which was pulled down as though he were trying to keep the nonexistent rainfall out of his eyes.

"Lots of things are black, of course, and I took no special note of the vehicle's appearance then. Most noteworthy to me was the fact that this driver, unlike all the others I had encountered, paid me no heed whatsoever. He did not curse me nor my parentage, he did not cause his horse to veer threateningly toward me as the other louts had done. He steered a straight course, apparently oblivious to me as well as to the rest of his surroundings—so oblivious it crossed my mind that he might have run the animal and the vehicle right over me if I had not altered my path to let him pass. Despite this unnerving observation, I found the whole incident curious rather than foreboding, and no doubt would have forgotten about it forthwith, except for what happened next.

"The coach turned another corner behind me, to my right—I could tell from the sound—and disappeared from sight and mind. But no more than three minutes later, there it was again, approaching me—from the left!—along an intersecting street. Having heard nothing as I approached the intersection, I did not bother to look left and right, as good mothers have admonished their children to do ever since there were streets. And so I did not notice the black coach that must have been standing there, a few houses distant, just before the horse was ordered onward.

"At the time, I assumed that it had been standing there. Now, thanks to what you've gotten me into, Tobin, I know—or, at least, I suppose—differently. It was the same coach: of that there was no doubt in my mind, even though simple reason demanded another explanation. How, after

all, could the vehicle have traveled a circuitous route covering several blocks, with me all the while moving away from it, and then once again happen to be directly in my path? As quickly as my mind phrased the question at the time, another part of my brain dismissed it and refused to struggle for an answer. Now I know that it had made that journey by means not available to normal horse-drawn coaches. It had... what's the word?... materialized—Thank you, Tobin—in a spot so as to be able to encounter me again.

"The coach reached the intersection after I had passed through it by fifty paces or so, and the steady clapping of the horse's hooves turned to follow along the path I had taken. I kept walking, determined to be as oblivious to the coachman as he had been to me, although I did make the prudent concession of angling my path towards the side of the street.

"In the next two minutes I learned something about myself that I had never had occasion to discover before. I knew, without being able to attach a reason to the feeling, that I was in grave danger. And through the peril, despite it, I stayed calm and composed, possessed of no weapons save my rationality. And my rationality told me that to panic and run would do me more ill than good—if not physical harm, then the worse hurt of always knowing that I had been presented with my moment of truth... and I had run away from it, trembling and whimpering as a child does when he escapes from the neighborhood bully-boy.

"The coach came closer, and the closer it came, the slower it moved. It took enormous force of will for me to keep my pace steady, my eyes forward. As the coach drew alongside me, I turned my head toward it and continued to walk. So much for being oblivious—but then again, the driver had obviously noticed me, so it was only polite to reciprocate. Perhaps he needs directions, I thought to myself. Still mindful of my manners, I stopped—at precisely the instant that the front wheels of the coach drew even with my progress.

"Emboldened, with an attitude that verged on devil-may-care, I turned further towards the driver, gave a slight bow, and asked with all due civility, 'May I be of service?'

"The driver was still facing forward as I said that, but then, as if on cue, he turned his head down and to his left toward me, and, from the visage still shrouded by collar and hat, a voice issued forth: 'Nay,' he said, in a tone that seemed somehow expressionless and considerate at the same time. 'But I may serve, if it please.'

"I thought I knew what was coming, but I replied nonetheless. 'In what way?' I asked, care-

ful to remain polite but detached. A part of me screamed out to be gone, to put as much distance between myself and this mysterious coachman as my feet would allow. But a larger part of me vowed to see this through. The man—if that was what he was—did not seem inclined to force me physically, and I felt that I could withstand any other form of persuasion he might bring to bear.

"For the first time, the driver moved something other than his head. He took the reins in his right hand and swept the left in the direction of the door of the coach. 'Transport to your destination,' he said, 'free of charge.'

"For the blink of an eye, I considered taking him up on the offer, though I had less than half a mile to go. All things considered, particularly the events of the last five minutes or so, I had had quite enough of the pedestrian way of life. But then reason surfaced, and prevailed. 'Thank you, no,' I said. 'I haven't far to go.'

"I waited for what seemed an eternity for the driver to offer a response that would spell the end of this odd episode. In reality, it must have been only a second or two. 'So you say,' the man replied. Then he teased the reins, and the horse set off at a walk. I remained standing, watching, until the coach turned at the next cross-street and, within seconds thereafter, the sounds of its hooves and rims against the pavement was no longer audible.

"It took me a while to get to sleep that night, but when I awoke the incident had passed from my mind—or so I thought. In the next evening's newspaper I was alarmed, but not completely surprised, to read that two persons had seemingly disappeared right off the streets of London the previous night. A man was last seen staggering out the door of his favorite pub, but never reached his home six blocks away. A woman dashed from her apartment, late for work, and failed to report for duty as a barmaid at a nearby tavern. Both incidents took place in the same neighborhood through which I had walked.

"Being a conscientious citizen, I contacted the police to tell them about the mysterious coachman. They were polite and attentive, but as far as I know never drew a connection between the man in black and the disappearances. 'Can't be a crime without a body,' a lieutenant told me—a rather simplistic point of view, I thought. 'It's a big city,' he felt behooved to add. 'People are pickin' up and leavin' all the time; we can't be keepin' track o' them as doesn't want to be found.'

"I nodded, thanked the officer for his time, and took my leave. To this day I've never seen the black coach again—but then, I've not made a habit of strolling the streets after dark, either."

The Sexton

This is a spirit that believes (to paraphrase The Bard) that all the world's a grave, and the ultimate purpose of any person is to fill a hole—with his or her own body.

If a person digs a hole in the ground for any reason, such action attracts the notice of The Sexton if the spirit is in the vicinity. The spirit wants the hole filled in, but the entity is not without patience; it can wait a day or two until appearing in physical form before the person who did the digging.

The Sexton manifests itself as a frail man dressed in a black suit, with a shock of snow-white hair atop its head. It beckons to the digger, entrances the person, and compels him or her to follow The Sexton to the grave site, whereupon the spirit materializes a shovel, knocks the offender into the hole, and fills the excavation with dirt.

The Farmer's Solution

There is one way to foil The Sexton, a method that was accidentally stumbled upon by a solitary farmer. One of his three cows took sick and appeared to be on the verge of death. Thinking ahead, he dug a shallow grave and meant to bury the animal as soon as it expired so that the corpse would not infect the other cows. He realized that not all the dirt he had excavated would fit back into the hole when the cow was put within. So, proud of himself for his ingenuity, he took away a volume of earth roughly equal to that of the body of the cow and used it to re-cover the floor of his cabin.

A day went by, then two, then a week, and still the cow survived—not only survived, but seemed to recover.

The next day he was visited by some pilgrims, who were quite upset to discover what was obviously an open grave. "Know ye not of The Sexton?" they asked. The farmer shook his head in confusion. After the pilgrims explained to him about the spirit, the farmer told them the story of the cow that didn't die.

And thus it became known that if a grave is dug, but a significant amount of the loose earth is promptly taken away from the site, The Sexton can be thereby thwarted. The spirit is left with a dilemma: in order to fill the pre-existing hole, The Sexton would be forced to dig some fresh earth of its own—and then that new hole, by virtue of its own stricture, would need to be filled by the body of The Sexton. Since a spirit cannot harm itself (a universal characteristic only humans seem to violate), the hole remains a hole, and The Sexton is obliged to find another venue for its dirty deed.

The Sexton

just filling in

The Sexton first tries to *possess* a victim, and if that doesn't work he uses *terrorize* to make the victim freeze in his tracks—so that the spirit can use his *shovel bash* to knock the target into the hole. *Speed shoveling* allows The Sexton to move the dirt piled up around a hole back into that hole faster than you can say "antiexcavationism" 10 times.

Brains	2	Identify Digger	5
Muscles	4	Shovel Bash	7
Moves	6	Speed Shoveling	9
Cool	3	Patience	6
Power	3	Dematerialize Object	
		Dematerialize Self	
		Possess	
		Terrorize	

Goal: Leave No Hole Unfilled

Tags: Physical, intelligent; frail body, old fashioned black suit, white hair



Nuckelavee

An Addendum by the Author's Friend

Smith here—Shrewsbury Smith, that is... at your service. And I do indeed have a great service to perform with regard to the monster known as Nuckelavee.

When my colleague Tobin entrusted me to deliver the finished manuscript of this book safely to the publisher, he had no doubt that I would perform the task unfailingly. What he could not have known is the fact which I now relate to you—and to him, when he browses this entry at some time subsequent to printing and binding: I have added some words of my own to what he set down about this monster.

I am convinced that I have discovered a way to thwart Nuckelavee, and I cannot in good conscience let Tobin's essay on this creature be printed before amending it with the following paragraph.

Nuckelavee can be satisfied by giving it skin. It doesn't have to be your own skin, although in a pinch this will suffice. You can give it the peelings of a potato, the rind of a lemon, a shoe or a leather jacket—any sort of skin will do. The monster doesn't care to wear the skin, only to keep it from being worn by someone or something else. I imagine that the creature thinks that if it has to go through eternity without skin, then all other things should be skinless as well.

There—now I've done it, for better or worse. Tobin may never forgive me for going behind his back, especially as I have taken advantage of the opportunity he unwittingly afforded me to set down a theory (although I consider it more than that) with which he vehemently disagrees. If it turns out that I am right, and the information I have just imparted saves only one person from the horror of Nuckelavee, then the loss of my friendship with John will have been a small price to pay.

A textual description of this spirit's appearance cannot possibly do it justice. As we were told by many of the eyewitnesses with whom we spoke, the only way to really know what Nuckelavee looks like is to encounter the thing—and in the next breath, they tell us the knowledge is not worth what it takes to find it out. The spirit always appears at night, and seems at first sight to be a man-shape astride a horse. Some viewers insist that the man's body and the horse's are somehow welded together. The most striking aspect of the man-shape as seen from a

distance is the size of its head—three feet in diameter, perched atop a massive set of shoulders. The head rocks from side to side on the shoulders, as though it is not attached to them but is rolling back and forth between the clavicles.

As the thing approaches closer, an observant viewer may see that the horse-body has flippers instead of hooves—an anatomical grotesquery that does not seem to prevent the creature from moving overland with good speed—and extremely long arms. The features of its face are gruesome to behold: a single red eye in the middle of the forehead, and a giant, gaping, slavering mouth that easily opens to accommodate the head of a normal man.

And then comes the most spine-chilling revelation of all: the man-body of Nuckelavee has no skin! The outer surface of the head, torso, and arms is raw red flesh, resembling nothing so much as freshly cut beef in a slaughterhouse. Blood of a darker red color (some say it is black) can be seen pulsing through translucent yellow veins and arteries, and grayish-white sinew is visible in the places where it occurs in human anatomy. Even if Nuckelavee were "only" a man in all other respects, this absence of epidermis alone would make the creature a horrifying sight.

The flipper-feet of the horse-body can move silently if Nuckelavee so desires, enabling the thing to surprise an intended victim. It rarely approaches from behind, however, apparently preferring to bring terror upon its quarry gradually.

If the victim is shocked enough or brave enough or stupid enough to stand his ground while Nuckelavee closes to arm's length, the monster unleashes an attack that no one can withstand: its breath.

The odor that it can expel from its mouth at will gives new meaning to the word "noxious." Even the most insensitive nose is assailed by the smell, and virtually any person turns and flees rather than continue to subject himself to the stench. It has often been likened to the smell of a decaying corpse, while others (who probably had not been exposed to that particular smell) describe it simply as the odor of something rotten or dead.

Nuckelavee's purpose seems to be to extract terror from its victim, as though it somehow thrives on emanations of horror. (My colleague Shrewsbury Smith has a different theory concerning what Nuckelavee is after, but, with all due respect to him, the idea is so preposterous that I cannot bring myself to even mention it.) If the victim turns and runs—and this is almost impossible not to do—Nuckelavee chases him, its mouth twisted into a semblance of a smile. The pursuit continues until the victim passes out from exhaustion (an unconscious person cannot be terrified), acquires serious (or even mortal!) injury during flight, or flees across a body of fresh water that Nuckelavee cannot circumvent.

This last point is a very interesting aspect of Nuckelavee's nature. For a reason that we are still trying to ascertain, the monster cannot abide fresh water and does anything to keep from coming into contact with it.

Nuckelavee

looks bad, smells worse

Nuckelavee is so afraid of water that it's practically impossible for it not to notice, and do anything to avoid, even the smallest trickle, puddle, or spray. Sunbathers don't have to worry about losing their "skin," since Nuckelavee only comes out at night.

Only someone with a lot of *Cool* can keep from being totally grossed out by Nuckelavee's breath. A victim might be able to do the world a big favor if he runs across Nuckelavee while

holding a hose or a squirt gun, and he's quick enough and lucky enough to shoot a stream of water right into its face. Maybe a blast of fresh-water mouthwash is just what this spirit needs.

Brains	3	Horsemanship	6
Muscles	4	Lung Power	7
Moves	6	Tailgate Target	9
Cool	13	Fear of Water	16
Power	8	Dematerialize Self Incredibly Bad Breath Terrorize	

Goal: Scare You Out of Your Skin (Yes, Shrewsbury was right.)

