



# IN NOMINE™

*In Nomine* was written by Derek Percy, based on an original game by CROC.

## LIBER UMBRARUM THE BOOK OF GHOSTS



**BY CHRIS ANTHONY**  
ADDITIONAL MATERIAL  
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Things that go bump in the night, things that moan in the darkness, things that whisper behind your back and run icy fingers down your spine . . .

When people tell ghost stories, the fear they inspire is often countered by the thought that it's only a story; the ghosts in the tale aren't real, and when the sun comes back up, the rational, solid world will reassert itself, and those ghosts will fade back into fiction. Unfortunately, those who inhabit the world of *In Nomine* don't have that luxury: even the person *telling* the ghost story might be a ghost.


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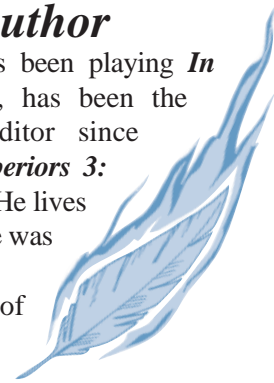
*Liber Umbrarum: The Book of Ghosts* is a field guide to identifying phantoms in the world of *In Nomine*, to hunting them, and to playing them . . . or to playing alongside them. This book contains a dozen new varieties of phantom, new advantages and disadvantages dealing with ghosts, and adventure seeds to introduce players and GMs to the world of restless specters.

So turn on all the lights, grab your security blanket, and remember – the moaning outside is just the wind . . . right?

## About The Author

Chris Anthony has been playing *In Nomine* since 1998, has been the Online Assistant Editor since 1999, and edited *Superiors 3: Hope and Prophecy*. He lives in Maryland, where he was born and raised.

Chris is afraid of ghosts.



## GURPS IN NOMINE

The *Liber Umbrarum* includes material both for the traditional *In Nomine* rules and *GURPS In Nomine*. Converted characters have been only slightly “normalized” – they are straight conversions, using the rules in Chapter 9 of *GURPS In Nomine*. The only exception is in levels of Discord; in a normal conversion, an adapted Frequency of Submission table (pp. CI10-11) would be used. For simplicity, Discord has been taken “straight,” with the default *GURPS Basic Set* or *GURPS Compendium I* mechanics. Human characters have also been rounded or approximated in some cases.

Note that Songs have had the -5 applied for use outside the celestial realm. If these characters go to Hell or Heaven, they will have +5 to all Songs.

The default Tech Level for *GURPS In Nomine* is TL7.

### Extra Hit Points and Reduced Hit Points

Many converted *GURPS* characters have Extra Hit Points for physical, mental, and celestial combat. The physical advantage is written as Extra Hit Points for the vessel in question. Extra Hit Points (Mind) are bought with the -50% Limitation, “Only for mental combat,” and Extra Hit Points (Soul) are bought with the -20% Limitation, “Only for celestial combat.”

Reduced Hit Points for Mind Hits and Soul Hits have the same Limitations. See pages 27 and 28 in *GURPS In Nomine* for more information.

### Power Investiture and Essence Control

The *GURPS In Nomine* advantages Power Investiture (p. IN27), and Essence Control (p. IN31) are both included in the Basic Celestial Template (pp. IN9-10). Non-player celestials are assumed to have the default 9 levels of Essence Control, and have allocated their initial Power Investiture levels to Power Investiture (Corporeal) 3, Power Investiture (Ethereal) 3, and Power Investiture (Celestial) 3. Any totals listed in the descriptions include these levels plus any additional purchased.

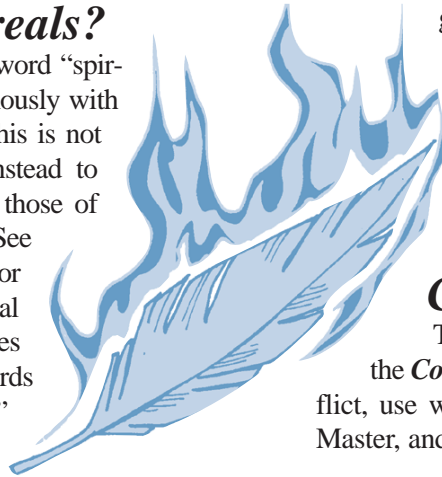
### Page References

Rules and statistics in this article are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition*. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* – e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition*. Page references that begin with CI indicate *GURPS Compendium I*, SPI is for *GURPS Spirits*, UN is *GURPS Undead*, and IN refers to *GURPS In Nomine*. For a full list of abbreviations, see p. CI181 or the updated web list at [www.sjgames.com/gurps/abbrevs.html](http://www.sjgames.com/gurps/abbrevs.html).



## Ghosts or Ethereals?

In common parlance, the word “spirit” is typically used synonymously with “ghost,” but in *In Nomine* this is not the case. “Spirit” is used instead to refer to ethereals, especially those of low power and few Forces. (See the *Ethereal Player’s Guide* for more information on ethereal spirits.) This book continues that tradition, and uses words such as “phantom,” “shade,” and “haunt” to refer to



ghosts; with the exception of the Spirit Harbor advantage (p. 4), any time the word “spirit” is used, it refers to ethereals.

## Conflicts with the Corporeal Player’s Guide

This book expands upon the rules found in the *Corporeal Player’s Guide*. Should they conflict, use what makes the most sense to the Game Master, and read *Breaking the Rules*, p. 8.

# NEW RESOURCES

*Kurt knocked on the front door of the mansion, but was looking over his shoulder at Nathan while he did so. “What did you say these guys had?”*

*Nathan sighed. “They said they had a banshee. Which she tells me is probably not the case, since banshees are extremely rare. Even more so since we’re in Massachusetts instead of, say, Ireland.” He looked over at Simone, who nodded encouragingly.*

*Kurt shrugged and knocked again. “She’s right. Banshees are dream-spirits, and not really our area anyway. Did anyone die?”*

*Nathan checked his notepad. “No, not as far as I can tell. Banshees kill people, then?”*

*“No,” said Simone, “banshees cry on the night of a death. Or, actually, when they think there’s going to be a death, which, between us, isn’t nearly as often as they think it is. Frankly, this is probably –”*

*She was cut off by the door opening to reveal a woman in her sixties or early seventies, her gray hair unbound and hanging around her shoulders. She smiled at the trio and blinked a few times through thin glasses. “Can I help you?” she asked cheerfully.*

*Nathan stepped forward and extended his hand. “I’m Nathan McAllister, ma’am. I believe we spoke on the phone.”*

*“Oh, yes,” she said, shaking his hand. “I remember. And these are Kurt and Simone, I take it?”*

*Nathan reddened slightly. “Yes, ma’am. Kurt Winchester and Simone Reed.” Kurt nodded his head, and Simone smiled.*

*“Well, come in,” said the woman stepping aside. “I’m Eleanor Chilcoat, call me Ellie. My Walter had such a fright the other night – I’m afraid I was out of town on business, but he insisted on calling me up the next morning to make sure I was all right.”*

*Kurt nodded. “Good man. Can’t be too careful with this sort of thing.”*

## ADVANTAGES

Aside from the advantages in the *Corporeal Player’s Guide*, there are some ghost-oriented benefits available to characters. Normally, the Spirit Harbor and Sensitive advantages, below, are restricted to humans. However, certain Superiors (notably Yves, Kronos, and – it’s rumored – the mysterious Archangel of Death) can grant them as attunements. This is extremely rare, however, and such an attunement may not be purchased; it must be granted as a favor, much like a Distinction.





## GHOSTS AND CHARISMA

Being dead gives people a new viewpoint on life – and on those who are still living. Even though they remain attached to the corporeal plane, many shades have moved beyond the charms of the flesh, or find the personalities of the mortals they meet uninteresting or lacking in perspective. As a result of this, any time a ghost reacts to a mortal – or anyone in a vessel whom the ghost doesn't know *isn't* a mortal – apply a -2 penalty to the roll. (Puncta mortum (p. 14), phone ghosts (p. 15), and phantom cats (p. 20) do not have this penalty, and in fact have a +2 *bonus* in its place; they are naturally predisposed to like mortals. But lurkers (p. 16) have a -4 penalty!)

Some ghosts will still react to Charisma (and its limited forms, such as Sex Appeal), and some won't; it is up to the GM to decide which is which. No ghost, however, is immune to Paranormal Charm (see below).

### ***Paranormal Charm*** (1 point per level)

Paranormal Charm is much like Charisma (*In Nomine*, p. 48), except that it applies only to ghosts. Ghosts are naturally predisposed toward people with positive levels of this advantage, and against those with negative levels. A character may buy up to three levels of Paranormal Charm, *or* up to two negative levels. Paranormal Charm is cumulative with Charisma and its limited forms (see box); someone with both might get up to a +6 bonus from certain ghosts – or up to a -4 penalty!

Paranormal Charm may be purchased by non-humans at twice the listed value, and applies to *all* of the character's forms, physical or otherwise.

### ***Sensitive*** (5 points)

A mortal with this advantage is somehow attuned to ghosts. This advantage does not improve the

character's ability to communicate with ghosts, but it does allow him to sense them when they are near. With a successful Perception roll, a Sensitive can detect ghosts within a range of his Celestial Forces times the ghost's total Forces in yards. For instance, a Sensitive with one Celestial Force could detect a ghost with five Forces at five yards, a ghost with four Forces at four yards, and so on. The check digit determines how much information he gets: on 1 or 2, he can tell that the ghost is there; on 3 or 4, he can tell where the ghost is to within 1 yard, and on 5 or 6 he can determine what type of ghost he has detected. A failed roll reveals no information; failure with a check digit of 6 might result in false information!




A Sensitive may recognize a spirit's anchor if he touches it and makes his Perception roll. (Normal layers of clothing, such as a glove over a haunted ring, or walking into a haunted building in shoes, do not muffle this ability.) At the GM's discretion, he may also recognize Spirit Harbors and those who are Haunted, as if they were regular anchors.

Most normal animals have this advantage without paying points for it; those without Celestial Forces are treated as having one Celestial Force for the purposes of this advantage. An animal which does *not* possess this advantage should take the Insensitive disadvantage (p. 7).

### ***Spirit Harbor*** (5 points)

This advantage allows a human to temporarily turn himself into an anchor for ghosts, so that they can travel far beyond their normal range. This requires a number of minutes equal to the ghost's total Forces, during which the human must be within the ghost's current range, and a Will roll made by the human; on a successful roll, the new anchoring lasts for a number of days equal to the check digit. An unwilling ghost may resist with a Will roll of his own; if this roll is successful, or if the human's Will roll fails, the anchoring fails. When the duration expires, the ghost immediately returns to his anchor, although the human may make another Will roll





(which can be resisted, if the ghost desires), just before the ghost departs, to maintain himself as the anchor. Success extends the duration for another (check digit) days; this may be continued indefinitely.