Tags: Physical, intelligent; baaaad breath, no skin, swelled head

Samhain

Samhain is a powerful and thoroughly malevolent spirit, rumored to be the purest manifestation of the evils associated with All Hallow's Eve, or Halloween in the United States. The spirit of legend is a goblin lord of incredible power, able and quite willing to wreak havoc and spread misery on a truly horrific scale during the few hours each year when it manifests itself in our earthly realm.

It is widely agreed that Samhain can only appear from sunset on All Hallow's Eve, October 31st on the modern calendar, to sunrise on All Hallow's Day, November 1st. No records we know of ever reported an encounter with the goblin at any other time. For this, at least, we can be thankful.

Folklore from the early Middle Ages suggest that Samhain may have had an existence as a Celtic god—and before that, a similar entity appears in pictographs dating as far back as ancient Phoenicia. Both Celtic and Phoenician spirits were known to cause mischief and grief in their night abroad, and both were held at bay by fire.

In Celtic times the custom became that a family left sweets on the porch for the goblin and its followers to appease their appetites. Then the frightened folk removed a safe distance and huddled 'round a bonfire all the night through, stoking the flames so that the spirits could not approach.

From these traditions have grown the practices of dressing youngsters up in costume and taking them begging from door to door. The traditional "Trick or Treat?" stems from the very real possibility that Samhain might choose the latter if the sweets not be sweet enough.

No verified sightings of Samhain have been recorded since 1412, indicating that for the last five

centuries the spirit has preferred to perform its work invisibly, sometimes acting through agents that it possesses or compels to do its bidding.

Samhain

trickery is no treat

With its talent of *anticipation*, it is almost always in the right place at the right time (from its point of view), and its victim cannot out-guess it or avoid it. Samhain is very *cunning*, which means that (in its ectoplasmic form) it nearly always succeeds in making the victim think that someone or something else is responsible for the vandalism, trickery, or criminal activity that the goblin instigates.

Brains	8	Anticipation	11
Cool	5	Cunning	8
Power	10	Control Mind Flight Materialize Possess Teleport Terrorize	

Ecto-
presence 17

Weakness: *Power* reduced one point every round by bright light

Goal: Horror on Halloween

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; pumpkin head, bad attitude

Death's Messengers

Grimm's Household Tales is a delightful and interesting book, full of tales that run the gamut from fanciful to frightening, from frivolous to factual. One of the most frightening stories in the volume, and one which is also arguably taken from fact, concerns the spiritual phenomena known collectively as Death's Messengers.

Medical science supports the study of folklore and antiquities on this significant point: Death most often does not come unannounced or unforeseen, so

Retold From Grimm

One day, so the tale goes, Death was bested in a battle with a mighty giant and left weakened and suffering by the side of the road. A young man passed by the spot soon afterward and restored Death to full vigor with a draught from his flask.

Death, being as grateful as Death can be, revealed its identity to the man and made him a promise: "I spare no one, and can make no exception with thee; but that thou mayst see that I am grateful, I promise thee that I will not fall on thee unexpectedly, but will send my messengers to thee before I take thee away."

The man expected nothing for his help, and so was quite happy to receive this boon. He went away and lived the rest of his life knowing that he never needed to fear that an illness or injury would be fatal, so long as Death's Messengers did not appear before him. He grew old and suffered many bouts of sickness and other maladies, but recovered and was looking forward to an even longer life.

Then one day Death tapped him on the shoulder and told him that his time had come. The man was confused and felt betrayed. He argued that he should not die, because Death had not kept its promise.

"Have I not sent one messenger to thee after another?" Death replied. "Did not fever come and smite thee, and shake thee, and cast thee down? Has dizziness not bewildered thy head? Has not gout twitched thee in all thy limbs? Did not thine ears sing? Did not toothache bite into thy cheeks? Was it not dark before thine eyes? And besides all that, has not my own brother Sleep reminded thee every night of me? Didst thou not lie by night as if thou wert already dead?"

To all of that, the man was speechless—not that any protests would have made a difference. He accepted his fate, and Death led him away.

long as someone knows what signs to look for. One other fact is irrefutable: no matter how many times its messengers are repelled or ignored, Death can only be postponed. It can never be prevented.

In practically every culture in which the entity is personified, Death is portrayed—quite correctly, it would seem—as impartial and uncaring. It can, and does, take infants as well as octogenarians. It can strike down a healthy person with shocking suddenness, or it can take someone who has lain ill and abed for years, someone for whom death might actually be a blessing.

And therein lies the key to understanding how Death's Messengers choose to conduct themselves. In addition to the physical maladies they cause directly, the messengers savor every opportunity they can get to torment a victim with fear and anxiety. Their most favorite targets are those people who know them for what they are, the people who are sure that a stabbing pain or an episode of delirium is a sign that Death is on its way. In fact, Death may not choose to take a person so afflicted for many months or years—but in the meantime, Death's Messengers will have a sadistically jolly time torturing that person over and over again. A sliver of anxiety and apprehension becomes a crack, then a crevice, then a chasm as the messenger makes repeated visits and its poor victim becomes more and more morose, pessimistic, and withdrawn.

The messengers are Pain, Dizziness, Delirium, Discomfort, Numbness, and Torpor. They may visit a victim singly or in any combination, except that Pain and Torpor do not usually consort together, because one tends to offset the effect of the other—but when they do visit at the same time, the cumulative effect can be more torturous than the most vicious punishment that one man can inflict upon another: imagine, if you can, feeling excruciating pain while being unconscious and helpless to do anything to alleviate it.

The messengers are usually invisible. Delirium is never visible, but its presence serves as a catalyst for any or all of the other messengers to show themselves if they so desire. It attacks the sensory mechanisms and the brain directly, causing the victim to see or hear or smell things that don't really exist—except in his mind.

Pain takes whatever visual form most closely corresponds to the kind of hurt the victim is suffering: a ball of flame for a burning sensation, a bloody dagger or knife for a stabbing pain, a body being crushed by an enormous weight to simulate a dull and persistent ache.

Dizziness is an amorphous form that swirls and pulses sickeningly, making the viewer disoriented and nauseous.

Discomfort may appear as large weights tied to the victim's wrists. If the subject is instead afflicted

with buzzing in the ears, discomfort resembles a grotesque bumblebee that constantly hovers alongside his head and cannot be swatted or shooed away.

Numbness can be a terrifying sight. If it causes a victim to lose the feeling in his foot, for instance, then it appears as an empty space separating the foot from the rest of the body. If it affects a victim's entire body, a condition known as paralysis, then the victim perceives that the very air around him has turned solid and murky, making independent movement impossible. The victim can be lifted and moved by someone else, but cannot initiate such actions.

Torpor manifests as a faceless, floating figure covered in a black shroud. As it moves closer, the blackness envelops the victim and brings with it unconsciousness. This messenger, because of its form and its effect on a victim, is often mistaken for Death itself.

If you have ever suffered a pain that no medicine would alleviate, don't blame your physician. If your hand has ever "fallen asleep" for no apparent reason, now you know what the reason might be. If you have ever been overcome by a feeling that something about the world around you is suddenly and horribly unreal, don't look for a rational explanation. Admit to yourself, and be mindful of the fact, that you have been visited by Death's Messengers. They may be trying to tell you that your demise is imminent, but it is just as likely that they are more interested in tormenting you... so that when Death does come for you, you will welcome, rather than dread, its arrival.

Death's Messengers

the malevolent six

Not every one of the Messengers has all of the special abilities listed below, but most of them have most of them, if you know what we mean (or even if you don't). For instance, Torpor doesn't have *creature feature*; it only *materializes* in one specific form. Delirium doesn't *materialize*, but (as Prof. Tobin figured out) the other Messengers only become visible after Delirium is already present. When a Messenger visits a victim, it takes pleasure in causing pain, dizziness, or whatever. But the bottom-line goal of every Messenger is to make the victim mortally afraid that he's about to die. Of all the spirits that are capable of scaring someone to death, these guys are the experts.

Brains	3	Inventiveness	6
Cool	2	Cause Fear	5
Power	4	Creature Feature (G)	
		Make Illusion	
		Materialize	
		Terrorize	
Ectopresence	6		

Goal: Cause Terror

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; spine-tingling, mind-numbing, palpating terror

The Shaggy Beast

Near the French city of Le Mans, along the banks of the river Huisne, farmers in the Middle Ages were plagued by a monster they called the Shaggy Beast (la Velue). As is so often the case in these matters, they blamed it for causing calamities that it had no part in. This may have angered the Beast, who did not appreciate having its reputation called into question. At any rate, the creature began to specialize in one type of awful deed: the abduction of innocent young people, most of them female.

One day the beast attacked a particular innocent girl and dragged her off to its lair. The girl's sweetheart tracked the monster, confronted it, and managed to kill it by slashing his sword into its one vulnerable spot, at the base of its tail. The legend goes on to say that the creature died instantly, and from that day forward the folk who lived along the Huisne were nevermore bothered by the thing.

What actually happened, of course, is that the unearthly creature simply relocated. It has popped up in various places throughout Europe during the last few centuries, and will continue to torment

innocent people until someone finds a way to put an end to its activities for once and for all.

When we began to investigate possible appearances of this monster, we disregarded most of the specific information given in the original French legend—for tales have a way of growing in the telling. We especially did not believe what was said about the creature's true appearance. The Shaggy Beast is supposed to have had the body of a bull, covered from neck to feet with long, matted green fur, the head of a snake, and a tail shaped like a serpent. What sensible young woman, we asked ourselves, would allow herself to be led astray by a creature that hideous?

It takes nothing away from the accomplishment of the intrepid hero of the legend to say that the beast he vanquished was human-looking, and that the sword blow did not cut off the creature's tail but instead struck it in the lower back. Or, as we have learned from further investigation, it is quite possible that the beast was made to flee simply because the flat of the blade hit it in the posterior.

Keeping the essentials of the French legend in mind, consider how they compare with this story, told us by a middle-aged woman who, in her youth, was a serving-maid in a tavern in Birmingham.

She was accosted one hot summer day by a burly man whom she guessed to be about 40 years old. It is not unusual for barmaids to be propositioned, of course, but this man sticks in her memory because his appearance was so unforgettable. He had a long, unkempt mane of black hair on his head, a scraggly beard of the same color—and the thickest, blackest covering of body hair she had ever seen. Because of the heat, his shirt was open to mid-torso and the sleeves were rolled up past his elbows—yet, had it not been for the palms of his hands and the area between his forehead and his beard, she would not have known what his skin color was.

"Not much to look at," she said, "but 'e 'ad a way about 'im." One thing led to another, and that evening she accepted his offer to walk her home. A couple of blocks away from the tavern, he insisted on taking a turn away from the direction they should have gone, and the girl began to suspect that something was amiss. Fearing what would happen if she simply tried to flee, she went along with him until they came to the opening of a dark alley.

There she hit upon the happy idea of fussing about her disordered tresses. She stopped in her tracks and got out her comb. While pulling it through a tangle, she contrived to half-drop and half-toss it, so that it landed on the ground a short distance in front of where they stood. The man grumbled and squatted down to pick it up—whereupon she let fly with the mightiest kick she could muster, hitting him square in the buttocks. She turned and ran, hoping to reach safety before he caught her.

As she fled, she called for help. Before she had got more than a few strides, a gentleman rushed up, grabbed her by the arms, and brought her to a halt. "'E's after me!" she said, gesturing back over her shoulder—but when the man turned her around, she saw nothing there. "It was like 'e vanished into thin air," she told me, little realizing how accurate that statement was.

The Shaggy Beast does have a certain amount of charisma, but the spirit is quite dull-witted, does not learn from its mistakes, and can be rather easily resisted by someone with a modicum of good judgment. If a victim should find his safety is at stake, he should but give his newfound friend a swift kick in the aforementioned portion of its anatomy.

Be aware that the Shaggy Beast might be able to disguise itself, at least to the extent that it can shave its body hair and thus appear as something other than a creature from the lower end of the evolutionary ladder. Be careful of strangers who are smooth-cheeked and well shorn; check the backs of their hands for razor burns, and be especially wary of any such person whose name is Harold or Harriet.

The Shaggy Beast

expert at hairassment

The spirit uses its talent as a *pickup artist* to get into the good graces of an unsuspecting victim, and then *terrorizes* just for the fun of it after he has abducted the person. (*Terrorizing people right away is no way to get them to take a walk with you.*) The Shaggy Beast knows from long experience that it can't stand being slapped on the bottom, so it usually tries to avoid presenting its backside as a target (galantly insisting the victim go first through a doorway, or weirdly walking backward if it has to be in front for some reason).

Brains	1	Disguise	4
Muscles	3	Bear Hug	6
Moves	3	Protect Rear	6
Cool	3	Pickup Artist	6
Power	4	Dematerialize Self	
		Terrorize	

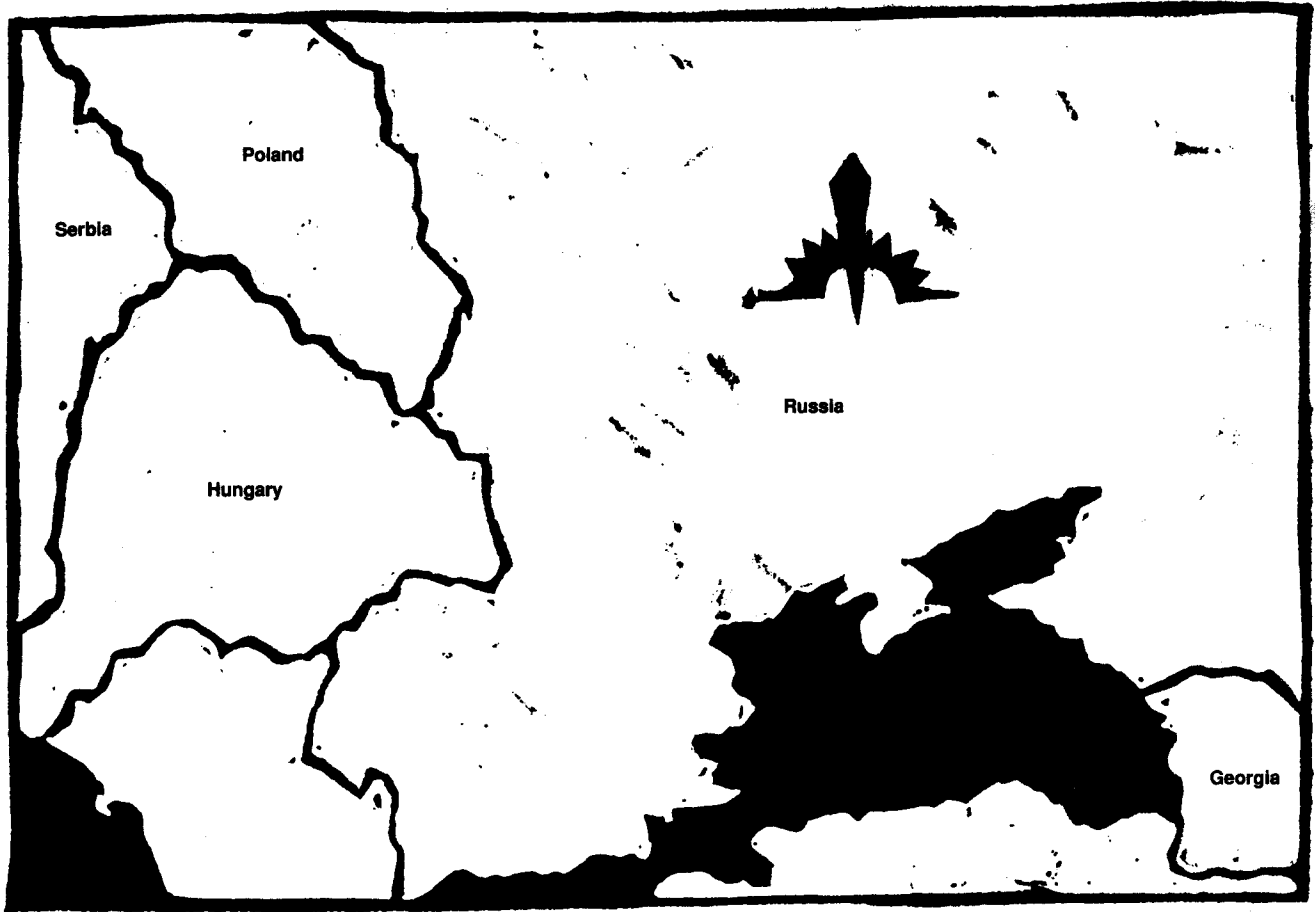
Goal: Kidnapping

Tags: Physical, intelligent; charismatic, but uncommonly hairy



3

Spirits of Eastern Europe



Serbia
Georgia
Poland
Russia
Hungary

I firmly believe that everyone, at some point in his life, should contrive an opportunity to visit the "other half" of Europe—those countries and regions that lie east of Germany and southeast of the Alps.

The people of this region have a set of values, a frame of reference, and a way of life that is not only foreign but utterly alien to the more urbane and—it must be said—more sophisticated countries of the western half of the continent.

When I traveled to the Slavic countries, into Russia, and then south across the Caucasus en route to Mesopotamia, my feet never left the surface of the planet—yet I felt as though I were truly in a different world. These people looked like I did; in general, they dressed the way I did; yet most of them received me with suspicion and skepticism. And the more time I spent in this area of the world, the more difficult it became not to reciprocate with similar emotions.

Initially I could not be sure if the people who did agree to speak to me (almost always through an interpreter) were being sincere, or if they were getting some perverse pleasure out of deceiving me. As time went on, of course, it became easy to weed out the purveyors of preposterous stories; if someone told me a tale that turned out to be completely dissimilar to anything else I heard, I dismissed it from consideration, because either it was a fabrication or it was (to the best of my knowledge at present) a singular occurrence.

Herein are described the spirits that I have determined to be authentic because of the frequency with which similar stories about them were told to me. As for the others, I have kept a file of one-time visitations (no matter how outlandish a story might seem) on the off chance that someday I will hear one of those stories repeated.

Imagine, if you possibly can, a spirit that compels little girls to spend their formative years hurling their bodies over and around oddly shaped wooden frames and apparatus, seemingly some sort of arcane torture equipment.

Try to keep a straight face as you contemplate the existence of a spirit that turns potatoes into little mounds of white crystals that are only edible if they are moistened.

See if you can avoid laughing out loud, which was my reaction when I heard an old woman solemnly relate to me a vision that came to her in a dream. A ghost appeared and told her that one day there would occur a conflict called the Cold War—a war not fought with guns and bombs, but with a strange new kind of weapon, something she called an icy B.M. These icy... things... would be hurled through the sky from one country to another, and wherever they landed the earth would be blighted for years to come.

These people... they may be crude and unfriendly, but they certainly have vivid imaginations. But enough about the chaff; here, without further ado, is the wheat.

The Buda Pest

This is one of the most unnerving and annoying "nuisance spirits" we have cataloged. Begging for food is not a reprehensible thing to do, if one is truly in need and has no other means of support, but the way the Buda Pest goes about it is enough to give beggars everywhere a bad name. The spirit appears as a dirty, smelly, dishevelled, nondescript middle-aged man. It may be noticed huddled on a curbstone or sitting up against the side of a building, or it may be shuffling weakly down the street toward its intended quarry.

When the target comes close enough, the Pest grabs onto a sleeve, a trouser leg, or the hem of a skirt and begins wailing softly and muttering in broken English: "Help me, please. I nearly dying from Hun-ga-ry. Give me food!"

Once the Pest has singled out a victim and gone into its wailing and moaning routine, the victim finds it impossible to be rid of this most insistent beggar until it has been given at least a morsel of something to eat.

If the victim ignores or refuses the Pest's plea, he prompts the spirit to follow him, continuing to cry out for food, probably causing onlookers to think he

is the most cold-hearted person on the face of the earth.

The longer he resists, the longer and harder the Pest persists. The longer he makes it wait for food, the more food it requires before being satisfied. As an illustration of the extremes to which the Pest goes, we relate the case of one Sir Wilfred Upper-crust, formerly a member of London's social elite. But when he visited our offices to tell his story, his reputation had been shattered and his spirit broken. Here is an abridged transcript of what he had to say about the day when the Pest came into his life:

"I tossed the cretin a shilling, but he let it lie where it fell. 'Not food,' he said, and he kept dogging my steps, walking about three paces behind me and pleading with me to feed him. 'As you know, a gentleman does not make a habit of carrying fruit in his pockets. I tried to tell the beggar as much, but he would have none of it. He just kept repeating himself. 'I very sick from Hun-ga-ry. Please give food!'

"I hurried, but for a man who was supposedly sick he did a remarkable job of keeping up with my pace. Two or three times I considered turning and rapping him about the head with my walking stick, but I am

not a violent man. If there had been a shop along my way, I would have bought him a bun or an apple just to get rid of him. Now I regret that I did not take a small detour to do such a thing.

"I got to the club, dashed inside, and slammed the door in the man's face, thinking myself finally rid of him. I knew that if the beggar tried to get inside, the servants would throw him out bodily if need be.

"Imagine, then, the shock that ran through me when I walked into the usually empty dining room, on my way to join the fellows in the lounge, and saw the beggar sitting in my place, utensils in hand, smiling—and drooling all over the table linen!

"I panicked and darted into the kitchen; the first thing I could think of was enlisting the help of the cooks and getting the man hustled out the back door before anyone else could see him. As soon as I crossed the threshold to the kitchen, he was right behind me again. In absolute exasperation, I grabbed a slice of cheese and threw it at him, saying, 'There's your food! Now leave me alone!'



"The man gobbled it in one bite and, without so much as a thank-you, said, 'Hun-ga-ry still! More!'

"At that point I have must gone temporarily insane, for I remember nothing of the next few minutes. The cooks testified against me at a hastily convened tribunal, and if they are to be believed, then this is what happened: I allegedly ran about the kitchen, grabbing pieces of food from the meal in preparation and hurling them in the general direction of the beggar, who ate everything as fast as I could throw it. Finally, when all of the food had been consumed or ruined, the head cook claims I collapsed in a sobbing heap while his subordinates ran to the lounge to alert the other members. By the time they returned, I was again lucid, but I have no recollection of the events they insist transpired, and the beggar was nowhere to be found. "Despite being a member of long standing, I was summarily dismissed from the club by unanimous vote. Now, for the last eight days, people who had been my fast friends refuse to acknowledge me on the street. My humiliation knows no bounds. Can you help me, good sir?"

With that question, his narrative ended. I did my best to comfort the man, but I had to tell him that my avenue to the paranormal is in research and not action. I can only hope that my catalog might be the cornerstone upon which relief from such malevolent spirits might be built.

The Buda Pest

the beggar

It's possible for the Pest to "eat" an amazing quantity of food, because what he actually does is *dematerialize* every morsel just as it passes between his lips. He only uses *control mind* on someone (as he did with poor Sir Uppercrust) if he is ignored for a long time and then follows his victim into the presence of a large amount of food, with results pretty much as described by the old gent.

Muscles	6	Tug on Sleeve	9
Moves	3	Juggling	6
Power	6	Control Mind	
		Dematerialize Food	

Goal: Gluttony

Tags: Physical, mindless; smelly, ragged old beggar, persistent whine

The Fool

If someone has not said it before, then let me: A fool who knows nothing is not as much a fool as one who cannot make proper use of his knowledge.

The ethereal entity who best exemplifies the truth of that adage is called, aptly enough, The Fool—capital letters intentional, because this spirit is truly one of a kind.

The most oft-repeated tale describing this spirit comes from the old Kingdom of Armenia. What could have been a wonderful success story turns out to be exactly the opposite... because the hero is an utter fool.

It is the spirit of that man, or a spirit with nearly identical qualities, that haunts our world to this day. Just as was the man in the story, he is a helpful and kind individual, willing to go out of his way for the benefit of others. He alone could do much to better the reputation of all ethereal entities... if only he weren't such a Fool.

If he appears, it is in the guise of a person his victim has never seen before. He introduces himself and does his best to befriend the victim, as long as that person is receptive to him. If his target is hostile or even standoffish, he politely excuses himself and goes away, and the victim never sees him again.

He (or she, if the spirit takes female form) is really quite a personable sort, easy to be attracted to on a platonic level. If the victim allows The Fool to strike up a conversation, he sooner or later makes mention of a great secret that he knows and is willing to share with a good person such as his companion.

A great many folk, especially the innately skeptical ones, shy away at this point, either because they suspect their newfound friend is leading up to some kind of swindle or because they are wondering if he is escaped from some nearby hospital for the insane.

Neither is the case. The Fool is kind-hearted and as sane as you or I, but The Fool is incredibly stupid. He knows a multitude of amazing facts about the world we live in, has some astounding powers, and is willing to share his knowledge—but he invariably expresses himself in a way that makes his assertions seem like lies or impossibilities.

Our research on this spirit was as enjoyable as it was interesting. It did not involve poring through dusty books, tiptoeing down dark corridors, or sitting alone all night in the middle of a graveyard. What it did involve was frequenting taverns and other gathering places in all the venues we have visited, talking to the patrons (often with the aid of interpreters), and asking them to share—in return for a drink or two—any weird experiences they might have had with friendly strangers who seemed, shall we say, unbalanced.

Of course, we were flim-flammed more often than we were told the truth (some folk will say anything to get their mugs filled), but it was fairly easy to sort

The Legend of the Fool

A man toiled long and hard and became disgruntled because, for all his effort, he never rose out of poverty. One day he decided to seek out God to lodge a complaint and ask a favor, so that his life might improve.

On the way he met a hungry wolf, who beseeched him to carry a complaint to God. The wolf had searched day and night for food and found nothing; what was the creature to do?

Then he came across a beautiful maid, who also had a complaint. She was young and fair and rich, but still unhappy. Would God help her to be happy?

Finally he chanced upon a tree, dried up and dying even though it stood on the bank of a river. The tree asked the man to inquire of God how long it must suffer, and the man promised that he would relay the complaint.

When the man found God beneath the ledge of a cliff, he got a wonderful and warm reception. God listened patiently to the man's complaint and then said, "I give you the Gift of Luck. Go find it and enjoy it always."