Characters with this advantage are known, among paranormal investigators, as spirit harbors, living anchors, or “spooksinks.” Nearly any type of mortal – even ghosts – can be a spirit harbor; the only ones who cannot are those without Celestial Forces. A

ghost with this advantage anchors other ghosts to his own current anchor, instead of his manifestation; alas, he cannot re-anchor *himself* using this ability.

It is, however, easier for a new ghost to anchor himself to a character with this advantage. When a newly-dead phantom is attempting to attach himself to the corporeal plane, if he chooses a spirit harbor as his anchor, the ghost may add the spirit harbor’s Celestial Forces to his Will for the duration of the anchoring process.

## GURPS POINT COSTS AND CONVERSIONS

This is a quick guide to converting the new skills, advantages, and disadvantages in this chapter. For details, consult the text. The point costs and conversions for Aura, Pallid, and Vestigium are covered on pp. IN212. In addition to the *In Nomine* conversions, the *GURPS* advantages of Channeling (p. CI34) and Medium (p. CI41) may also be of use.

### Skills

*Knowledge (Ghost Hunting)* is best represented by Professional Skill: Ghost Hunting, or a specialization of Occultism. The GM should consider granting a half-point in an appropriate Electronics Operation specialization, for spook-stalkers who favor cameras and tape recorders to get evidence of their prey.

*Knowledge (Ghost Lore)* translates directly to Occultism. The Game Master *may* wish to require specializations – Mundane or Aware – to distinguish between what celestials and most ethereal spirits know to be true, and what humans *think* is true. Hidden Lore (p. CI147) might also be a good representation of *true* Ghost Lore.

*Dreaming* is Lucid Dreaming (p. CI142).

*Meditation* is Meditation (p. CI142), and gives Sensitive characters the same doubling of range, or improves the target number (and thus the potential degree of success) by 2.

*Alchemy* is Alchemy (see p. IN175).

Other Esoteric Skills from *GURPS Compendium I* may also be useful to characters who seek out contact with the supernatural.

### Advantages

*Paranormal Charm* is Charisma with the Ghosts Only limitation (-75%), or, for negative levels of Paranormal Charm, a new disadvantage loosely based on Frightens Animals (p. CI97), which, since it affects ghosts instead of animals, potentially making them hostile instead of afraid, is -2 points per level.

*Sensitive* becomes Second Sight (5 points, p. CI43), but for spooks, not magic. The base range is 1 hex, multiplied by the levels of Essence Control the haunt possesses (minimum 1).

*Spirit Harbor* is a new power, worth 5 points. The GM may convert the check digit to degree of success, as per p. IN210, or simply use days equal to the amount the roll succeeded by (minimum 1).

Characters may also wish to take Channeling (p. CI34) or Spirit Empathy (p. CI46).

### Disadvantages

If any of the following are applied to a celestial character as Discord, they gain an additional -5 or more (as per p. IN36).

*Continued on next page . . .*



## GURPS POINT COSTS AND CONVERSIONS (CONTINUED)

*Easy to Possess* characters have two levels of Weak Will (Only against Possession, -50%) per level of the disadvantage, as well as the special effects listed in the main text. It is worth -8 points per level.

*Haunted* characters have an Enemy! (Usually.) Any time the character is in a stressful situation, or one which might personally interest his haunt, roll 3d6. If this is equal to or less than the Frequency of Appearance modifier for the Enemy, the ghost appears to make life miserable for its victim. As usual, the GM may simply rule that the specter appears when dramatically appropriate. Essence regeneration is still interfered with, but if neither the haunted character nor the haunt have Essence Control, this may not be noticed. If the victim feels he must conceal his problem, he has a Secret (p. CI78), and other disadvantages should be added if appropriate (a negative Reputation for

being a jinx, a Delusion that it's not really a ghost, etc.). If the ghost is not a terribly hostile Enemy (being merely inconvenient), halve the cost. A friendly haunt may be purchased as an *Ally* instead, though associated disadvantages (e.g., Reputation) will likely apply. Player character haunts are not worth points, any more than player character enemies or allies are!

*Insensitive* becomes two disadvantages. As a Discord (and linked to that disadvantage), it is effectively two levels of Reduced Alertness (p. IN39) with the -75% "Only Ghosts" limitation, for -3 points per level, *plus* the associated levels of Discord (to take into account the reaction modifiers), for a total of -8 points per level. For humans, it is a -20 point disadvantage, roughly equivalent to 10 levels of Reduced Alertness with the -75% "Only Ghosts" limitation.

## DISADVANTAGES

While ghosts – no matter their appearance, if any – are not subject to disadvantages such as Crippled, the physical effects of Obese, and may lose Damaged Senses, they may have disadvantages which do not normally apply to humans! Old disadvantages with slightly different effects on ghosts, and new ones, are both listed here.

### CORPOREAL

#### *Pallid* (1 point per level)

Specters with the Pallid disadvantage have a distinctive stench, which can be recognized with a successful Knowledge (Ghost Lore) roll by characters within yards of the ghost equal to the disadvantage's level – even if the ghost is not currently manifest!

These ghosts do not, however, take the Body hits associated with the disadvantage, which lowers its point value to 1/level.

#### *Vestigium* (1 point per level)

Rarely, a spook's self-image will be both malevolent enough *and* pathetic enough to acquire vestigium of some kind or other. Even if the haunt is not currently hostile, it will usually be treated like a demon by mundanes and even some sorcerers.

### ETHEREAL

#### *Aura* (2 points per level)

Ghosts with this disadvantage are easier to perceive. It adds the level of this disadvantage to its





Will + Celestial Forces roll to become visible, audible, or corporeal – but even when insubstantial, anyone in range gets a Perception roll + (level - 1) to sense that *something* is there. (Except Insensitive people, below.) Since humans rarely like sharing their lives with the dead, the ghost’s anchor is at risk as the mortals around it seek out “cursed” objects. Sorcerers and demons may have uses for ghosts, too, and ones with Aura are definitely easier to find . . .

## CELESTIAL

All of these may also manifest as Discord in celestials.

### *Easy to Possess*

*(3 points per level)*

Some humans, including many mediums, are loosely connected to their bodies. For every level of the disadvantage, any possessor gains a +1 to target rolls to possess the person *and* the victim has a -1 to resist! This may also affect celestials as Discord, even if they happen to be Bound into an object.

A ghost whose abilities do not normally include possession *may* attempt to inhabit the body of someone with this disadvantage as though he were a lurker (p. 16), with the additional bonus and penalty listed above.

### *Haunted*

*(3 points per level)*

This disadvantage indicates that the afflicted character is personally haunted by a malevolent ghost. This may be due to a celestial accident, the use of certain rare artifacts, or the ghost having intentionally used the victim as an anchor. Whatever the case, the ghost is a hostile phantasm, and will manifest during any tense or dangerous situation or when the afflicted character encounters the cause of the ghost’s remaining on Earth. While manifested, the ghost will cause as much havoc as he can; the GM is encouraged to be creative, but remember that if the character *dies*, the

ghost may find itself without an anchor, or tied to an unmoving corpse. Neither of those are in the haunt’s best interests.

In addition, this disadvantage interferes with the victim’s daily Essence collection as usual, but if he fails to collect Essence, it goes to the ghost instead. If the character manages to rid himself of the haunt without paying points to buy off the disadvantage, a new ghost may, at the GM’s option, appear within (7 - Discord level) days to harangue the victim.

A ghost haunting a character with this disadvantage might not be affected by the character’s Paranormal Charm, whether positive or negative, at the GM’s discretion.

If the GM permits, someone may be haunted by a merely inconvenient ghost, or even one who is actually friendly. This reduces the cost by 1 or 2 points per level, respectively – even the most helpful of phantoms might be noticed from time to time by passers-by who will want to make life difficult for the haunted character.

### *Insensitive* *(varies)*

Just as the Sensitive advantage (p. 4) makes a mortal more sensitive to ghosts and phantasms, this disadvantage removes the ability to sense ghosts entirely. Any Insensitive character cannot detect ghosts at all – even if they manifest right in front of him. The only exception to this is if a ghost touches the afflicted character; in this case, the victim will feel only a slight pressure and a cold sensation at the point of contact, regardless of how solid the contact is. This makes combat between ghosts and characters with this disadvantage effectively impossible. Insensitive characters cannot take either the Sensitive (p. 4) or Spirit Harbor (p. 4) advantages.

In humans, this disadvantage is worth 5 points. As Discord, it is worth 3 points per level, but has a slightly different effect: it imposes a penalty, equal to twice the level of the Discord, on any Perception roll made to perceive a ghost; the victim may roll each time a ghost manifests or affects the physical world in order to notice that ghost. Once the celestial’s effective Perception is reduced to 0 by the penalty, the effects





## BREAKING THE RULES

This book lays down strict *guidelines* for creating ghostly PCs and NPCs. Some concepts are, by nature, outside its scope. The GM is free to assume that those concepts are not necessarily *impossible*, however! *In Nomine* is a setting where the rules are routinely folded, spindled, and mutilated by Interventions. Do you want a Remnant Kyriotate of the Sword to be haunted – and occasionally possessed by – the ghost of its Role’s human creator? Perhaps Lucifer had a hand in the Remnant’s loss of its own soul. Perhaps God intervened so that some human’s destiny would be unaffected.

Should a punctum mortis (p. 14) manifest on the anniversary of its death every year, somewhat like an echo (p. 22), waiting for her true

love to bring her a promised engagement ring? What if handing her the ring *frees* her from the loop of time, and she becomes true flesh and blood again? Was she cursed by the Adversary, or granted a second chance at life by the Lord?

Even if the GM does not wish to have such a striking thing as an Intervention to account for mechanics-bending, there are many possible variations on the ghosts listed here – just as there are minor Choirs of angels and minor Bands of demons. A player should not *count* on the rules being bent, but neither should hapless specter-seekers assume that they know every possible ghost that *can* exist. So long as it is not going to break the GM’s game, GMs should feel free to break the rules here and there.

are exactly the same as the human disadvantage, and no further levels of the Discord can be taken.

Animals possess the Sensitive advantage by default; this Disadvantage removes that ability. An Insensitive animal cannot detect ghosts at all; it will ignore even ghosts who can manifest visibly, as well as supernatural creatures in their celestial forms. It will, however, react to the touch of a ghost as though a human were touching it.