The man was quite grateful, but he did not rush off until he had recited the complaints of the wolf, the maiden, and the tree. God gave answers to all three, and the man resolved to pass on what he had been told.

On his way back home, he passed the tree and explained it could not thrive because a pot of gold was buried beneath it, choking its roots.

"Dig it up, then," said the tree. "You will be rich, and I will be able to drink."

"Oh, no," said the man. "God has given me the Gift of Luck, and I must hurry home to search for it."

When he met the beautiful maid again, he assured her that God said she would soon meet a kind man who would make her happy.

"You are such a man," she said. "Stay as my companion." But the man gave her the answer he had given the tree, and hastened on.

The wolf was waiting for him, by now nearly starved. "Where have you been all this time?"

The man explained about being delayed by the beautiful maid and the tree, and related the responses to their complaints. Then the wolf asked what God had to say to it.

"God said you would stay hungry until you met a foolish man whom you could eat," said the man. "Then will your hunger be satisfied?"

The wolf thought for a second about everything the man had told it. Then it said, "Where will I ever meet a man more foolish than you?"

And then it ate up the fool.

out afterward the authentic stories from the other sort. The tales we were told could fill pages, but in the interest of brevity here we have set down only those few that Shrewsbury and I consider the most Foolish of all. When necessary, the dialogue has been sanitized and Anglicized, so as to make it more comprehensible to the reading public.

The Fool has a lot of knowledge and some remarkable skills; he never says anything that is not true and always does what he says he will do. But when it comes to proving that he knows what he's talking about, The Fool is a total failure.

Perhaps you know of a person who acts in much this same fashion. I would be the first to agree that the world is full of people who are, shall we say, a few slices short of a loaf. However, do not forget that someone you know cannot be the spirit in question, because he always appears as a total stranger. That is one difference, although not the biggest one, between a fool and The Fool.

Encounters with The Fool

"... 'I know where the loot from the train robbery of '78 is buried,' he says, so I agree to follow him. We walk about a mile, then turn into a dark alley. He takes a thimble out of his pocket, plunks it down on the ground, and says, 'Right there. Right under the thimble!' What does I do? I hauls off and takes a poke at the guy. I could swear I smacked him, but he musta ducked at the last minute. Nex' thing I knew, he was gone into the darkness and I was left to walk back to the tavern by myself."

"... 'I know how to read minds,' she says, quite matter-of-fact about it. I move my chair ever so slightly away from her and look around to see if anyone has overheard. 'Right now,' she goes on, 'you're thinking that you don't believe me.' I says, 'Of course that's what I'm thinking,' meaning that it does not take a mind-reader to puzzle that out. She becomes exuberant at that, stands up, and says triumphantly, 'Of course that's what you are thinking!' I excuse myself, not altogether politely, and go up to my room."

"... My husband came home and said, 'I just talked to a complete stranger who said he knew what you were giving me as a Christmas present.' I refused to believe this, so he asked, 'Is it a new watch?' I said no, and that was the end of the conversation. Next day I took the watch back to the jeweler's shop and bought him a new waistcoat instead."



The Fool

honest to a fault

The Fool is much more powerful than he thinks he is, and maybe it's just as well that he's too dumb to realize everything he's capable of. All he really wants to do is make friends and impress people with what he knows—but if he thinks he's ever going to succeed by acting the way he does, then he really *is* a fool.

Brains	1	Speech Making	4
Muscles	5	Endurance	8
Moves	3	Dodge Punch	6
Cool	1	Assert Oddities	4
Power	4	Control Mind	
		Dematerialize Object	
		Read Mind	

Goal: Win Friends and Influence People

Tags: Physical, intelligent; average, innocuous stranger—just a little intense

The Gozerian Cult

The first known reference to Gozer the Gozerian is a brief phrase in an Egyptian legend believed to reach back to the end of the Middle Kingdom (2040-1650 B.C.). This particular chronicle, dated to approximately 1600 B.C., warns about a powerful deity of the Hyksos known as Zuul, or Gatekeeper, minion of Gozer.

The menace of Gozer did not end with the passing of the Hyksos (the Egyptians overthrew their masters in 1567 B.C.). Though his worshippers remained silent for more than 3000 years, remain they did.

The world at large encountered the Gozerian cult in Vienna in 1899. There, a public outcry arose over a lecture delivered by Dr. Michael Zhorchev, a Serbian surgeon from Zagreb. Dr. Zhorchev believed that human beings were by nature an angry, abusive, violent creation that surgery could transform into docility. Zhorchev was laughed out of Vienna, and when it was discovered that he actually performed operations on all but one student at a Serbian university, he was hunted down and hanged.

During the hunt for Zhorchev, investigators were struck by the unusual shape of his Zagreb house.

Upon inquiry, the searchers discovered that Zhorchev had built the building himself, at considerable expense, after a research trip to Damascus. The roof of Zhorchev's house was precisely the shape of certain odd and ancient ziggurats in the Middle East.

The exact motives of the sinister Serb are unclear, but it is known that he had at least one disciple, Ivo Chandor, an Albanian medical student and research assistant to Zhorchev, fled to the United States and took with him the secrets of the Gozerian cult. In New York City, Dr. Chandor continued Zhorchev's research, experimenting with the pacification of humans, performing surgery on his unsuspecting patients to remove certain organs.

In 1910, Chandor began his descent into madness. He formed a secret society of people who believed, as he did, that mankind was far too sick to be allowed to survive. At its height, this society numbered some one thousand members, and these men and women would meet on the rooftops of New York to plot the end of the world; to worship Gozer the Destructor. Some of them subsequently moved to other parts of the country, perhaps to other parts

Gozer in England

Hawthorne Bent, another fanatical Gozer worshipper, founded the Alnwick School in 1871.

The ruins of Alnwick can still be seen rising from the English moors today. Their most striking feature is the odd, pyramid-like shape of the roof of one of the buildings. One also notices the strange stone arch that is the entrance to the ruined school grounds. On one side of the arch crouches a large stone statue of a deformed dog. The other side of the arch is empty, making for a curiously unbalanced structure.

The school was a front for a Gozerian cult. Statements which the poor students made to investigating officers, as recorded in county court records, indicate that Bent trained each of his charges in the sinister practices of Gozer worship.

Finally, in 1878, Bent was ready. He assembled the students in the building with the oddly shaped roof, and he began the ritual of summoning.

Until this moment in history, it was thought once the ritual was begun, destruction must surely follow. The courage of a schoolboy and the stupidity of the minion Vinsclortho would prove that long-held belief wrong.

Bent's arcane ritual woke Vinsclortho first. The boys' accounts become confused here; events are difficult to reconstruct. Vinsclortho must have galloped past an old plow-horse that the school kept on the grounds, and rather than possess a

human form, the demon Keymaster took the horse's body. It was the possessed Clydesdale, then, that burst through the doors of the assembly room and demanded in a voice hoarse from centuries of silence, "Where is the Gatekeeper?"

It searched the room with fiery eyes. No one spoke until young Alan Childress, a sixth-former said to have done the best impression of the schoolmaster, hit on an idea. In a near-perfect imitation of Hawthorne Bent, young Childress answered, "Here I am—I am the Gatekeeper."

The demon-horse spun its head around, perhaps looking for the source of that adult-sounding voice. "Are you the Gatekeeper?" it rasped mechanically at the stunned Bent.

"No, no," Bent stammered. "Zuul is. If you wait patiently, please, we will summon him."

But Vinsclortho remained fixated on the voice he had heard. "You *are* the Gatekeeper! I am the Keymaster!" the horse bugled as it leapt towards Bent. The schoolmaster ran screaming.

Neither Bent nor the horse was ever seen again, but several Border farmers reported seeing the running figure of a man pursued by a horse with strange, glowing eyes. Bent never completed the summoning ritual, Vinsclortho never met with Zuul, and because of the ingenuity and courage of young Mr. Childress, Gozer the Gozerian was not allowed to walk the Earth.

of the world. They have no doubt taken their arcane practices with them, in an effort to spread Gozer-worship to the ends of the Earth.

Zuul

the Gatekeeper

For Zuul, achieving its goal is a two-step process. First it must *possess* a human host, to travel through our world without attracting a lot of attention. Then it must seek out and join with Vinsclortho the Keymaster. The power resulting from their summoning ritual enables Gozer to come forth, at which point Zuul vacates the body it has *possessed* and sits back to watch the fun.

Brains	5	Find Human Host	8
Muscles	7	Wrestle	10
Moves	5	Seduce	8
Cool	4	Flex and Seethe	7
Power	10	Dematerialize Frog'n'Prince (L*) Possess Terrorize	

**change possessed body into likeness of own body*

Goal: Sex (Ritual)

Tags: Physical, intelligent; flexes, seethes, and otherwise demonstrates dangerous-looking lust (When in human host; otherwise, more animal predatory behavior)

Vinsclortho

the Keymaster

Vinsclortho is similar to Zuul, but less imaginative. It is a spirit focussed wholly on the job at hand, with no thought to anything else.

Brains	1	Find Human Host	4
Muscles	7	Run	10
Moves	5	Jazzercise	8
Cool	1	Talk to Animals	4
Power	9	Dematerialize Frog'n'Prince (L*) Possess Terrorize	

**change possessed body into likeness of own body*

Goal: Sex (Ritual)

Tags: Physical, intelligent; canine sniffs and snuffles; mimics other people; utterly uncomprehending of the world

Gozer

ancient world-conquering demon

The numbers given below for Gozer are only estimates, since nobody really knows how powerful it is (and nobody ever, ever wants to find out). Fortunately, it can't just show up any time it wants to and in any form it desires. Gozer must wait until after Zuul and Vinsclortho have completed their joining, and then it must *materialize* in the form chosen by its worshippers, presumably the first beings it encounters when it comes through the gate from the ether to Earth.

Brains	10	Multiverse Trivia	13
Cool	15	Ignore Puny Humans	18
Power	25	Dematerialize Object Dimensional Transfer Flight Frog'n'Prince (G) Invisibility Materialize Physical Immunity (G) Proton Immunity Read Minds Summon Pests Teleport Terrorize	

Ecto-
presence 50*

**variable*

Goal: Take Over the World

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; utter confidence; contemptuous dismissal of mortals

Editor's Note

More than 60 years after the original publication of *Tobin's Spirit Guide*, there were absolutely confirmed reports that Gozer did indeed walk the Earth for a few brief but terrible moments. For full details, refer to Dr. Egon Spengler's "Crossing the Streams: Reverse Particle Generation in the Repulsion of Class VII Metaspecters," *Journal of Unexplained Things* #16 (March 1985), or the popularized treatment in theatrical release: "Ghostbusters," available on video cassette from Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. © 1984, all rights reserved.

Baba Yaga

Tales of witches abound in practically every culture extant on this planet; the word, and what it means in general, should not be unfamiliar. In Western civilization, the term brings to mind a typical and almost universal image: a horribly ugly crone who dresses in black, rides across the sky, and (when she is not tormenting mortals) spends much of her time stirring the odious and probably poisonous contents of her kettle.

Without meaning to give short shrift to these evil and fairly powerful spirits, we must now advise the reader that he will find no more about so-called "ordinary witches" in these pages. What we purport to do here is describe *the* witch of all witches, the one who embodies all the worst qualities of every witch and at the same time is unique unto herself.

That witch is the terrible Baba Yaga, who for centuries has made life miserable for people in the great land of Russia. During all but the last few years of this time, Russia has chosen to remain more or less isolated from the Western world—a situation with which Westerners, by and large, were more than happy to live. Now, since the Great War and the events coincidental with it that have occurred in that country, Russia is more and more showing signs of becoming interested in exerting influence upon, and being influenced by, the other countries of the world. As an unfortunate byproduct of this process, it is entirely possible that Baba Yaga too will see fit to venture forth and exert her influence on innocent Europeans who have never heard of her before.

This passage, then, is first and foremost a warning. As of this writing, we have no proof that she has invaded our culture or is about to do so. But we dare not assume that such a thing will not happen. Where Baba Yaga is concerned, it is best to take no chances.

Baba Yaga, known in some Russian tales as old Bony-Shanks, appears as an impossibly emaciated, unthinkable ugly old woman. Imagine the ugliest person you have ever seen, and then imagine someone who makes that person look like Venus or Adonis, and you will have approached an idea of what Baba Yaga looks like.

The witch, also known as The Devourer, has iron teeth set inside a mouth that can, if she desires, open wide enough to ingest half a human being in one bite. (She might be capable of swallowing a person whole, but apparently prefers the pleasure of savoring her meal by chomping on portions instead of eating a person all at once.) She is said to have a special taste for young children.

She lives in a small thatched hut that would be unimpressive in itself, were it not for the trappings that adorn it. Around the hut is a fence made of human bones; the fenceposts themselves are skeletons. The hut rests on a pair of enormous chicken feet that can, upon Baba Yaga's command, elevate

the hut and rotate it so as to face any direction she desires. The sections of the hut are held together by dismembered human hands. In place of a latch on the door is a mouthful of sharp teeth, such that anyone who tries to enter the hut without Baba Yaga's consent will have his hand severed at the wrist. The inside of her hut is as large or as small as she chooses to make it, regardless of what it looks like from the outside.

Baba Yaga does not remain inside her hut waiting for people to come to her, although she can compel someone to do so if she desires. She enjoys traveling through the surrounding area—looking for victims, or sometimes just taking perverse pleasure in showing herself and frightening someone to death (perhaps literally). When she travels overland, she does so by sitting inside a giant iron kettle that makes awful clanging and booming noises as it bumps along. When she wants to fly, she sits in a mortar and propels herself through the air with a pestle. There seems to be no limit to the kinds of impossible tasks she can accomplish if she puts her mind to it; she appears to be bound by none of the physical or natural laws that dictate what we mortals can and cannot do. One of her favorite bits of cruelty is to recruit or kidnap someone to help her tend to chores around the hut. She gives commands such as "Wet the firewood before you ignite it" and "Take this sieve and fetch water for my bath." The poor prisoner, of course, is unable to do these things, whereupon Baba Yaga (depending on her mood) either flies into a rage or cackles merrily and proceeds to demonstrate that—for her—it is quite easy to set fire to drenched wood or carry water in a sieve.

For all of her power, Baba Yaga has three weaknesses that prevent her from being more of a force in the world than she actually is. First, she is unable to enter or travel on the surface of a naturally occurring body of water, and so it is possible to escape from her by diving into a lake or leaping across a stream.

Second, more often than not she prefers to take a prisoner rather than killing a victim outright—so that, from the prisoner's point of view, while there is life there is hope. As attested to by the large number of Baba Yaga stories in Russian literature, many people have encountered the Devourer and survived to tell about it.

Third, she is extremely dull-witted and can be outsmarted rather easily. For instance, she would not notice if the firewood had been dampened with lamp oil instead of water, and if one of her "helpers" did succeed in carrying water in a sieve, it would not occur to her to examine the sieve and discover that the outside of it had been coated with grease. In this respect she is almost a comical character, because in many tales her potential for stupidity seems to exceed even her penchant for evil.

Editor's Note

We may never know whether Prof. Tobin compiled any hard information on Baba Yaga. What we do know is that Baba Yaga is (to use the terms very loosely) alive and well. Somehow she got across the Atlantic and set up shop in the United States. She's apparently just as dumb as ever, but she's also pretty adaptable.

Instead of bopping around in a kettle, she drives a Maserati. Instead of being an ugly old lady, she's a blonde with a body that won't quit. Her hut is now a town house on Park Avenue.

She can still get anything she wants, only now she does it differently. Instead of combing the countryside for a victim, all she has to do is sashay into a singles bar. Instead of taking people apart physically, she breaks them down in other ways. ("I've always wanted a diamond necklace exactly like that one. You can afford it, can't you? For me...?") She still forces people to perform difficult or impossible tasks, only now they don't have anything to do with firewood or sieves. ("Sweetheart, that man over there is looking at me funny. No matter how big he is, I'm sure you aren't going to let him get away with that.") If you suspect that you're in the presence of old Bony-Shanks herself, you want to know for sure, and you feel like living dangerously, try inviting her to take an ocean cruise with you, or to go to a pool party, or to spend a day at the beach. She might just decline and suggest something different—but if she thinks you're on to her, then you've got Trouble with a capital T.

But make no mistake about it: she is evil, and cruel, totally devoid of remorse and compassion and reasonability. When this kind of personality is combined with power that is capable of bending (if not breaking) the rules of earthly reality, the result is an entity who should never—never!—be taken lightly.

Perhaps in the months and years to come, as I continue to pursue my life's work, I shall come across new stories of encounters with the most awful of witches. As a researcher who counts this among his unfulfilled goals, I look forward to the prospect. But as a human being who cares about the welfare of his fellow man, I hope I never hear or read another word about Baba Yaga.

Baba Yaga

the worst witch of all

The list of special abilities below covers most of what Baba Yaga can or will do, but she's actually even more versatile. If she wants to do something magical or ghostly that's not on this list, she can do it with a *Power* of 5. This versatility is in line with her goal, which is to do anything she wants to do any time she wants to do it. She will get her own way, one way or another, and she doesn't care who she ruins or rips off in the process. A lot of people in the world have this same goal—but there's only one Baba Yaga. Fortunately.

Brains	3	Beauty Secrets	6
Muscles	4	Monstrous Mouth	7
Moves	8	Drive Vehicle	11
Cool	18	Stay Dry	21
Power	15	Control Mind Creature Feature (G) Make Illusion Materialize Murphy Poltergeist	

Goal: Instant Gratification

Tags: Physical, intelligent; whatever gets the job done



Eshmahkie

Charles Caleb Colton, nearly a century ago, wrote that "Imitation is the sincerest flattery." From that remark alone, we may infer two things about Mr. Colton: one, that he had never been to Russia; and two, that he had never been visited by an Eshmahkie. The Eshmahkie imitates, but certainly does not flatter. It annoys, it embarrasses, it torments.

Earliest reports of this spirit entity come mostly from Russian lore—which is not surprising in light of the character of those people. They do not laugh often; they certainly do not laugh at themselves. This makes the Russian an ideal target for an Eshmahkie.

The spirit manifests itself as a caricature of its victim, exaggerating some physical or behavioral aspect. If that aspect had not been a source of shame to the person before, it will be forever afterward.



The Ruin of a Smile

Jimisch Kartovich, a humble farmer from Georgia, was paid whatever price he asked for his produce because he had such an honest smile. Life was good for Kartovich until an Eshmahkie appeared to him in his fields one day. The spirit was the farmer's duplicate in all ways save one: the Eshmahkie's smile was a slobbering, lopsided grin, giving its face the appearance of that of a moron.

Poor Kartovich—instead of dismissing it as crude ridicule, he took the Eshmahkie's visage for a bit of truthful intuition, and he became convinced that this was the way his neighbors and customers viewed him.

"So," Kartovich said to himself, "they treat me well not because they favor me, but because they pity me." From that day forward he vowed he would never smile again.

When next he took his crop to market, he did so with an expressionless face. And the people who had been paying his market price for years abruptly turned reluctant. Because Jimisch Kartovich was not smiling, they reasoned, this must be a bad crop, and they would not buy.

His continued stolid countenance and lack of customers rendered him unable to buy winter grain to keep his horse fed, and the animal died. He could not afford seed for a full planting the following spring—and now poor Kartovich really did have nothing to smile about.

Today a man's life is ruined and a horse is dead, all because an Eshmahkie made him self-conscious about an attribute that was not only unusual (for a Russian) but harmless, even pleasing, as well.

Eshmahkie

character assassinator

Eshmahkie's talents are more dangerous than its special abilities, but it has to first *materialize* into a distorted likeness of its victim before it can *ridicule* and *imitate*. (An invisible copycat isn't very effective.)

Despite Prof. Tobin's example story, it's more usual for an Eshmahkie to torment people who are egotistical and vain. Even such as these have a hidden doubt about themselves, and an Eshmahkie takes great pleasure in the challenge of revealing that weakness to the world.

Brains	5	Ridicule	8
Cool	5	Imitate	8
Power	3	Creature Feature (G)	
		Materialize	
Ecto- presence	6*		

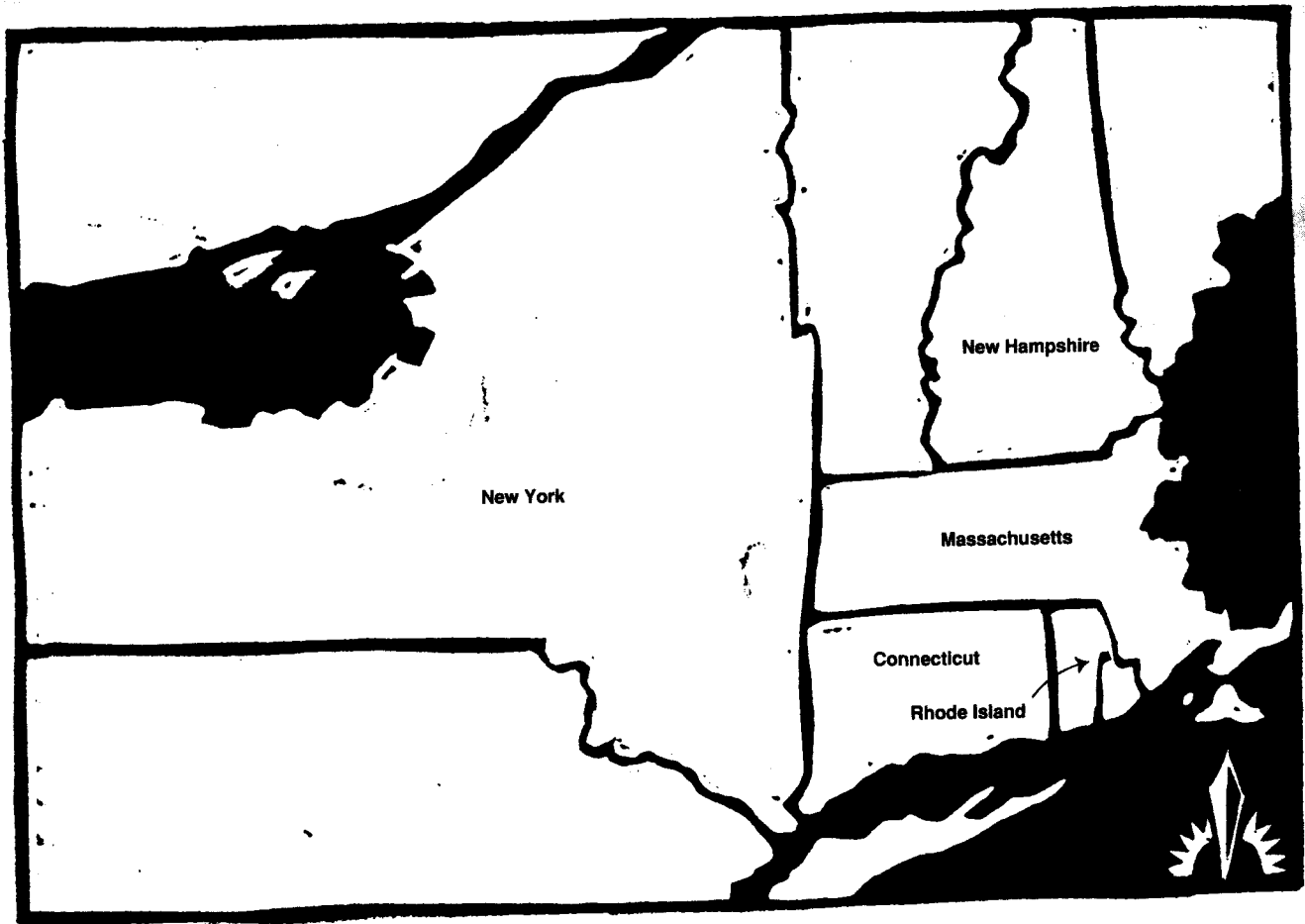
* *variable (Traits and talents same as person being imitated)*

Goal: Humiliation Through Imitation

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; caricature of the person it imitates

4

Spirits of Eastern America



Massachusetts
Connecticut
New Hampshire
New York
Rhode Island

To begin this section of the book, a confession: When I began compiling information to go between these covers, I did not intend for any of the pages to be taken up with spirits of American origin. I scheduled a brief trip to the former colonies for the express purpose of confirming a suspicion of mine: that some of the spirits who first emerged in Britain and on the Continent had somehow made their way across the Atlantic.

When I arrived in the United States and began making my usual inquiries, I was gratified to discover that my suspicion was correct. But much to my surprise, I also found that in the relatively brief time that America has been part of the civilized world, some spirit-types unique to that culture had manifested themselves. What follows are descriptions of those that I found to be the most intriguing, and about which I could garner a decent amount of information during my all-too-brief sojourn across the sea.

I was obliged to leave the United States to fulfill other commitments that could not be postponed, but even as I boarded the ship for the voyage back to

England I was making plans in my head for a return visit. In fact, I hope to go back shortly after this manuscript is completed, and this time I will make my way farther west. I have heard astonishing things about the city of Detroit, where it is said that they turn out motorcars the way our bakers produce hot cross buns. Surely some kind of supernatural entity must be at work there!

I can hardly wait to visit Chicago and conduct some on-site research into the cause of that city's great fire. How can anyone suppose that a cow was responsible for all that destruction?

My itinerary will certainly also include New Orleans, because I am more than casually interested in exploring the original cause of the unearthly cacophony called jazz. This style of music—and I use the term loosely—could not have been created by a human being, or at least not by one who was in control of his faculties.

Yes indeed, we have much left to learn about America. Let what follows, then, serve as a sampling to whet your appetite, with the prospect of a main course yet to come.

Captain Lightfoot

No professional or habitual criminal ever goes to the grave feeling as though his life's work has been accomplished. There is always one more bank to be robbed, one more victim to be assaulted or swindled... always one deed that goes undone, for lack of time or opportunity—but certainly never for lack of desire. In this respect, the infamous highwayman known as Captain Lightfoot is no different from his unsavory cohorts. But there is one aspect of Captain Lightfoot that sets him apart from all the villains who have come before and since:

Captain Lightfoot, whose given name was Michael Martin, was the first person in the United States sentenced to death for the crime of highway robbery.