### **Need** (3 points per level)

Hungry ghosts (p. 14) always have a variant of this disadvantage, but other spirits may develop it in a form closer to the Discord (*In Nomine*, p. 89). The Need may be for insubstantial things, such as piano music or the scent of perfume – and the ghost may manifest itself in order to satisfy the Need.

## ROLES

*“Tomorrow I’m going to call someone.”*

*“Like who? I looked in the Yellow Pages. ‘Furniture Movers’ we’ve got; ‘Strange Phenomenon,’ there’s no listing.”*

*– Steve and Diane Freeling, Poltergeist*



These are a selection of suitable jobs for humans, or Roles for celestials (or ethereal spirits!). Each Role has a skill or skills which are necessary to possess, above and beyond the generalized knowledge of “how to be a . . .” that the Role includes.

### **Exorcist**

Exorcists are specialized priests or shamans, with a knowledge of ghosts and their behaviors. (Some







exorcists place ghosts in the same category as demons, but the skill set remains the same.) Typically, an exorcist will have Knowledge (Ghost Lore), a Knowledge skill relating to his religion, and at least one level of Charisma; Status is usually 1 to 4, although it can go as high as 6.

Any exorcist can attempt to convince a ghost to leave Earth of its own volition, but human exorcists may have access to sorcery, which can make their job much easier. Where a celestial exorcist must resort to celestial combat to forcibly remove a ghost, and a mundane one use mere spectral psychology, a human exorcist with Sorcery can use either the Exorcise Ghost ritual (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 39) or both Summon Human Soul (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 42) and Banish (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 37) to lay a phantom to rest; the former destroys the ghost, while the latter technique sends it on to its final reward or punishment.

## Ghost Hunter

From amateur explorers to professional paranormal investigators, the goal of ghost hunters is to seek out ghosts for study. A ghost hunter might want to lay ghosts to rest, but his primary goal is finding and researching them. Some ghost hunters even have permanent research facilities, especially those hunters who are part of larger organizations. A ghost hunter needs Knowledge (Ghost Hunting) and at least one of: Area Knowledge of a given haunted area, Knowledge (Ghost Lore), Knowledge (Investigation), or Tracking. He can have any Status.

## Medium

Where ghost hunters study ghosts and exorcists remove them from Earth, mediums seek to communicate with ghosts. Although many mediums have simply been skilled tricksters, some have a genuine ability to communicate with ghosts with more facility than the average person. Both sorts should have both Emote and Knowledge (Ghost Lore). Trickster-mediums should also have Fast-Talk; true mediums need no additional skills, but human mediums should have the Sensitive advantage. Mediums generally have Status 2-4, but some – especially those backed by the Media – have achieved Status 6.



Although not all characters with the Spirit Harbor advantage (p. 4) or Haunted disadvantage (p. 7) are known to the public as mediums, many mediums do have one or both of these resources. A friendly ghost who is attached to the medium is often referred to as the medium's *control* and used as a method for the medium to communicate with other ghosts; unfriendly ghosts, on the other hand, will rarely help the medium unless their own existence is at stake, but can be used by the medium to whom they are bound to enhance the medium's reputation.

## Skeptic

Skeptics make a living either denying the existence of ghosts or publicly requesting proof of the existence of phantoms and other paranormal phenomena; the former tends to result from genuine disbelief in the paranormal, while the latter is a call for intellectual rigor rather than credulity. Skeptics come from all walks of life, and can have any Status. The Role requires Detect Lies and Fast-Talk; Knowledge (Ghost Lore) is not required, but is recommended. Those who are skeptical due to disbelief often suffer from the Insensitive disadvantage (p. 7).





# SKILLS

*“There are no experts. You probably know more about possession than most priests.”*

– Father Damien Karras, *The Exorcist*

## KNOWLEDGE SPECIALIZATIONS

Both of the new skills presented here are actually Knowledge skills, and should appear as Knowledge (Skill) on character sheets. They can also be further specialized, allowing researchers to focus on a category of ghosts (human, animal, or location) or

a specific variety (e.g., screaming skulls (p. 12) or poltergeists (*Corporeal Player’s Guide*, p. 81)). Characters are not required to specialize in these skills, and may take this skill more than once with different specializations – although if he wants more than a few specializations, it is recommended that he simply take the general skill. A specialization should appear as Knowledge (Specialization).

### *Ghost Hunting (Intelligence)*

#### **Default: -4**

Over the years, ghost hunters have built up a body of techniques used to track down and detect ghosts. This skill is distinct from the Knowledge (How to be a Ghost Hunter) skill that comes with a Role (*In*

## NATHAN MCALLISTER

### *Human*

#### **Corporeal Forces - 2**

Strength 3      Agility 5

#### **Ethereal Forces - 2**

Intelligence 4      Precision 4

#### **Celestial Forces - 1**

Will 2      Perception 2

*Status:* 2 (Student)

*Skills:* Driving/4, Language/3 (English), Knowledge (Area: Boston/3, Folklore/4, Ghost Hunting/1, Ghost Lore/1, History/3, Occult/2, Research/3), Lockpicking/3, Ranged Weapon/2 (Handgun), Swimming/1

*Advantages:* Paranormal Charm/1

### *Nathan McAllister*

#### **19 points**

Nathan is the youngest, and newest, member of Simone’s investigative group. A post-graduate student of folklore, Nathan decided to join up with Simone’s team in order to get some field experience investigating reports of ghosts; he never thought he’d be *meeting* any!

Nathan is studious, and might be charming if he could get his nose out of his notes and

records. Unfortunately, strangers make him nervous, and so Simone has put him in the point position – both to give him some experience talking to people and to take advantage of his tendency to start taking notes furiously when he gets nervous.

**ST** 9 [-10]; **DX** 13 [30]; **IQ** 11 [10]; **HT** 9 [-10].

Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

*Advantages:* Charisma (Ghosts Only) +2 [8].

*Disadvantages:* Reduced Alertness -2 [-10];

Reduced Manual Dexterity -1 [-3]; Reduced Hit Points -1 [-5]; Reduced Hit Points (Mind) -1 [-2]; Weak Will -2 [-16].

*Quirks:* Strangers make him nervous; takes notes when nervous [-2].

*Skills:* Area Knowledge (Boston)-12 [2]; Driving (Car)-14 [4]; Guns/TL7 (Pistol)-13 [1]; History-10 [2]; Literature (Folklore)-11 [4]; Lockpicking/TL7-11 [2]; Occultism-2 [11]; Professional Skill (Ghost Hunter)-9 [1/2]; Research-11 [2]; Swimming-12 [1/2].

*Languages:* English (native)-11 [0].

*Nathan is a balanced starting character for In Nomine, with the basic starting package from the Corporeal Player’s Guide (p. 24). For GURPS In Nomine, he could be used as a low-point mundane, or raised to the 25-50 point range by removing disadvantages.*



## APPLYING EXISTING SKILLS

Many skills can be applied to the world of ghosts; Chemistry, Electronics, and Engineering, for example, can be used to build equipment for ghost hunters, and Fast-Talk is invaluable for gaining access to private haunted houses (or Lockpicking, if Fast-Talk fails). Perception, and sometimes Tracking, can be used to detect ghostly “spoor” – e.g., temperature changes and animal reactions. Knowledge (Psychology) can help mundane exorcists, whether or not the ghost is real! There are three skills, however, which have special uses when applied to ghosts.

*Dreaming* (Precision/Will -3; *Ethereal Player’s Guide*, p. 65) allows a ghost to change his shape. Phantoms normally appear – if they are visible at all – either as they appeared in life, or in the shape prescribed by their type. (See *Types of Ghosts*, p. 12.) A ghost with the Dreaming skill can change how he appears, however, within the limitations of the skill; the ghost’s new form lasts until he fades from visibility or until he reshapes himself again. Regardless of what shape a ghost gives himself, Dreaming cannot change the ghost’s combat abilities; the Power, Accuracy, and number of his attacks remains constant.

*Meditation* (Precision, -4; *Corporeal Player’s Guide*, p. 29) allows a Sensitive (p. 4) character either to double the range of his sensitivity for a single round or to improve the *check digit* of the Perception roll by 1. It may also be used normally to improve the target number of the Perception roll. (In *GURPS*, use the more realistic version

of Meditation (Mental/Hard) on p. C1142 or Autohypnosis (Mental/Hard) in the “improve concentration” mode, p. C1137.)

*Alchemy* (Intelligence, -4; *Corporeal Player’s Guide*, p. 28) can be used by an alchemist with the Spirit Harbor advantage (p. 4) to create Ghost Catchers. A Ghost Catcher is a large crystal which can contain a single ghost; to capture a ghost, the owner of the Ghost Catcher must place the crystal within the space that the ghost occupies. Doing so forces the ghost to react as with Spirit Harbor, and the effects are the same: a captured ghost uses the Ghost Catcher as its anchor until the owner releases it or until the duration (the owner’s Corporeal Forces in days) expires, at which point the ghost immediately returns to its original anchor.

Recently, a variant on Ghost Catchers has emerged, clearly inspired by popular culture. It uses a technological device about the size of a shoebox instead of a crystal. Although the variant is scorned by purists, it is notable for allowing the captured ghost to be held for *weeks*, instead of days; creating one of these involves a -2 penalty to both the Will roll involved in Spirit Harbor and the Alchemy+Enchantment roll required to create the device.

A variant on the sorcerous ritual, Create Spirit Anchor (*Corporeal Player’s Guide*, p. 40), that affects corporeal phantoms can perform the same functions as a Ghost Catcher. GMs may wish to use this variant in place of, or in addition to, the alchemical ritual.

*Nomine*, p. 44) in that it grants knowledge of these information-gathering tools and procedures, as well as information on the history of ghost hunting and important paranormal investigators and investigative organizations. It does not, however, impart any knowledge of the nature or behavior of ghosts.

### ***Ghost Lore (Intelligence)***

***Default: -4***

This is more than just ghost stories: a character with this skill knows the characteristics and behavior of the different varieties of ghost, and can, with a good check digit, name examples of each. This skill

also imparts knowledge of historical hauntings and ghost sightings. Mundane ghost hunters, no matter how high their skill, may have *misconceptions* about ghosts. They will be unaware that the haunts are souls *who have met fate or destiny*, but are unwilling to move on, for instance, or of the exact mechanics of spending Essence to manifest physically. Symphonically-aware hunters probably have more of a clue about what’s really going on. Mundanes with this skill who *become* Symphonically aware do not automatically gain knowledge of the reality of ghosts; they must learn it through roleplaying.