As it turns out, Martin (and the world at large) would have been better off had he not emigrated across the Atlantic in 1819 to avoid capture by authorities in Scotland. He continued to make his living by robbing travelers and always succeeded in outrunning pursuit, until the fateful day he arrived in the city of Boston. His very first robbery in this new venue went awry. Martin chose for his victim a man of great influence, who raised such a hue and cry that a posse was quickly formed. These men chased Captain Lightfoot for nearly one hundred miles before apprehending him. He was immediately brought to trial and almost as quickly found guilty.

Michael Martin probably expected to serve a sentence at a work farm, and certainly to feel the

sting of the lash. However, unbeknownst to him until the end of his trial, a statute had just recently been enacted which made highway robbery a capital crime. The court, eager to make an example of the first criminal convicted under the new law—and an infamous one at that!—decreed that the execution should take place with all due speed.

Captain Lightfoot, no longer so light of heart or of foot, did what a man faced with certain death might be expected to do: he tried to escape—and, remarkably, he actually succeeded in getting free of the jail before being recaptured.

The escape was the last criminal act of Michael Martin's mortal life. Thereafter he was chained to the bars of his cell until the day appointed for the carrying out of his sentence. Reports indicate that he climbed the steps of the scaffold calmly, almost serenely... as if he knew that Captain Lightfoot was destined to live on after Michael Martin was gone.

The spirit takes the same form that "the Captain" did in life: a man in early nineteenth-century garb (riding breeches, high boots, waistcoat, cloak, but no face covering) astride a small and fast gelding. He becomes visible in front of a victim, counting on the shock value of his sudden appearance to frighten the person into handing over what he demands. He accepts money but greatly prefers jewelry, even if it is of the cheapest sort.

If the victim is not cowed and, instead of complying, calls for the nearest constable, Captain Lightfoot smiles broadly. His form, which until then had



been an insubstantial image, fully materializes—because he must be solid so that he can be captured.

To keep up the pretense, he leads pursuers on a merry chase (merry for him, at least) before slowing and allowing himself to be caught. Now comes the part of the game that the Captain enjoys the most. He is invariably taken to the nearest jail, there to be incarcerated until legal proceedings can be started. And in the first instant when he is left alone, unnoticed by guards, he becomes insubstantial again and walks through the walls until he is out of the place.

All of the available information on this aspect of Captain Lightfoot's behavior comes from others who were imprisoned at the same time and thus witnessed his escape. The public—not to mention the police—put no stock in their assertions, but we who believe in and research spiritual phenomena can ill afford to leave any stone unturned. The police, of course, have no better explanation. We must assume that when they can get away with it, they sidestep the question and “solve” the problem by simply eradicating from their records any mention of the arrest. After all, if there was no criminal to begin with, then there can have been no escape.

If any law enforcement official sees fit to take issue with this bit of reasoning on my part, I would defy him to produce evidence from his precinct or any other that a highwayman was in fact apprehended and subsequently escaped from a locked cell.

For reasons that should be obvious, I would be most pleased to read the record of such an incident, and would happily and fervently apologize to the officer to whom my above remarks were offensive.

Captain Lightfoot _____

phantom felon

The Captain is pretty good at getting out of tight spots because of his *long jump* and *escape artist* talents, and he'll try to break out using those skills before he uses his special ability to *dematerialize*. He enjoys befuddling policemen and prison guards, but he doesn't want to make it too easy for himself; after all, even a spirit needs some kind of challenge in his life.

Brains	3	Criminal Law	6
Muscles	3	Long Jump	6
Moves	5	Escape Artist	8
Cool	3	False Remorse	6
Power	4	Materialize	
		Dematerialize	
Ecto- presence	8		

Goal: Break Out of Jail

Tags: 19th century clothes, pistol; jaunty air

Calvin and Hobbes

John Calvin and Thomas Hobbes were both philosophers of a grand purpose. Calvin was dedicated to illuminating the way to God's perfection for us mortals steeped in sin. Hobbes theorized that man was ruled by his passions in a life "poor, nasty, brutish and short." They both repudiated gaming, Calvin as the devil's work and Hobbes as a medium striving to make the immaterial material. Now both have become active in an entirely new field.

Until very recently, the board game has been an educational and moral tool, quite in line with the reformers' goals. But an upstart Pennsylvania company has injected the dangerous concept of fun into their stock and trade, and Calvin and Hobbes seem determined to be their downfall.

Calvin and Hobbes

entertainment exorcists

Most likely to strike corporate offices, Calvin and Hobbes have been known to tackle Friday night poker hells, too. Their most common attack is to *murphy* projects into oblivion—mis-shuffling or crimping cards in a deck, frinstance—or to *make illusions* that change the components or costs of the game. If their victims persist in fixing the damage, they'll *dematerialize objects* so that not only is a game broken, it's incomplete.

Brains	7	Philosophy	10
Cool	9	Fire and Brimstone	12
Power	6	Dematerialize Object	
		Make Illusion	
		Murphy	
		Murphy	

Goal: Prevent Gaming

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; no sense of humor

A Cautionary Tale

The company had conceived of a game which made light of the Puritan period in New England. The playing pieces were apparitions and vapors; the object: to be made head witch of one's circle⁴.

The first authors hired to produce the entertainment were soundly defeated by a mysterious ennui⁵, and the second laid low by a serious illness. A manuscript finally in hand, clerks in the company were stymied by a lack of artwork—during the night, within the locked doors of the offices, images drawn the day before all faded to blank sheets of paper! One of the printers, a god-fearing soul, refused to put plate to press when he saw eyes staring out of his inkpots.

As the delays mounted, rumors of the company's dissolution became rife and the market was besieged by similar products from other game publishers. Advertisements were composed, urging the loyal publicTM not to give up hope.

At last, the pieces were produced, ready to be assembled within the re-secured walls of the shop. But as the workers opened the cartons of cards and tokens and boxes to house the game, they found instead they held cartons of religious pamphlets, brown beans, and ladies' cologne! Nearly overset, the company was last heard to be hiring a parson with training in the rites of exorcism.

⁴A circle of witches is known as a coven, but the company wished not to go into extensive detail about the Dark Arts, lest some poor child be led astray in his imaginings.

⁵Pronounced on-WEE, and meaning boredom. It's French, tres chic (tray SHEEK).

The Headless Hunter

In relative terms, decapitation must not be a particularly terrible way to die. From what we know of physiology, it is apparent that life (and thus, any sensation of pain) ceases in the instant that the spinal cord is severed at the neck. Certainly, then, beheading is a less agonizing way to meet one's end than, for instance, wasting away from a painful disease or bleeding to death from a wound.

Having said all of that, we must recognize that there are two sides to every contention. We cannot verify the truth of our first assumption, because of

the self-evident fact that no one who has been decapitated has lived to tell what it felt like.

And aside from the issue of physical pain, there is something terribly discomfiting about dying in this fashion. Despite the cold logic of my first assertion above, there are many—and I number myself among them—who would rather go to the grave in any other way that did not involve the separation of head from body. For those who hold this viewpoint, a headless body is one of the most repulsive images that our minds can conjure up or that our eyes will ever see.

Our heads are an integral part of us. They contain and embody all the things that make each of us a distinctive person. It is by our faces that we are recognized. Our brains are what make each of us psychologically and intellectually unique. Our eyes, ears, nose, and tongue are the devices through which we interact with the world around us. Take all of this away from us, and we would be as good as dead even if the act of decapitation did not actually kill us.

And so it is with denizens of the spirit world. Because head and body have been sundered, these entities are not whole. They are incomplete, unfulfilled, and they can never rest. They are doomed to wander the earth in spirit form thereafter.

When a person's head and body are not laid to rest in the same grave (which is most often the case in these incidents), the spirit of the corpse appears as the image of the headless body. It is able to move, to walk, to ride a horse. It must somehow be able to sense its surroundings, but it cannot speak or hear. Its purpose on this mortal coil is as singular as it is fruitless: to find the body's severed head.

The animated body, which I have generically dubbed the Headless Hunter, seems to believe that by locating and repossessing its head, it will achieve wholeness and completeness once again, and with its purpose achieved it will then be able to rest.

In fact, this is not true. Even if it were possible for the Headless Hunter to realize its goal, we know that the mere act of possessing one's severed head does not end the spirit's torment. We know this by the numerous sightings of decapitated bodies that are holding or carrying heads—presumably their own.

A Headless Hunter of this latter sort seems to have found what it was looking for—or, as is more probably the case, the person's head and body were buried together, so that when the spirit rose, it could bring both parts of the mortal entity along with it.

This spirit has its head, but it continues to hunt—and to haunt—nonetheless. From this fact we deduce that the actual, ultimate purpose of a Headless Hunter is not just to find its head, but to find a way to reattach it. And the fact that the spirit has not achieved this suggests that (certain fictional accounts notwithstanding) the reuniting of head and body is impossible in the spirit world, just as it is—and certainly will remain—beyond the ability of medical science in the mortal realm.

Headless Hunters are liable to be found in any locale. I include them in the section devoted to American spirits because, for reasons yet to be discovered, sightings of this type of spirit were extremely proliferate in the colonies during the time of the United States' revolt against the Mother Country. (You might say it serves the upstarts right, and you would not be alone in that opinion.) In no other place and at no other time have so many decapitated bodies, with and without heads, been reported traversing city streets and country roads alike.



The Headless Hunter

a real looker

A hunter without a head searches for its missing part—and it looks anywhere, including the victim's underwear drawer and his refrigerator. A hunter carrying its head is on a meandering quest to fix its head back on top of its shoulders. It may try to *balance* its head on the base of its neck in the victim's presence; if it fails, the head simply rolls off and hits the ground with a sickening thud (which automatically *terrorizes* the viewer, if he or she hasn't been scared out of his socks already). It may hold its head out toward the victim, as though asking for help. The best thing for him to do is head in the opposite direction.

Muscles	4	Neck Massage	7
Moves	3	Balance	6
Power	4	Dematerialize Self	
		Make Illusion	
		Terrorize	
Ecto-			
presence	5		

Goal: Get Itself Together

Tags: Physical, mindless; body dressed in fashion of the time, with or without head in arms

Old Tom the Pirate

When an earthquake struck the northeastern United States in 1658, it brought death to Thomas Veale and birth to the spirit that calls itself Old Tom.

Thomas Veale never admitted to being a pirate, but Old Tom has no such qualms. The spirit is disoriented and certainly demented, but not really a bad sort—so long as he is satisfied by the occasional finding of some buried treasure.

The part of Thomas Veale's story that concerns us took place in the seaside town of Lynn in Massachusetts, just a short distance north of Boston. It seems that a small band of pirates established a hideout in a cove near the town. They plied their trade in distant locales and did not bother the folk in this vicinity—and, in fact, at this time the colony had no law prohibiting piracy.

Nevertheless, after a time the townsfolk became concerned, and determined to put an end to the operation. A group of them invaded the secluded glen where the pirates were sequestered and succeeded in apprehending all but one. The miscreants were put aboard a ship bound for England—which did have statutes under which they could be tried.

The one who escaped was Thomas Veale. He made it safely to a cavern in the woods, where he and his comrades had stored much of their booty. He lived there in solitude and peace for several years, working as a shoemaker and occasionally visiting the town to sell his wares and buy food. So far as can be ascertained, he never alluded to his former profession, and since he posed no threat to them, the townsfolk were willing to let well enough alone.

Then came the earthquake, which found Thomas Veale, as usual, at home in his subterranean workshop and treasure trove. The tremors caused a cave-in, turning his residence into his tomb.

It must have been a shocking and horrible way to die, and perhaps this shock was what distorted and warped the purpose of Thomas Veale's spirit. Old Tom rose from the crypt, shovel in hand, and set off on an eternal career devoted to unearthing every bit of buried treasure he could find.

Sometimes he works alone and invisibly, his presence betrayed only by scratching noises. At other times, when he comes upon some digging, the spirit shows himself and heartily joins in to help. He introduces himself as Old Tom and offers his assistance, asking in return to be given a share of whatever treasure is yielded by the excavation.

The sight and sound of this ethereal, emaciated corpse is often sufficient to send witnesses into horrified flight. But if they dare to return to the site, they may discover that the hole has been made larger. Old Tom did some digging himself and then departed the scene either after finding some treasure or becoming discouraged.

In one especially interesting case, a man was

accosted by Old Tom while digging post-holes for a new fence. The sun was high in the sky on a very hot day, and so the man immediately attributed the appearance of the spirit to a delusion brought about by heat exhaustion. On a lark, he pulled a button off his shirt and dropped it into the hole he had just begun to dig.

"There's some treasure!" he exclaimed, pointing at the trinket. In a flash, Old Tom was over the hole, thrusting his shovel into it.

The spirit pulled up the implement, plucked the button from the end of it, and went into dancing a furious jig 'round and 'round the hole, cackling all the while, "Aye, 'tis mine! Mine! I dug it up, and 'tis mine to keep!"

Then, all of a sudden, Old Tom was gone. The man, grateful that his fit of delirium had passed, sat down in the shade to rest. When he returned to the hole a few moments later, he remembered about the button he had cast into it. He searched and searched, sifting dirt through his fingers, but the button was nowhere to be found.