# TYPES OF GHOSTS

*They sat in a well-appointed drawing room as Walter told them what had happened and Nathan took notes. “At midnight I was awakened by a scream the likes of which I have never before or since heard. For a few minutes I was frozen in place by its intensity, but then I roused my courage and went downstairs. The screaming seemed loudest from the basement, but when I looked, I saw only an unearthly glow coming from the rear wall.”*

*Simone stopped him. “So you didn’t actually see the banshee?”*

*Walter looked at her. “I saw her glow. That was enough for me. Meeting the gaze of a banshee is death, you know.”*

*Simone looked at her feet and tried not to smile. “I didn’t know. Please, continue.”*

*Walter cleared his throat. “The screaming continued through the night, and finally I could bear no more and went to a hotel for the rest of the night, although the screaming was so intense that I could hear it even as far as the road. At dawn I called Eleanor on the phone to see if she was all right, and then I spent the day in town. When I returned to the house after dark, the banshee was still screaming, but it was faint, and by midnight it had stopped entirely.”*

*“What day was it?” asked Kurt.*

*“It was Wednesday,” said Walter. “I thought Eleanor had told you.”*

*Nathan checked back in his notes. “Oh, yes,” he said, looking apologetically at the others. “The first. My mistake.”*

*Simone glanced at Nathan, then back at the Chilcoats. “And you say the screaming was loudest in the basement?”*

*Walter nodded, and Simone looked at Kurt. “Get the hammer from the trunk, will you? Mr. and Mrs. Chilcoat, you’ll want to go back to a hotel until tomorrow night, I’m afraid. I suspect that the screaming will be back, but after that we can assure you that you won’t hear it again. Oh –” She paused as the Chilcoats began to rise. “Both of you should see a doctor within the next week. Just as a precaution.”*

The *Corporeal Player’s Guide* details the basic types of ghosts who have anchored themselves to the corporeal plane, refusing to journey on to their final destination. Naturally, as humans – even dead human souls – are difficult to pigeonhole into strict categories and natures, there are sub-types and variants of will’o’wisps, poltergeists, apparitions, and even the least-distorted “regular ghosts.”

## HUMAN GHOSTS

*It’s a dead man’s party*

*Who could ask for more?*

*Everybody comin’, leave your body at the door*


*Leave your body and soul at the door*

*– Oingo Boingo, “Dead Man’s Party”*

### **Screaming Skulls**

A screaming skull is an unusual ghost in two respects: its anchor is the head or skull of its mortal body, and it has a supernatural attachment to the





house in which it resides and to the people living within.

Screaming skulls are poltergeists (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 81); they never have Ethereal Forces, and rarely have more than one Corporeal Force. In life, they were people with strong ties to those around them or to a particular place, and they died violently, often protecting the people or home that they loved. In death, they are still driven to watch over their earthly wards.

These ghosts take their name from their tendency to shriek, loudly and ceaselessly, on any of three

occasions: when the skull is removed from its home, when the skull's home is threatened, or when one of the people living in the home is fated to die within a month. In the first two circumstances, the skull will only stop screaming when it is replaced in the house or when the threat is removed; in the third, the skull screams for the duration of a single night – from dusk to dawn – on the first of the month in which its ward will die, or the first night that the person spends in the house (whichever is first). The scream of a screaming skull is piercing and shrill, and penetrates most earthly barriers easily; it can be heard throughout its

## GURPS IN NOMINE BASIC GHOST TEMPLATE

In some ways, *In Nomine* ghosts are much less flexible than the basic ghost template in *GURPS Spirits* (pp. SPI33-36) and *GURPS Undead* (pp. UN51-54). In other ways, they are more powerful. Because of this, it's more informative to write the *GURPS In Nomine* basic ghost template, derived from the data on pp. 80-82 of the *Corporeal Player's Guide*, from scratch, instead of adapting Spirit Form from *GURPS Spirits* or *GURPS Undead*.

In most respects, a ghost is treated as a being which is permanently in celestial form (p. IN10), with a few modifications.

### Ghost Form

Insubstantial (Always insubstantial, -50%; can affect the corporeal world when insubstantial, +100%, requires 1 Essence to affect the corporeal world, -10%, requires Will roll to affect the corporeal world, -40%, Causes Disturbance, -10%) [72]. This includes Invisibility to Machines (except when manifesting, -10%) [18]; when not affecting the corporeal world, they can only be seen with a successful Perception roll, just like celestial forms (p. IN182). Ghosts also possess Doesn't Breathe [20], Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Doesn't Fatigue [15]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; and Unaging [15]. However, they have the disadvantage of Social Stigma (Dead) [-20], and


Anchored (see below) Their attributes will be affected by the binding process; any ghost with no ST or DX cannot affect the corporeal realm physically, some have low (or no!) IQ, and some should be considered to have 0 in every stat, with a bit of Strong Will, Alertness, and perhaps Extra Hit Points (Soul). The basic cost to be a ghost is 145 points.

**Anchored:** This is a disadvantage most human ghosts have. They are bound to an anchor (which can be a person, place, or object), and cannot travel far from it – their range is as for the Celestial Song of Motion (p. IN164), with the “degree of success” as half their Will. Anchored is a new disadvantage for ghosts worth -5 points; it might also be taken as an unusual Discord.

*Will'o'Wisps* (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 81) add 0 ST [-90], 0 DX [-90], 0 IQ [-90], 0 HT [-90], Alertness 4 [20], Mute [-25], and Strong Will 4 [16]. Their template cost is -204 points.

*Poltergeists* (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 81) add 0 IQ [-90], Alertness 4 [20], Mute [-25] and Strong Will 4 [16]. Their template cost is 66 points.

*Apparitions* (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 82) add 0 ST [-90], 0 DX [-90], and 0 HT [-90], and Mute [-25]. Their template cost is -150 points.



house – regardless of where the skull actually is at the time – and anywhere within 100 yards of the skull times the skull’s Will.

This is not to say that screaming skulls are infallible; in particular, they cannot detect the potential influence of supernatural interference. The death heralded by a screaming skull can be averted by the hand of a non-mortal (if that non-mortal knows where to look!), although it is said that if such an event happens, the skull will scream any time that that non-mortal is in the house at any point thereafter.

Legend tells that screaming skulls can be laid to rest by finding the rest of their bones and giving them a proper burial; this is untrue, and – unless the skull is buried within the confines of its house – usually results in a continuously shrieking skull. A screaming skull can only be silenced by destroying either the skull’s home or the skull itself; in either case, the ghost will scream for a full day and night afterward, and then proceed to its final destination.

### *Hungry Ghosts (Gaki)*

Hungry ghosts are the shades of humans who were greedy in life; in death, this greed is transformed into a dire hunger. Each hungry ghost has a substance which it must consume at least once per day. The substance must be chosen when the ghost is created, and is typically something that living humans would consider revolting, such as sewage or the flesh of corpses. If a hungry ghost fails to find and eat at least a morsel of the food it needs once



### **GURPS HUNGRY GHOST TEMPLATE**

Hungry Ghosts can be regular ghosts or poltergeists, depending on what their IQ is, but they require physical characteristics to manifest and consume their needed food. They add a Dependency (p. CI81) to some substance, daily, which causes soul hits instead of physical damage (+20%). Since the dependency varies, point cost for these ghosts will also vary.



### **GURPS SCREAMING SKULL TEMPLATE**

A Screaming Skull is a type of poltergeist (p. 13). They also possess an additional Alertness +6 [30], Symphonic Link (to their anchor-home and any who stay there) [20], for 116 points. (Though they scream, they keep the Mute disadvantage, even as regular *GURPS* animals do.) They frequently have ST, DX, and HT of 5 or less, which can reduce the point cost.

every 24 hours, it will take Soul hits equal to its own Corporeal Forces.

These ghosts typically manifest as they looked in life, but inhumanly gaunt and with a distended stomach. Occasionally, however, they manifest as floating smoke or flame, and in their human guises these ghosts can change their faces at will, to frighten away the living. Although they are by no means friendly ghosts – a hungry ghost has a -2 penalty to any reaction roll it makes, even for other ghosts – they will not go out of their way to be aggressive toward humans, unless they need a substance (such as the flesh or blood of the living) that requires it. Otherwise, hungry ghosts are predominantly solitary.

Hungry ghosts can be found in nearly any environment, as long as they are close to a source of the substance they need. This source, in fact, is often the anchor by which the ghost holds itself to Earth; when the source dries up, the ghost must either re-anchor itself or proceed to its final destination.

Most reports of Japanese *gaki* are of this kind of ghost, but things appearing to be zombies, groaning for “braaaaains,” may actually be hungry ghosts instead of Samingan zombies.

### *Puncta Mortum*

*Elizabeth rushed downstairs to tell her husband: their son was home from the war. He’d walked in the door a few hours before, still in his uniform – it had*



been 3:02 PM, she remembered, because she had looked at the clock when she heard Johnny's footsteps, thinking it was awfully early for her husband to be coming home from work. He'd said, "It's okay, Mom. You don't need to worry about me anymore." Then he'd gone upstairs, still smiling. Elizabeth had assumed that he was going to see his bedroom, which she and Harold had kept in perfect condition for when he came home, but when she went to check on him he wasn't there. She'd supposed that he needed to use the facilities, and decided not to bother him until he came downstairs again, so she'd been puttering around excitedly until she heard Harold come in the door. At about the same time, the phone rang, and she heard Harold pick it up in the hall. She tried to bottle her excitement, but after a few minutes it was too much for her, and she burst into the hallway breathlessly. "Guess what, Harry! Johnny's come home from the war! They must have sent him home early, isn't that wonderful?"

Harold looked at her sadly and set the phone back in its cradle. "Beth," he said slowly, "that was the Army. Johnny's helicopter was shot down today, all hands lost, at about 3 PM."

Elizabeth fainted.

*Puncta mortum* (sing. *punctum mortis*, literally "moment of death"), also known as crisis apparitions, are a special sort of ghost: they have only one goal in the moment of their death, and this is to reassure their loved ones. To this end, at the moment of death, these ghosts appear to those they love as apparitions, looking exactly as they did in life; usually, they vanish after a minute or two, but some have been known to last for hours.

A *punctum mortis* typically retains all of his Ethereal Forces, and can – if he lasts long enough – have meaningful conversations with those to whom he appears. He may or may not retain his Corporeal Forces; if he does, he can manipulate objects in the physical world, as normal ghosts can. (There is at

## PHONE CALLS FROM THE DEAD

*Puncta mortum* do not always manifest visibly – or, in fact, at the moment of their death. There is a special class of *punctum mortis* known as phone ghosts, and – as their name suggests – these are phantoms who, on their way to Heaven (no recorded phone ghost has been fated to go to Hell), stop for a moment to place a telephone call to their loved ones.

Phone ghosts can manifest days or even weeks after death, and take the form of a telephone call from an unlisted number. They invariably occur when the person they intend to speak to is available, and are never hostile or malicious. Universally, they want simply to tell their loved ones that they're all right, and that they're moving on to their final destination. Sometimes, they also want to find out what's happened since their death; these calls can stretch on for hours, although the ghosts will never consent to speak to anyone but their intended subject. (If the phone is handed off, the line immediately goes

dead.) The maximum duration of one of these calls is the ghost's Celestial Forces in hours; if the call goes on that long, the ghost will politely but firmly tell the person on the other end that he has to go, and the line will go dead after they have said their goodbyes.

Unfortunately, the phenomenon of phone ghosts is less well-understood than many researchers would like, in part because some of these calls aren't actually from ghosts! Occasionally, Saints on Earth or blessed souls in the service of Lightning – or damned souls who have somehow found a communication device in Tartarus or Perdition – bend the rules and make phone calls to the people they knew before they died. Doing this carries severe penalties – more so in Hell – but some souls are willing to risk that to speak to their loved ones again. The matter is further confused by celestials or ethereal spirits "tying up loose ends" after they recover from Trauma or retire a Role.





least one example of a crisis apparition having a full English tea with a friend before disappearing.) The ghost appears in the presence of the person to whom he most wants to speak, although this can mean that he appears in a crowd.

At the beginning of every period that the phantom wants to remain on Earth, he must roll Will + Corporeal Forces; failure, or opting not to make the effort, means that he vanishes gradually over the next ten seconds. Success means he may stay for another check digit minutes before rolling again; success with a check digit of 6 allows him to stay *almost* as long as he likes! In any event, a punctum mortis cannot remain on Earth past the next sunset if he appears during daylight, or sunrise if he appears at night.

Although it is possible to banish or exorcise a punctum mortis, there is little point, given that it will vanish quickly. It is possible to dispel a punctum mortis by striking it sharply; crisis apparitions abhor violence, and will proceed immediately to their final destination if attacked. Puncta mortum themselves cannot attack at all; any ghost seen engaging in combat is definitely not a punctum mortis. Puncta mortum have no true anchors, but can be treated as though their anchor is the person they have come to see.

## Lurkers

Lurkers are ghosts who were betrayed at the moment of their death, and whose desire for vengeance has kept them tied to Earth. A lurker almost never manifests, instead hiding in his anchor, waiting for unwary mortals to come near so that the ghost can possess them – albeit briefly – and use their bodies to perpetrate his revenge.

A lurker's anchor is the weapon which killed him or an object symbolizing the betrayal on which he has fixated. When a mortal – even one with the Insensitive disadvantage (p. 7) – picks up the anchor, the ghost may make a Will roll (which the mortal may resist, also with Will) in order to temporarily inhabit the mortal. If the lurker is successful, the vic-

tim's eyes become black as night, and the victim's consciousness retreats to the far corners of his mind, watching through a vague, fuzzy lens as the ghost acts using the victim's body. The ghost retains command of his own mind and soul, but uses the victim's body (and Strength and Agility) for the duration. This possession lasts for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the successful Will roll plus the ghost's Celestial Forces. Possession can be prematurely interrupted if the anchor, for any reason, leaves contact with the mortal's body, if the anchor is broken, or if the ghost succeeds in carrying out his vengeance. In the first case, the ghost returns immediately to his prison within the anchor; in the second and third instances, the ghost will proceed to his final destination. Lurkers may also be forced out if someone *else* takes over the body – or is already in possession! Shedim, Kyriotes, other lurkers, and those with the Songs of Possession or Exchange (*Ethereal Player's Guide*, p. 66) may contest the possession; the ghost rolls against his Will, and if he loses, he is forced back into his anchor.


Fortunately, lurkers have strict limitations on their other ghostly abilities. They may never range more than a few inches from their anchor, and regardless of how many Forces they have, and of what types, they may never manifest physically, nor appear incorporeally as anything except a cloud of smoke with baleful black eyes.

A lurker who is unable to pursue his revenge – due either to distance or to the death of the betrayer – does not immediately disappear from the corporeal plane. Rather, his vengeance transforms into a general malevolence; upon possessing a human, the ghost will simply attack anyone around him, often going after the most physically powerful person he can see, or the one who most resembles his betrayer.

A lurker's hostility and need for vengeance is much of what ties him to Earth, and is comparable to insanity in mortals. If one of these ghosts voluntarily lets go of his madness, he immediately begins bleeding Forces as though he were turning into a ghost *again*, and must go through the anchoring process anew – with the Forces he has already sacrificed to stay on Earth unavailable to him. If a lurker succeeds in re-anchoring himself, he loses the abilities associated with being a lurker, and becomes one of the







basic types of ghost, depending on how many Forces he has left. Alternately, the lurker may let go of the corporeal world, and proceed immediately to his final destination.

Much like phone ghosts (see p. 15), lurkers are not as well-understood as they could be. Kyriotates can duplicate not only the ability to possess humans but (at least in the case of Lightning's Dominations) the lurker's "jump" from an object to a human, and this leads to confusion when researchers attempt to separate true ghost lore from divine possession. Often, the only way to tell the difference is the color change in the eyes and the single-minded devotion to revenge and mayhem that are the hallmarks of lurkers. Unfortunately, Shedim who know about lurkers are perfectly happy to muddy the waters and commit atrocities while shouting about ancient history and revenge.

## **GURPS LURKER GHOST TEMPLATE**

Lurker ghosts are effectively apparitions (p. 13), with little or no physical characteristics of their own, but they do not use that template, for they possess the Body-Hopping advantage (p. IN30), with the limitations of Touch Only (-66%) and extremely Limited Duration (minutes instead of days, -25%), and gain their host's physical attributes (+50%) [48]. Possessed hosts acquire an Unnatural Feature (p. CI85), and lurkers cannot appear as "themselves" even when insubstantial [-5]. Their Anchored disadvantage has a +100% enhancement, adding -5 points.

They lose the ability to affect the substantial world while insubstantial, but neither does their ability to possess humans require Essence or cause Symphonic disturbance, subtracting 64 points from their Ghost Form advantage, for a total of 81 points.

Finally, they have an Obsession (p. CI93) for revenge: -10 points, since they can only attempt to steal bodies. (Those who cannot kill the object of their Obsession may take Berserk, instead.)

The total cost to be a lurker is 109 points.

## **Mirror Ghosts**

Mirror ghosts are not true ghosts; rather, they are shards of a soul who have become lost on the way to Heaven or Hell. Occasionally, the Forces lost by ghosts when they anchor themselves to Earth do not proceed to the ghost's final destination, instead staying on Earth in places – sometimes far from the ghost's anchor – that the shade remembers as having been important. This can be as personal as the home in which the phantom spent the last 10 years of his mortal life, or as fleeting as the hotel where a career-making movie deal was signed. Mirror ghosts have no mind or capacity for manifesting physically, regardless of what sort of Force it is; instead, Corporeal Forces appear as light touches on the people and objects who pass through or inhabit the haunted areas, Ethereal Forces – the most common of these manifestations – as fleeting glimpses of the shade's mortal appearance in reflective surfaces (hence the name "mirror ghosts"), and Celestial Forces as vague spots of heat or cold within the haunted spot.

Typically, when the ghost to whom a mirror ghost belongs leaves Earth for his final destination, the Force follows him, and the haunting stops. However, mirror ghosts sometimes miss the ghost's call, and do not proceed to Heaven or Hell as they should. (Or perhaps the soul has taken a metaphysically round-about route; for unknown and possibly unknowable reasons, some souls only appear in the celestial realm long after death.) These haunts can live on for years, decades, or centuries after the ghost has left the corporeal plane. Mirror ghosts – even those left behind in this fashion – can be induced to move on or be exorcised, although most ghost hunters simply let them stay as lonely reminders of those who have long since shuffled off the mortal coil.

A ghost who encounters one of his own mirror ghosts may make a Knowledge (Ghost Lore) (p. 11) roll to realize that these lost Forces can be reattached! Reattaching the Force can only be attempted once; it requires that the ghost be within one yard of the mirror ghost and that he make a Will roll at a +1 bonus. Success indicates that the Force has been successfully reattached; the character regains not only the Force but the characteristic levels associated with it. A failed roll means that the mirror ghost remains



separate from the ghost as usual; an unfavorable Intervention sends the Force on to the ghost's final destination, to be reunited with any other lost Forces that might be waiting for the phantom . . . unless the GM has a more *interesting* idea, such as acquiring an Infernal Force, attracting the attention of a hostile angel, or being sucked into the *mirror ghost* and retaining all of its limitations.

Although no examples of this have ever been seen, some paranormal researchers (and not just human ones) believe that mirror ghosts can *combine*, becoming a single entity with the characteristics of both Forces. According to this theory, if enough mirror ghosts from a single human bond, the result might be a *second* true phantom from the same human, with only the memories and abilities contained in the Forces the new ghost comprises. It

might or might not be aware of the existence of the first ghost! A ghost formed in this way would have to be at least a poltergeist or an apparition (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 81-82), but could – if it found more mirror ghosts – theoretically augment itself to the level of a full ghost.

If these “mirror phantoms” can exist, it is even odds whether they could attempt to absorb their parent haunt, or vice versa, as if they were reattaching a single mirror ghost. This could allow the ghost to return to nearly its full mortal configuration of Forces – and a confusing set of doubled memories.

Most celestials don't bother to worry that mirror ghosts from *different* phantoms might find a way to merge into a new “Force-child” of the two human souls, but necromantically-inclined sorcerers might contemplate the notion.

## WHERE HAVE ALL THE FORCES GONE?

*Where have all the young men gone, long time passing?*

*Where have all the young men gone, long time ago?*

*Where have all the young men gone? Gone to graveyards, every one . . .*

– Pete Seeger/Joe Hickerson,  
“Where Have All The Flowers Gone”

When a ghost attempts to anchor itself, it tends to lose Forces, either to failed rolls, or simply in the anchoring process (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 81; GMs may decide that a failed roll with a check digit of 1 results in mirror ghosts). The anchoring Force, most Symphonically aware researchers believe, is not “lost” so much as providing the stabilizing link between the ghost and the corporeal realm, much as Superiors stabilize new-formed Tethers with one of *their* Forces. Note that while a ghost with only one Celestial Force may *attempt* to anchor itself, anything that would normally cause the loss of that Force will instead draw the soul to its afterlife reward.

Still, that leaves the question of what happens to any other Forces which the soul might have lost in its attempt to remain on Earth.