Old Tom the Pirate

yo-ho-horrible

Old Tom doesn't try to *terrorize*, but sometimes he can't help it; the sight is pretty scary even if Tom is basically a friendly sort. The *poltergeist* ability is vested in his shovel, which can move large chunks of solid matter from one place to another. When he finds "treasure," he *dematerializes* it; then, when Old Tom disappears, the treasure comes back—but always in a place where his victim will never find it. Tom's "treasure" doesn't have to be anything valuable, nor does it have to be buried. Ever wonder why sometimes when you drop a contact lens, it seems to vanish from the face of the earth? Have you ever wondered exactly what happened to that set of car keys or your favorite pen? Well, now you know.... and you may as well stop looking for it.

Brains	2	Knot Tying	5
Muscles	3	Handle Shovel	6
Moves	2	Grab Bauble	5
Cool	1	Pirate Tales	4
Power	4	Terrorize Poltergeist Dematerialize Object Dematerialize Self	

Goal: Find Treasure

Tags: Physical, intelligent; corpse in swash-buckler's garments, shovel in hand

Voodoo Loas

This is the only entry in this book that owes its existence to happenstance rather than research, and this is the only spirit type discussed herein that I freely admit is deserving of much more attention than I am able to give it.

By way of explanation rather than apology, I offer this short story of how I encountered the powerful and mysterious spirits known as voodoo loas.

I was within hours of leaving the United States, on my way back to England, arranging to have my baggage loaded aboard my ship. Suddenly, out of the crowd of people on the docks in New York City emerged one of the most remarkable-looking women I have ever seen—not beautiful, not even attractive, but nevertheless a person at whom I could not avoid staring open-mouthed.

Instead of being offended (as most women would be), she smiled and approached me.

"You nevah seen woman like me befo', eh, mon?" she asked. I had to admit, with a mute shake of my head, that I had not. She was stocky but carried herself well, with skin as black as the inside of a coal bin and the most... colorful... clothing of anyone on the docks. (I would call it garish, except that on her, the chaotic splashes of red, yellow, green, and violet seemed somehow fitting.) On her head she wore a scarf, tied tightly around what must have been a very close-cropped hairdo. I have seen turbans and headdresses before, but never anything so distinctive as this simple, large skullcap.

We fell into a conversation; she apparently had time to spare, as did I. When she found out my profession, a few sentences into the exchange, she cackled and quivered with glee—and then got an even greater laugh out of the way she startled me with that outburst. She was from the island nation of Haiti, an obscure country not far from where Columbus landed when he thought he had discovered America. A fruit vendor by trade, she was also a practitioner of the religious ritual known as voodoo—so she was elated to find in me a researcher into spirit phenomena.

"I got some spirits for you, mon," she said. "You know voodoo?" I admitted that I had no more than a passing acquaintance. "Then I tell you about the loas," she said. "Mebbe you come to my country sometime, an' I show you what you been missin'."

Loas form part of the foundation of the culture of voodoo ritual. They are spirits of power and influence divided into two camps. Good spirits assist their followers with good harvests, bountiful families, and full lives. Evil spirits help voodoo bocors (sorcerers) control lives, frighten the populace, raise the dead, and even kill.

Loas usually manifest themselves during and immediately after the performance of a voodoo ritual. When the participants have gone through a

sufficient amount of dancing, singing, and feasting (which somehow prepares them for the loa spirits to occupy), then the loas emerge from the ether and possess the worshipers, including but not limited to the bocors who preside over the ceremonies.

It is easy to tell when someone has been possessed by a loa, and very difficult for someone not possessed to do an effective imitation. He who is possessed abruptly drops into an ecstatic trance, becomes rather sedate, and begins to make pronouncements and give advice. Depending on the type of loa who occupies his body, the medium gives out either good news or ominous tidings.

Good loas somehow have the ability to predict when fortuitous events will happen, or to manipulate the fibers of reality so as to make those good things occur. Evil loas have the converse ability; they can curse a person (or make him think he is cursed, which usually has the same effect), can cause terror in those who view or listen to the afflicted worshiper, and (so it is said by my very convincing source) can actually make the dead rise up from their graves to torment the living.

All in all, the loas remind me of nothing so much as the little girl of fairy tale and fable: when she was good, she was very, very good—and when she was bad, she was horrid. "Mama" (the only name she would give me for herself) said that there is no way to control which kind of loa will possess you, but apparently (judging from the number of people who she says participate in these rituals) the benefits of being visited by a good one far outweigh the risk of being set upon by one of the other sort.

Voodoo Loas

good news and bad news

Loas tend to possess the bodies of people who think like they do. Bad loas can *summon pests* of whatever variety they are associated with—storms, snakes, and zombies are all popular. Good loas have the ability to *unmurphy*—making things go right instead of causing them to break or be ruined.

Brains	3	Select Host	6
Cool	4	Convince	7
Power	3	Possess	
		Summon Pests	
		*Unmurphy	
Ecto- presence	5		

* *Applies only to good loas*

Goal: Varies

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; varies

Noises from Nowhere

All of us have heard sounds for which we could ascertain no logical explanation—yet we know as sure as we are alive that the sound was made. Often when we relate an experience of this sort to someone else, we are accused of “hearing things.”

The wording of that charge is most peculiar, upon further examination—because the accusation is quite in accordance with the claim it is supposed to refute. Yes, we did “hear things”—a sound, or a collection of sounds, or some uttered words that appeared to come from nowhere and everywhere at the same time, or which indisputably emanated from a source that we know to be incapable of making such noises. But if the sound did travel through our ears—and who should know better than we?—then it must have existed in order to be able to do that.

By way of example, I relate here a well-documented case that occurred in the year 1754 in the small village of Windham, in what is now the state of Connecticut. In this instance there is no disagreement that the mysterious sounds did occur, because they were heard by every resident of the town.

It is a trait of human beings to want to attach a logical explanation to an illogical occurrence, and the good people of Windham were certainly no exception. In this case, however, they did not try quite hard enough; no one ever advanced a reason for why the frogs “spoke” the names of Elderkin and Dyer.



The Great Frog Pond Faceoff

Shortly past the witching hour everyone was awakened by a horrible cacophony of sound that seemed to come from everywhere in the sky above them. It was a gloomy, overcast July night, but regardless of the sky condition the source of the sound should have been visible... except that it was not. When the townsfolk rushed outside to see what was causing the clangor, all they saw were low clouds forming a dark gray blanket over the village—yet the sounds were so loud that they must have been originating from a spot only a few feet above the rooftops.

Some described it afterward as a horrible roaring and booming, punctuated occasionally by screams and shrieks. Others reversed the predominance of the two types of sounds, feeling sure that these were the war-whoops of Indians about to descend upon the defenseless residents of Windham. Still others thought that they could discern names being called out over the din—specifically, those of Colonels Dyer and Elderkin, two of the town's most prominent citizens.

The sounds persisted through the night, then faded noticeably as the first rays of dawn peeked over the horizon. By the time the sun was fully

risen, the noises had all but disappeared, and those who could still hear them claimed that they were coming from someplace a short distance away instead of from directly overhead.

Some of the hardier and more inquisitive souls followed the sounds to a mill-pond less than a mile east of the village. There they saw a most remarkable sight: hundreds of bullfrogs dead on the banks of the pond, and hundreds more in and around the water. The village had been in the throes of a drought for some time, and it was clear from this scene that a pitched battle had just taken place among the frogs, fighting for the right to claim what water remained in the half dried-up pond.

And then, something more remarkable still: as if on cue, the frogs on one side of the pond raised a cry that sounded exactly like “Col. Dyer! Col. Dyer!”—and those on the opposite bank joined in with “Elderkin too! Elderkin too!”

When those who visited the pond returned with this story, the rest of the villagers breathed a collective sigh of relief. It was possible, after all, to piece together a rational explanation for the unsettling events of the previous night.

Our hypothesis for these kinds of incidents goes thus: Just as some spirits exist only in visual form, others exist only in the auditory realm. They appear (if that word can be used in this context), make their noises, and depart.

Some of these spirits are non-intelligent entities that simply exist, and may not even be aware of what they do. At the other end of the scale are those that must possess some degree of intelligence in order to be as devious and frightening as they are.

One need look no farther than the local newspaper to read about how the police were called to the home of Mrs. Smith, who is sure that she heard someone prowling about outside her window. Of course, when the officers arrive, not a footprint is to be found.

By digging a bit deeper (in journals of psychology, physicians' case studies, and the like), it is not difficult to find accounts by and about people who claim to have heard voices speak to them out of thin air, or who have actually had the bizarre experience of listening to an animal speak.

No doubt some of these accounts are hoaxes; it is quite amazing the lengths to which some people will go to get a bit of attention. But altogether too many incidents are reported by people who are and always

have been perfectly lucid. In such cases, a diagnosis of "temporary insanity" does not do justice either to the medical profession or the person who is so diagnosed.

Noises From Nowhere

hear today, gone (if you're lucky) tomorrow

The figures below are for a mindless spirit of this type. The intelligent ones (with *Brains* and *Cool*) have more *Power* and more *Ectopresence*. The dumb ones can't make any noises beyond simple thumps, screeches, scratches, and stuff like that. The intelligent ones can imitate voices, and they have just enough *Brains* to know when they're making a sound that's driving their victim slowly nuts.

Power	3*	Make Noise
Ecto- presence	4*	

* variable

Goal: Disturb the Peace

Tags: Ectoplasmic, mindless; moaning, tapping and other auditory delights

Flighty Lucre

Flighty Lucre preys upon people who are carrying coins or paper money, causing them embarrassment and possibly ruination by absconding with the money in the instant before the victim is obliged to hand it over in payment for goods or services.

The spirit seems to enjoy perpetrating this prank at times when the victim is being a spendthrift, trying to make a frivolous purchase or trying to impress others with how affluent he is. It does not often victimize people who are spending money on true necessities, although such is not unheard of. In a twist on its usual behavior, it can make money vanish from the pocket of a merchant who has recently overcharged or defrauded a customer.

We know nothing for certain of the spirit's origin, but based on typical aspects of spirit behavior and motivation, we can reasonably assume that Flighty Lucre is the ethereal form of some person who had a very bad experience with money during his lifetime—perhaps someone who chose not to worry her pretty little head about financial woes (Shrewsbury Smith insists the spirit's name has a feminine ring).

The spirit is malicious, to be sure, but it also seems to operate under some sort of moral code, as though it is trying to teach the Americans something. There is more to life than wealth, and there are some things that money cannot buy—one of them being freedom from Flighty Lucre.

Flighty Lucre

coin collector

Flighty Lucre is pretty good at figuring out costs, so the spirit can use that talent to relieve a victim of just enough money to keep him from being able to afford what he has just bought. The spirit's special ability allows it to *dematerialize* the cash; then, if it feels *generosity*, it can cause the money to reappear in a place that will do some poor soul some good. Otherwise, the money reappears in a random and usually very strange place when Flighty Lucre returns to the ether.

Brains	2	Guess Price	5
Cool	1	Generosity	4
Power	2	Dematerialize Object (L)	
Ecto- presence	3		

Goal: Make Money Disappear

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent; smell of ink, jingle of coin

Chumboro House

Haunted houses are more or less a standard phenomenon in the realm of paranormal events and objects, and for the most part we have studiously avoided filling the pages of this work with accounts of structures in which certain spirits reside.

The exception to this rule is the following passage concerning Chumboro House (sometimes the Chumboro Mansion), located in the unassuming rural village of Chumboro near the quiet and proper city of Providence, Rhode Island. This house is a good example of how an edifice can be occupied by a variety of spirits, very few of which have a direct connection to the house itself.

The original owner of the house was Captain Wilhab Dickenhart, who had the place constructed in the 1840s⁶. The man amassed a considerable fortune running his merchant ship in the commerce of rum, molasses, and the slave trade. After slave trading was abolished, he turned to the China tea trade and became one of the first Americans to establish offices in Hong Kong.

Captain Dickenhart retired from the sea in about 1852 and took up permanent residence in his house, which he had furnished with many African and Chinese souvenirs of his travels.

The captain never married nor kept a diary. However, from letters of his friends we have discovered that the captain's fiancée, a Miss Eudoria Danforth, died of fever thought to have been contracted on the widow's walk at Chumboro House while the captain was away on his last voyage.

We know now, thanks to modern science, that the night air is not infested with evil humors that take malicious delight in infecting those hardy souls who leave their windows unshuttered. In those backwards times.... Even so, records of the day express much surprise at Miss Danforth's early demise, for she was not known to be a sickly maiden.

The house was first reported to be haunted in the 1860s, according to letters written by guests of the captain. The visitors wrote of chilling mists and moving lights in rooms no candle warmed. Captain Dickenhart himself disappeared mysteriously in 1869. His estate was eventually purchased, intact, by his lawyer, Charles Devereaux, who lived there for ten years before declaring that "The house is driving me quite mad; I cannot live there any longer."

As of this writing, the place has had a long string of short-term residents (lessors, all of them, since no one dare buy the dwelling) for nearly forty years. It has quite a sordid reputation among residents of the area, who steadfastly claim that strange sights and sounds come from the house.