Some believe that these Forces are lost forever, dispersed into the Symphony – and some souls *have* appeared in Heaven or Hell as weakened shadows of their former selves – but those shattered souls are a minority. Most former ghosts, when they manifest in the celestial realm, are as spiritually hale as before they anchored themselves. Where the Forces *go* in the meantime is a minor topic of celestial speculation. Some become mirror ghosts (p. 17). Others, apparently, do not. It's been proposed that missing Forces are actually replaced from stray ones within the Symphony, but the counter to that is the recovered memories that tend to be associated with Ethereal Forces. The remainder – of those who care – are about evenly split between the theory that the Forces go to Limbo for the duration of the ghost's Earthly tenure, and that the Forces go to the ghost's ultimate destination and somehow wait for it there, out of perception of the denizens (including Superiors).

Neither Yves nor Kronos have been heard to comment on these speculations.





# ANIMAL GHOSTS

For whatever reason (and there are many theories), animals do not become ghosts in the same way that humans do. In order to become a ghost, an animal must have at least one Celestial Force at the time of death, and must have an overwhelming desire to remain on Earth. An animal attempting to anchor itself to Earth must roll Will as humans do, but it does not lose a Force unless it fails the roll. It may keep rolling, losing a Force with each failure, until it succeeds or until it runs out of Forces. If the animal succeeds in becoming a ghost, the Forces that it has lost do not proceed to the animal's final destination as a human's would, but stay near the ghost. When the phantom manifests, these Forces appear as faint, hovering lights or flames near and around the ghost, although aside from their visibility they do not affect the corporeal or spiritual world in any way, and cannot be captured or banished on their own (save, perhaps, by Superiors who care to make the effort).

After the initial act of becoming a ghost, an animal haunt behaves much like a human phantom, in that it can be banished, exorcised, or compelled to move on of its own free will. Animal ghosts have no anchor, however, and may – if they wish – move freely about the Earth.

## *Shrikes*

Not all dogs go to Heaven.

A shrike is the phantom of a dog that was abused throughout his life. This doesn't mean simple neglect; dogs who become shrikes are those who are the subject of human cruelty from the day they're born. The emotion that binds a shrike to Earth is always rage and malevolence toward humans – these ghosts are shades of revenge against their former masters. Dogs who maintain a good temperament even after all they have endured might stay on Earth as phantoms, but they do not become shrikes after death.

Regardless of the size or shape of its mortal body, a shrike becomes a hulking black hound, with embers for eyes, and teeth and claws sharper than

any earthly blade. Shrikes only manifest physically to defend animals against human cruelty; more often, they appear without assuming solid form, watching silently or howling balefully from the side of a lonely road as humans pass by, or stalking a particularly cruel human. Often their appearance alone is enough to frighten a mortal into changing his ways.

Although a hunting shrike can threaten its quarry physically, its most powerful weapon is its dreadful howl. This cry can be heard for a full mile, and inspires terror in even hardened souls; anyone who hears it is affected as though they had encountered the object of a Fear Discord, regardless of whether or not they know what the howl signifies. If they attack physically, shrikes strike with Power +2 and Accuracy 0 with their claws, or Power +4 and Accuracy -2 with their teeth.

A shrike will only leave Earth voluntarily if it watches someone whom it is stalking change his ways and become kind to animals, or if it receives truly kind treatment from a human. Like other ghosts, however, shrikes can be banished and exorcised, and defeating a shrike in corporeal or celestial combat will send it on to Heaven.

It is known that Jordi looks favorably on shrikes, and strongly rumored – among those angels who care – that he and his Servitors take advantage of the existence of these spectral hounds to target particularly cruel humans. A nastier rumor in Hell is that Jordi *encourages* humans to abuse dogs so that they will become shrikes after death . . .



## *GURPS SHRIKE TEMPLATE*

As well as Ghost Form (p. 13), shrikes start with the maximum values for the Wolf template on p. B144 [63], have Move 9 (Enhanced Move (Running)  $\times$  1.5 [5], qualify as Mute [-25], and add Penetrating Call with the enhancement that it is supernaturally frightening (+40%) [7], Claws (p. CI67) [15], and Fangs (p. CI67) [10]. The total for a Shrike is 220 points.



## Ghost Cats

Ghost cats don't stay on Earth because they have any particular goal in doing so; they stay because they're comfortable here. In direct contrast to shrikes, ghost cats were well-treated in life, and died naturally and in their sleep. Some investigators theorize that ghost cats don't even need to make a conscious effort to stay on Earth; they just never get around to leaving.

Although some ghost cats do manage to retain their Ethereal Forces, none ever manifest visibly. They make themselves known by touching those around them – through the ghostly sensation of rubbing against the ankles, scratching on the legs, and other feline behaviors – and by leaving persistent warm spots where they rest, as a living cat does. Any Forces that they lost during the process of anchoring are likewise invisible, manifesting as smaller touches or warm spots. This has led some observers to the theory that some ghost cats have kittens with them, although this is almost never actually the case. If the recipient of the ghost cat's affection attempts to actively touch it, the ghost will disperse immediately, only manifesting again after an hour or two. This is not a willful action on the ghost's part; it is simply part of the nature of the ghost.



## Phantom Herds

Phantom herds are a special kind of echo (p. 22) in which hundreds or thousands of animal ghosts appear at once, stampeding across a short stretch of land and disappearing at the other end. The duration of a phantom herd depends on how many animals are in the herd, how fast it is moving, and how far the herd has to go; typically, they last a few seconds, although particularly slow herds (such as turtles) or large herds (such as passenger pigeons) have been known to manifest for minutes or hours at a time. There does not seem to be a limit to the distance a

herd has to travel; one hunter reported that he saw a ghostly flock of passenger pigeons stretch for a hundred miles in the mid-1950s, and another claims to have seen a phantom herd of buffalo emerge from one end of a crosswalk and disappear at the other end (although it did hold up traffic for several minutes as the herd passed).

Despite their name, phantom herds can be composed of any animal that moves in large numbers – herds, packs, colonies, etc. Each member of a phantom herd, while manifested, has the full combat abilities of a living example of its kind, and will attack or trample anything that gets in its way, although it will not leave the path for long. Predator species especially should be avoided by cautious hunters, as there have been reputable reports of entire packs leaving their ghostly migration to attack and devour anyone who got too close. On the other hand, despite the appearance of hundreds (or thousands) of creatures, a phantom herd is actually a single ghost, and – like other ghosts – may not have more Forces than a single example of the species it represents might.

There is, however, one saving grace: phantom herds announce themselves, a full minute before they arrive, with the sound of their approach. This gives anyone within range time to get away, although some curious – and inexperienced – investigators may go even closer. Anyone still in the path of the herd when the animals arrive might be trampled or attacked as though the ghosts were living creatures, or might be carried along with the herd. Those who reach the other end of the creatures' path and are forced through must immediately make a Will roll; on a success, they are merely flung onto the ground beyond the point of departure, but failure renders the victim wholly unconscious for days equal to the check digit of the failed roll, and inflicts half as many Mind hits – in addition to whatever physical damage he took from the herd itself.





## Viduae

Ancient relics of long-dead races, *viduae* (sing. *vidua*; literally, “relicts”) are rare, but often powerful. Most smaller creatures do not become ghosts because of low numbers of Forces, and many *viduae* have been coaxed to Heaven by Jordi or his Servitors. Of those left, some have been summoned by sorcerers (using a variant of the *Summon Human Soul* ritual; see the *Corporeal Player’s Guide*, p. 42) so that they can drain the ghosts’ Essence (using *Sacrifice for Essence*; see the *Corporeal Player’s Guide*, p. 40). Others – especially larger *viduae*, such as tyrannosaurs and saber-toothed cats – have been enslaved by sorcerers and demons with a flair for the dramatic, who keep the ghosts as guards or pets.

Whether captive or free, even small *viduae* can be dangerous – if nothing else, they possess sharp teeth and claws when they manifest physically – and an encounter with a spectral aurochs or diatryma can be both terrifying and deadly. Many of these phantoms have nearly the same number of Corporeal Forces as they did in life, and can do considerable amounts of damage, either deliberately or while on a mindless rampage.

Although most *viduae* date to before the dawn of recorded history, the name applies to any ghost from an extinct species, however recently that species died out. Investigators have reported passenger pigeon and dodo ghosts, among others. *Viduae* contribute not only to reported sightings of extinct animals (such as legends of Amazonian or Antarctic lost worlds) but to cryptozoology; some ghost hunters have theorized that cryptids such as the Loch Ness Monster are actually the *viduae* of long-dead titans, manifesting briefly and then vanishing without a trace.

### VIDUAE IN GURPS

*Viduae* come in such a selection of sizes and kinds that each one would have to be designed (probably with *GURPS Bestiary*), and an appropriate ghost template (p. 13) added to it. Captive ones would almost certainly have an involuntary Duty (p. CI77).

# LOCATION GHOSTS

Ghosts are not necessarily limited to individuals, or even once-living things. Ghost ships are well known, and phantom trains have their own legends. Sometimes even *events* produce ghosts that haunt the living, or rise up and suck in the unwary!

## Transplantation

Transplantation is an extraordinarily rare form of haunting in which living subjects are seemingly transported to another time entirely. Only two or three verifiable events have occurred in recorded history, the most famous of which happened at Versailles in the early 20th century. Transplantation can last anywhere from an instant to an hour, although extremely short events tend to be written off as *dejà-vu*. Although it affects everybody within the transplanted area, anyone experiencing a transplantation must make a successful Perception roll to notice that anything is amiss. The GM may grant a bonus of up to +4 to this roll, depending on how different the haunted surroundings are from their modern counterparts.

A transplantation is essentially a retelling of history, with those who experience it as not only observers but active participants. Characters drawn into a transplantation might find themselves anywhere from a month to a millennium in the past; although they cannot actually affect the course of history, they can interact with the people, buildings, and objects that they encounter (assuming they speak the same language!), as though they were actually *in* the time represented by the haunting and as though the participants were meant to be there; those with whom they interact will not be thrown by differences in attire, for example. Transplantation never transports people in space, only time; however, when the subjects return to their own time, they may find that they are separated by walls that did not exist in the era they just visited! Participants will never enter a transplantation or return to their own time within a solid object; either they or the object will be moved, or the transplantation will not begin or end until they are out of the way.



## Echoes

Far more common than transplantation, echoes, also known as “battle ghosts” after their most common manifestation, involve the sights and sounds of yesteryear being replayed for a modern audience. These are distinct from transplantations in that those who experience them do not appear to be transported back in time; their modern surroundings remain, and only a small portion of the world seems to have been rewound.

Echoes most often appear as the sounds of a historical battle, and often take place out of sight of the observers; only the sounds of ghostly fighting are heard. However, nearly any event which was traumatic to a large number of people can be the subject of an echo. Examples include ghostly re-enactments of Boston’s Great Molasses Flood and the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Even recent events have created echoes: people have reported hearing screaming and seeing smoke pour from a nightclub where, decades ago, a fire claimed the lives of hundreds of people.

These hauntings rarely last more than a few minutes, although occasionally the manifestations last for up to an hour. The GM may roll 1d6; on 1-5, the apparition lasts for twice the rolled value in minutes. On 6, roll again, and the apparition lasts for 10 times the rolled value in minutes. They often appear only once, but some echoes – particularly those associated with extremely strong emotion or large numbers of deaths – can recur, usually on the anniversary of the event. Unlike transplantations, the ghosts of an echo are intangible, and observers cannot affect the drama as it plays out.

## Ghost Ships

Some captains do not let even death lessen their determination to reach their destinations. Even after their ships have been destroyed, they sail on in spectral vessels, bound to reach port or spend eternity trying. These are ghost ships, avoided and feared by sailors for their legendary ability to curse or enslave those who still ply the living sea. Many are said to be captained by those who made deals with the devil and refuse to go on, or were cursed to never find rest. Ghost ships can be recognized by their aura; they either glow brightly or are surrounded by unnatural darkness.

A ghost ship is the will of a dead captain made manifest; the original ship might lie in flinders, but she lives on through her old master. These phantoms are no longer waterbound, either; some ghost ships are *never* seen anywhere but in the clouds. They are dangerous to anyone who sees them: their unnatural nature inflicts a penalty of -1 to *all* observers’ rolls while the ship is in sight – due to an aura of dread, simple bad luck, or whatever else might be appropriate to the ship in question. In addition, these phantoms have the ability to capture living sailors.

A ghost ship intent on acquiring new blood will attack and board the ships of the living; the ship’s weapons do no damage, but may be flaunted to intimidate. The phantoms – and previously-enslaved living thralls – try to board the target ship and kidnap the crew and passengers. Anyone captured must make a Will roll (without the -1 penalty) once they set foot on the ghost ship’s decks to avoid falling into thrall; they can make another roll any time they leave the ship to shake off the enchantment. The ship’s thralls age normally, although they need neither food

## FLYING GHOST SHIPS

Other things could be ghostly vehicles of the sky – airplanes, zeppelins, carpets, or starships, for instance. If *they* vanish, the consequences to any still-living passengers are more dire than merely being dumped into the ocean.

The details of any given flying ghost ship’s demise are up to the GM. It is *suggested* that the fall be survivable – the ship “crashes” first, the plummet somehow never reaches terminal velocity, or some other stroke of luck keeps the living on this side of the veil, for now. However, the destruction of this sort of ship is even less well documented than that of the seagoing sort. Player characters are unlikely to be sure exactly *what* will happen, and may wish to plot such a ship’s destruction *very* carefully . . .





## PHANTOM VEHICLES

Although ghost ships are the most common spectral vehicles, they are by no means the only type. Nearly any sort of vehicle can remain on Earth in phantom form after it is destroyed, through the will of its pilot or passengers, from ancient, rusty bicycles rattling along gullies late at night, to Japanese Zero pilots still looking for unwary Allied ships in the Pacific. Two of the most common types of phantom vehicles are ghostly trains and carriages.

Unlike other ghostly vehicles, ghost trains are not limited to certain stretches of track – or even to the tracks they ran when they were corporeal. (One ghost train reputedly haunts tracks in Russia, the United States, and many locations in between.) These trains have two forms: either they simply appear as they approach a station, lasting only long enough for those on the platform to notice their antique shape and spectral or skeletal passengers and crew before they disappear again, or they proceed invisibly ahead of other trains approaching a station, and passengers who are too close to the edge of the platform may be dragged onto the tracks below. (This requires a simple Strength roll to resist.) Many investigators think that these ghost trains are simply using the wind generated by their passage to draw passengers over the edge, but some survivors have reported feeling ghostly hands pulling them off the platform. Any passengers who die from landing on the tracks or from being run over by the approaching corporeal train are captured as ghosts, to serve on the train's spectral crew.

It is possible to destroy a ghost train, either by killing its engineer or by destroying the engine. Anyone living who manages to board one of these trains – usually by leaping onto a train which has appeared, before it disappears again – has a chance to do this, although he must contend with the ghostly crew first . . .

Ghost carriages (and their close relative, ghost automobiles), on the other hand, are rarely malicious, and never take on new passengers or crew. These are the ghosts of those who were killed

trying to reach a destination, much like other ghost vehicles. Most encounters with them, however, manifest simply as the driver of the carriage stopping to ask for directions, and then driving on (but rarely – if ever – following the given directions, so certain is the driver of the way to his destination). Ghost carriages typically manifest either with skeletal horses or – more commonly – with no horses at all.

### *GURPS Statistics for Phantom Vehicles*

Each vehicle is linked to its master: the ghostly driver, captain, or passenger who will not let it – or himself – rest. Through processes which might be understood by Yves, Kronos, or the enigmatic Archangel of Death (if such a being exists), the vehicle is at once based solely upon its master's Forces, and is also far more sturdy and strong than such Forces should reasonably be expected to make it. Saminga, more concerned with undead *bodies*, has never been particularly interested in the Symphonic underpinnings of any sort of ghost. Confusing issues, a few phantom vehicles actually *are* anchored to the remnants of a carriage or ship; these do not take on crew, and are markedly less hostile, with a shorter range. Some are echoes.

Starting with the usual ghost template (p. 13), a Phantom Vehicle removes the +100% enhancement allowing it to affect the corporeal world when insubstantial, and reduces the "Not Substantial" limitation to "Not usually substantial," -45%. Hostile phantom ships and trains have the Dominance (p. CI53) and Infectious Attack (p. CI97) advantages; those who are captured will quickly become enslaved to the dark will of the ghost. When visible, they are, effectively, Jinxes (p. CI98), and have DR and PD appropriate to their size and construction. They have no Anchors. There are too many variables to have a typical template beyond those adjustments.



nor drink. If they die while in thrall to the ship, they may make a final Will roll to escape the ship's influence. If they fail, they lose one Force (as normal ghosts do) and *automatically* become ghosts, permanently anchored to the captain and able to leave only when he lets go of Earth or is destroyed.

If a living thrall is sent on some mission off the ship, inventive player characters may attempt helpful Songs, attunements, ethereal affinities, or sorcerous rituals. The effectiveness of any of these is up to the GM.

Fortunately for those facing ghost ships, they have no supernatural protection other than becoming intan-

gible, and *must* become corporeal to attack another ship. When corporeal, any damage a ghost ship receives translates directly into Soul hits dealt to its captain, *in addition* to any damage the captain himself receives in combat! If the captain is destroyed or can no longer maintain his hold on Earth, the ghost ship dissipates immediately, and all ghosts attached to the ship go to their final destinations or reincarnation. The captain's supernatural hold over his living thralls is broken at that point; they return to their senses and – if they were still aboard the ghost ship when it was destroyed – fall into the ocean, waiting to be rescued.

## SIMONE REED

### *Soldier of Destiny*

#### Corporeal Forces - 1

Strength 2      Agility 2

#### Ethereal Forces - 3

Intelligence 7      Precision 5

#### Celestial Forces - 2

Will 3      Perception 5

*Status:* 3 (Paranormal Investigations Company Founder)

*Skills:* Computer Operation/2, Driving/1, Emote/2, Fast-Talk/2, Knowledge (Area: Boston)/3, Ghost Hunting/4, Ghost Lore/6, Language/3 (English), Savoir-Faire/2, Swimming/1.

*Advantages:* Sensitive.

### *Simone Reed, Soldier of Destiny*      13 points

Simone founded her investigative group, "Reed and Associates," after her first experience with a ghost – who happened to be her father. It wasn't much later that she ran into Kurt Winchester (p. 35), and shortly after *that* she was inducted into the organization of Destiny and became a Soldier.

Simone believes that most ghosts – and all ghosts who aren't self-aware – should be sent

on to their final reward or punishment. She allows those phantoms who are beneficial to those around them, and those actively attempting to redeem themselves after succumbing to fate, to stay on Earth until their goals are accomplished, but other ghosts are, to her – and much to the occasional consternation of Kurt – to be studied, and then to be sent on to their final destination.

**ST** 8 [-15]; **DX** 8 [-15]; **IQ** 15 [60]; **HT** 8 [-15].  
Speed 4; Move 4.  
Dodge 4.

*Advantages:* Awareness (Symphonic) [15];  
Essence Control 6 [16]; Extra Hit Points (Mind) 1 [3]; Manual Dexterity 2 [6]; Second Sight [5].

*Disadvantages:* Reduced Alertness -2 [-20];  
Reduced Hit Points -1 [-5]; Weak Will -5 [-40].

*Quirks:* Appears ruthless toward most ghosts [-1].

*Skills:* Acting-14 [1]; Area Knowledge (Boston)-16 [2]; Computer Operation/TL7-15 [1]; Driving (Car)-10 [1/2]; Fast-Talk-14 [1]; Occultism-18 [8]; Professional Skill (Ghost Hunting)-16 [4]; Savoir-Faire-15 [1]; Swimming-7 [1/2].

*Simone is an experienced character, with the basic starting package from the Corporeal Player's Guide (p. 24).*





# USING GHOSTS IN A GAME

*The investigators watched the Chilcoats turn onto the main road until they were out of sight. Then, Kurt opened the trunk of the hunters' station wagon, pulled out a sledgehammer and a shovel, and slung one over each shoulder. As the trio made their way back to the house, Nathan asked, "What're the tools for?"*

*"Digging and hitting things," said Simone. Nathan gave her a dirty look, and she laughed. "It's definitely not a banshee," she said. "I think what we have is a screaming skull, and it's probably either buried beneath the floor of the basement or behind one of the walls."*

*Nathan shuddered. "I don't mind ghosts," he said to himself, "but I don't think I'll ever get used to bones."*

*Kurt elbowed him lightly. "You will. I did." Simone laughed.*

*The group made their way to the basement, where Simone turned on the lights and Kurt grabbed the*

*hammer. "Just hit the walls, anywhere," said Simone. "That'll verify what we're looking for."*

*Kurt brought the hammer up and around, and as soon as the head smacked into the brick of the wall, the ghost began wailing. Nathan winced and covered his ears, and the others looked pained. "It's a screaming skull, all right," shouted Simone. She closed her eyes and concentrated, then looked toward the back wall. "There, where the wall bulges."*

*Nathan tapped on the wall and nodded. "It's hollow," he said, and Kurt picked up the hammer and began pounding the wall. The shrieking intensified, but Kurt kept hammering until the wall broke away to reveal a set of skeletal remains. Nathan paled and backed away.*

*Kurt peered at the skeleton, and reached out and touched the skull. "Woman, early twenties. Household servant right after the house was built. Knew too much. **Definitely** our screamer." Simone backed up next to Nathan, and Kurt pulled up the hammer and destroyed the skull in a single blow.*

*The screaming increased in intensity, and Simone nodded. "It'll keep screaming until this time tomorrow, and then pass on to the next world. Good work." Kurt nodded, grabbed the shovel, and started up the stairs, followed by the others.*

*At the door, Nathan paused, then started back for the drawing room. "What are you doing?" asked Simone.*

*"Leaving a note," said Nathan. "They should at least know what happened."*

*Simone shrugged. "Whatever you want. We'll be in the car. I don't want to have this howling in my ears any longer than I have to."*





Ghosts can be antagonists, or red herrings. They can be the focus of an adventure, or just part of the eerie setting as the player characters confront a necromantic mastermind. They can even be PCs themselves – or the PCs might *become* the spooks . . .