⁶The documents for the purchase of the house show that the captain paid a modest price for the extensive grounds on which he built. This fact piques my curiosity, but I had not enough time to investigate further into the matter.

Apparently because they are afraid to loose all of the spirit residents upon the surrounding countryside, these people have made no attempt to tear the house down or drive the ghostly beings away.

It has been speculated, quite reasonably, that Chumboro House is home to a variety of hauntings because of the number of African and Chinese artifacts that Captain Dickenhart collected within it. At least some of those relics have a connection with the spirit world, or may actually belong to denizens of the ether—who appear periodically to be sure that their possessions are being well cared for. It is entirely possible the ghosts of Miss Danforth and Captain Dickenhart himself also frequent the place.

If Chumboro House is still standing when you read about it here, and if you live close enough to make a journey to the place, I suggest that it would be a wonderful spot at which to begin your own investigation into the supernatural. Seldom in my research have I found a location where so many different entities can be found at the same time.

Editor's Note

Chumboro House is standing yet today, apparently unchanged from what it was like in the early 20th century. Ownership of the place passed to Charles Devereaux's heirs, who continued to rent it to unsuspecting or foolhardy families until 1957, when the current owner gave the property to the Captain's Boulevard Preservation Association.

It took three years to refurbish the house and grounds, and during that time an extensive search was conducted for the artifacts that had been "borrowed" from the house by renters over the decades.

The house remained a regular stop for tourists until 1979, when the current resident caretaker, Mr. Jonas Heller, died of a heart attack—induced, so they say, by the spirits of the house. Apparently the house became quite a party place, inhabited by several or even dozens of spirits at once.

Finally the Association decided, after Mr. Heller's death, that the house was unsafe even for tour groups who were taken through in the daytime. It is closed today, and the only people allowed admission are legitimate researchers. Dr. Spengler did some investigation at Chumboro while he was an undergrad and the house was still open for tours, but his notes are packed away in cardboard file boxes, and Janine hasn't dug them out yet. He says they weren't especially interesting, anyway.

The Curse of Chocorua

In the early eighteenth century, in the area now known as the state of New Hampshire, the Indian chief Chocorua and his young son lived alone. Chocorua's tribe had deserted him for what the others thought would be better lands to the west, but the chief insisted on staying in this serene and beautiful land where his forebears had hunted, beaver were still abundant, and where he could provide well for himself and his son by living off the land.

One day Chocorua needed to make a long journey, and before setting out he entrusted his son to the care of a white settler named Campbell who had staked a claim in the chief's tribal hunting ground. The son fell victim to his own youthful curiosity, drinking from a bottle of poison that Campbell kept in his cabin for use against wolves.

When Chocorua returned, his boy was dead and buried. Overcome with anger and grief, he refused to believe Campbell's account of what happened and was convinced that the white man was responsible for his son's death. He vowed to get his revenge.

Some time passed, and one day when Campbell came home from hunting he found his wife and children murdered—obviously the work of Chocorua.

Now Campbell was the vengeful one. He enlisted the aid of some neighbors, and the group went into the mountain reaches of Chocorua's ancestral grounds to seek out the chief and bring him to justice. After an arduous search they found his hiding place, chased him out of it, and finally cornered him atop the highest peak in the mountain range.

Faced with imminent death in one form or another, Chocorua elected to preserve his dignity to the end. But before doing so, he spat this curse at his pursuers:

"A curse upon ye white men, who overrun my sacred hunting ground with death and crops! Your grain wither on the stem! Winds and fire destroy your dwellings! The Evil Spirit breathe death upon your cattle!"

And then he leapt off the precipice upon which he was trapped. In later years, the peak where Chocorua met his end was named in honor of the chief—a prudent and respectful gesture to be sure, but not sufficient to dilute Chocorua's curse.

The spirit of Chocorua is unrelentingly bitter, cruel, and interested only in revenge. Its presence is presupposed for each subsequent activation of the curse. Chocorua is not interested in letting its victims know why they are being victimized; the act of revenge itself is all that matters.

Fortunately—if anything good can be found in all of this—the effects of the curse do not appear to have

gone beyond the stipulations that Chocorua screamed out just before he jumped. The curse causes harm and destruction to people's possessions, not directly to the people themselves (although if Chocorua sets a house on fire, he will not care if it is occupied, or if all the occupants escape safely). In addition the curse seems limited geographically to the area previously ranged by Chocorua's tribe. It is to be hoped that the chief is satisfied with the ground he haunts, and never succumbs to the impulses of his former companions who traveled west for fairer lands.

Examine any newspaper or book of local history for accounts of unexplained calamities, and read about events that are quite possibly manifestations of Chocorua's curse. A farmer's crop comes up diseased, or fails to ripen. A mysterious disease sweeps through the stock in the area. A fire destroys a man's home or barn, and an extensive investigation fails to suggest a reason for the conflagration. (There does exist in nature a phenomenon known as spontaneous combustion, but can this legitimately be used to explain every blaze that has no apparent cause?)

Chocorua

chief cause of despair

Chocorua's *curse* is a variant of the *murphy* ability, but the language employed means there are certain things that the curse can't affect. Buildings made of earth or stone can't be set afire—although the contents can be—and are highly resistant to damage from high winds, either directly or indirectly. Chocorua can't pollute a vegetable, fruit, or stalk of grain once it has been harvested, because at that point is technically ceases to be a crop. The spirit can't taint a piece of meat from an animal that has been killed in preparation for butchering. But, from the opposite perspective, all of these limitations pale in comparison to the despair and destruction that the curse of Chocorua is capable of causing.

Brains	4	Pyromania	7
Cool	7	Vengefulness	10
Power	8	Curse (G) Flight Terrorize	
Ecto- presence	15		

Goal: Carry Out His Curse

Tags: Ectoplasmic, intelligent, Indian drum-beat

Variable *Ectopresence*: A New and Optional Rule

Consider the average haunting: a Class III, focused, full-torso repeater, a person whose tragic death or life prevents his or her soul from accepting final peace. She might be a murdered Civil War matron who wants to protect her children from the damn Yankees. He might be a construction worker felled by an uninspected faulty beam. These spirits have a purpose, a goal in li—uh, in death. They want to right the wrongs done to or by them.

Being focused, they appear in a narrow area: the back orchard in which the matron was struck down, or the highrise that sprung up after the worker's death. Research shows us the closer he is to the actual focus site, the more likely a person is to encounter the entity. Indeed, the spirit's energy can be said to increase with its proximity to its focus-point.

In practical terms, it is now possible to quantize the variation in psychokinetic flux produced by a phantasm's proximity to its focus-point or goal. The GBI Research Labs staff has published a monograph entitled "Determinant Fluctuation in Focused Repeating Entities Coaxially Plotted Against Distance and Time." We provide a synopsis of this seminal paranormal research here.

Ectopresence, we have said, is both a measure of an entity's toughness and a measure of its grasp on our dimension. The greater an *Ectopresence* rating a spirit has, the more difficult it is to subdue and contain. Extensive GBI investigation has reinforced the notion that sometimes phantasms are stronger in one location than another. The variation in the strength or toughness of an entity seems to correspond best to its distance from the focus-point (in the case of focused haunts) or goal (in the case of free-floating apparitions).

Consider the following table (note that these experimental values are merely first estimates):

Similarity Index	
Degree of Proximity/ Similarity	<i>Ectopresence</i> Multiplier
Very Little	1
Some	2
A Good Amount	3
Lots	4
Whole Lots	5
More Than You Can Imagine	6

To interpret the table, consider the closeness of the entity to its focus-point (or its nearness to achievement of its goal, in the case of free spirits). If it is in Very Little proximity, then its *Ectopresence* is multiplied by a mere 1. If it is, however, in Lots of proximity, its *Ectopresence* is multiplied by 4.

Example: In the case of the Civil War matron, say the ghost has been encountered in the front yard. This is Very Little proximity to the spirit's focus, and its *Ectopresence* is 1 ($1 \times 1 = 1$). If instead the phantasm has been spotted in the vegetable garden next to the orchard, it is in Lots of proximity, and the *Ectopresence* is a more weighty 4 ($1 \times 4 = 4$). Encountering the ghost in the orchard upon the very site of its murder is More proximity Than You Can Imagine; the spirit reaches its maximum strength of *Ectopresence* at 6 ($1 \times 6 = 6$).

Another Example: Gozer the Gozerian has been mentioned as the most powerful paranormal entity ever encountered. We estimate its *Ectopresence* to be ultimately unknowable, but for the sake of argument, we'll use the round number of fifty. When the portal into Gozer's dimension first opened, the spirit found an atmosphere of Very Little similarity to its goal of Global Destruction. Its *Ectopresence* was at that time a horrifying 50 ($1 \times 50 = 50$). As it began to wreak havoc on the property and lives of millions of Manhattanites, the Similarity Index rose and Gozer the Traveler's *Ectopresence* rose as well. We estimate that GBI averted worldwide disaster before the similarity of the state of the world to Gozer's goal reached more than Some, putting the demonstrated *Ectopresence* of the demon around 100 ($2 \times 50 = 100$). Had Gozer exerted its influence over a larger portion of the US, it would have continued gaining *Ectopresence*, theoretically destroying the globe with a staggering strength of *Ectopresence* 300 ($6 \times 50 = 300$). It would have been bad. Very Bad.

Please note that GBI Research Labs continues to investigate the theory of Variable *Ectopresence*, and that this monograph presents our most preliminary findings. Some entities seem not to demonstrate any variation in *Ectopresence*, and we have insufficient data at this time to explain why.

The range and distance from the focus point also varies by entity. Some spirits seem to gain one step on the Similarity Index for every 10 meters, while others grow from Some to A Good Amount in a distance of miles. While we suspect that the more *Power* an entity has, the wider its range of influence, we have not confirmed any correlation, and recommend other paranormologists be wary. Caution is our watch-word; we suggest you make it yours.

For the nuts and bolts of paranormal eliminations, we would like to point out that entities who are within reach of their goals may be too powerful to defeat using strictly conventional means. Removal or hindrance of the goal may knock back the *Ectopresence* level of the spirit sufficiently to allow trapping.

INDEX OF Spirits, Spooks and Specters

We at GBI Research have thoughtfully indexed the extensive variety of phantasms found in our various publications here for your convenience. The abbreviations before the page numbers refer to the title of the publication in which the reference is found, as follows: **AN** = *ApoKERMIS Now!*, **GBII** = *Ghostbusters II: The Adventure*, **GH** = the *Ghostbusters Handbook*, the big book in the boxed set of *Ghostbusters International*, and of course, **T** = *Tobin's Spirit Guide*.

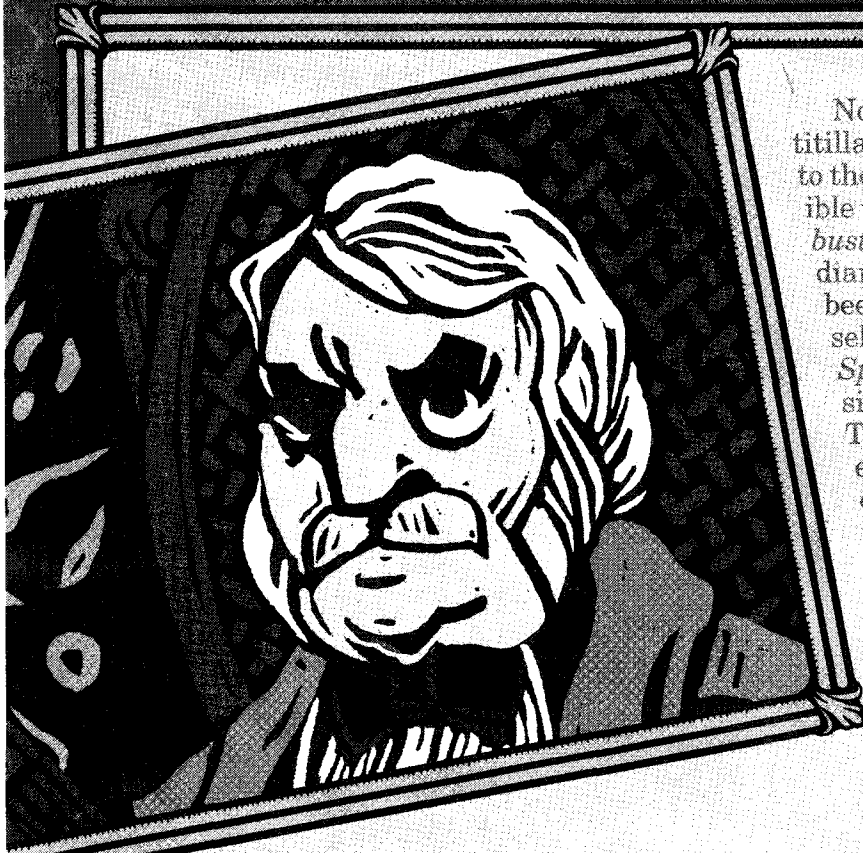
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John Horace Tobin spent 20 years risking life, limb and sanity to gather true accounts of human encounters with the paranormal. His travels covered the world, and his lively, informal style earned him fame and recognition wherever he journeyed.

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by Kim Mohan



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