# NOT JUST GRAVEYARDS AND HAUNTED HOUSES

When many people think of ghosts, they think of haunts roaming around cemeteries, or phantoms haunting houses and terrorizing the families within. This is, in fact, often the case . . . but even more frequent are the ghosts who have attached to other places that were important to them in life – the places where they lived, played, worked, and prayed. Still other ghosts have found a way to disappear from the corporeal world entirely and haunt the world of dreams.

## *Traditional Locations for Ghosts*

Of course, there would not be a tradition of ghosts appearing in graveyards and haunted houses if there were not some basis in fact. Indeed, many ghosts anchor themselves to the houses in which they lived in life, not wanting to leave behind the good (or very, very bad) memories that they hold of their Earthly homes. Other ghosts, in an attempt to overcome death through sheer force of will, attach their souls to their human bodies; some of these, after going

through the trauma of death (p. 27), are so startled to find themselves haunting the graveyards where their remains are interred that they never fully recover. Ironically, a few ghosts who attach to their mortal bodies arrive at their final destination without ever waking up from their trauma, their bodies having been quickly cremated.

Ghosts who attach to the houses in which they lived tend to have one of two reactions to other people who come to live there: either they treat the newcomers as welcome guests, and attempt to live in harmony with the new residents, or they are unfailingly hostile, doing their best to drive new owners away. Screaming skulls (p. 12) are an example of the former, watching over those who live in their chosen home and warning them of danger; many of the latter category are poltergeists, not understanding why other people have come to live in their houses and trying to repel who they see as intruders.

Cemetery ghosts, on the other hand, generally have much milder reactions. Those who have not yet accepted their deaths will often engage the living in conversation or attempt to leave the cemetery; they always have an imagined reason for being in the graveyard, which ranges from “my car broke down up the road and I stopped here to rest” to “we were visiting gravesites and the rest of the family accidentally left me behind.” Those who are aware that they are ghosts, however, are usually resigned to the fact; they neither drive away nor welcome the living, but remain solitary and aloof, often only coming out when they think nobody’s watching.

## *Theater Ghosts*

Some people are so attached to the theatre that they remain after death, watching performances and sometimes assisting – or hindering – the cast and crew. Although theater ghosts are relatively common – stages across the world, of every age and type, at least have *stories* of one or more ghosts associated with them – they are also notoriously difficult to pin down. Most ghosts who inhabit theaters only manifest during rehearsals or performances, and then only to the actors and crew members; if a ghost hunter really wants to track down a theater ghost, therefore, the best way is to *join* the cast or crew, and hope that the ghost appears to him.





## ACCEPTING DEATH

Dying and becoming a ghost is traumatic. A character who becomes a ghost suffers the effects of Trauma (*In Nomine*, p. 67), treating his anchor (or his mortal body, if he has no anchor) as his Heart; he may add his total current Forces to his Will to return to consciousness. For the duration of the Trauma, the ghost is intangible and invisible, and cannot be banished or exorcised; in fact, only Sensitive characters (p. 4) will even notice that he is there.

Some ghosts don't understand that they're ghosts. A ghost who died a very quick or traumatic death, or one whose reason for remaining on Earth was a subconscious refusal to accept death, may firmly believe that he is, in fact, still alive. These ghosts usually dismiss any evidence of supernatural activity – and their own supernatural nature – out of hand, and only forcing them to see themselves for what they are will bring these phantoms back to reality.

A ghost who has not accepted death has, for all intents and purposes, the Insensitive disadvantage (p. 7); he cannot see or hear other ghosts, and will not notice that he himself is one. Any time he personally experiences his own supernatural nature – the physical limit of his range, or his need (and ability) to dematerialize – he may make either a Knowledge (Ghost Lore) roll or an Intelligence roll to figure out the truth; on a success, he realizes his own nature as a phantom, while on a failure he will rationalize the experience as being strictly mundane. Evidence of *other* supernatural activity is rarely enough to trigger this, though it's sometimes possible to help such a soul to relax and pass on, by convincing him one is an angel to guide him, explaining he's intended to go to Heaven, or some other psychological argument. Anyone can attempt this, but Mercurians and Balseraphs are the celestials who try it most often.

It's considered very bad form for a Mercurian to do this to a *fated* soul.

The majority of theater ghosts are benevolent, keeping an eye on their successors on the stage and behind the scenes. Many are actively helpful, keeping props handy and watching out for dangerous situations, and a few brave ghosts have even been known to assist with set construction, makeup, or costuming. It is rare that anybody involved with the theater is upset by the presence of one of these ghosts; in fact, the owners or managers sometimes set aside seats in the audience for their ghosts, especially if the ghost is known to watch performances, and the cast and crew often think of the ghost as a good luck charm.

Some of these phantoms, however, are out to make the thespians' lives difficult; they interfere with makeup, hide props, deface or destroy set pieces, and are the main cause of theatre staff requesting help from ghost hunters. A few theater ghosts are not just mischievous but malicious, and try to harm the cast and crew, preferably during performances. These phantoms will topple set pieces, sharpen prop weapons (or replace them with live steel), and drop sandbags (or other, deadlier objects) on the actors, the stagehands, the directors and managers, and even the audience. When one of these ghosts strikes, the theater it has afflicted often closes until the ghost is exorcised or otherwise removed.

Although Gaston LeRoux's *The Phantom of the Opera* is not about an actual ghost, the Phantom's actions are an excellent examples of the sort of malicious activity that a malevolent theater ghost can and will perform.

## School Ghosts

From rural one-room schoolhouses to vast universities with tens of thousands of students, nearly any sort of school can be home to the phantoms of its departed students, staff, and faculty. Almost universally, these ghosts are innocuous – in fact, most of them don't seem to *notice* the current residents of the school. There are only a few who want to harm those who now inhabit the school or to use them for the ghosts' own purposes.

One of the most common examples of a school ghost is that of the jilted college lover. Heartbroken over the loss of his love, the student flung himself from a rooftop, hanged himself in the auditorium, or killed himself in some other memorable fashion,



long ago – but his shade lingers on, still in pain, repeating the act of death over and over across the years. Also common is the night watchman, killed in the line of duty but still making his rounds with a ghostly flashlight (or, if the phantom is old enough, the flickering light of a candle). Another is the overworked professor, who died of a heart attack while grading papers; he continues to appear late at night in his old lecture hall, startling passing students with the clicking of chalk on a blackboard as he prepares notes for the next day.

Most malevolent school ghosts are lurkers (p. 16), who have anchored themselves to dormitory rooms, classrooms, or other more-or-less permanent campus features and who want to use the students they possess to wreak havoc on their targets or on the school in general. Unless the administration has an overwhelming reason not to do so, once the ghost has been discovered, the part of campus haunted by one of these ghosts will typically be closed off until the ghost can be driven away. Even staunchly mundane and skeptical management should want to find the “traps or drugs” which are causing the problems! (Discovering why the administration *hasn't* closed off the campus might be an adventure by itself . . .)

## Church Ghosts

As long as humans have been building places of worship, there have been ghosts to haunt them. Although they can appear at nearly any site of worship, these ghosts are known as church ghosts by paranormal investigators. Unlike theater ghosts and school ghosts, church ghosts are rarely benevolent; those who *are* tend to be those holy men and women who felt strongly that their work on Earth was not yet over, or martyrs who haunt the site of their death, upon which has been built a place of worship. For the most part, however, ghosts who inhabit places of worship are either aloof or malicious. Most met their fate during the course of their work for their chosen place of worship (those who embraced their fate and then began working in a context of faith in order to redeem themselves more often fall into the category of benevolent ghosts, as above), or met their destiny but were killed in or near the site they now haunt, or at the hands of those who worshipped there.

Those who own and administrate churches (or temples, synagogues, mosques, etc.) tend to believe that they can take care of the ghosts themselves, or that their faith and worship itself will drive the ghosts off. They are rarely correct, and many of these sites end up haunted for centuries as successive generations believe that they can succeed where their predecessors have failed. Others believe that the hauntings are actually the result of divine intervention, that the apparitions at their places of worship are actually saints or angels and that if they are so blessed, no action should be taken to stop the activity. In either case, ghost hunters are rarely called in these situations, and are often refused access if those in charge of the site realize who the investigators are and what their goal is.

## *Ships' Ghosts*

According to the lore of sailors, anyone who dies aboard a ship might return to haunt its decks. This is not as far from the truth as some skeptics suspect; anyone who dies aboard a ship during a voyage has a +1 bonus to his Will rolls to anchor himself to the ship, or +3 to anchor himself to his mortal body. (Also, anyone *killed* aboard a ship gains a +1 bonus to anchor to his killer.) Those in a position to know why this is true have kept silent, but the most popular rumor is that this is the dying curse of Vephar, Demon Prince of Oceans.

Ghosts who are attached to ships run the gamut from benevolence (the salt who died of old age aboard his favorite schooner) to untempered hostility (a mad captain murdered by his mutinous crew), and come in every possible variety. (A World War II-era destroyer even carried a screaming skull (p. 12), the shade of a worker killed in its construction; it was discovered only a month before the ship was sunk, by sailors who reported the ghost's howls belowdecks, and rumors still float among Navy personnel that the skull can even now be heard screaming by those who pass over the ship's wreckage.) Sailors might call upon ghost hunters or exorcists to rid them of *any* haunting, however; they often view ghosts as bad omens, and sometimes hire a priest as part of the crew for the express purpose of banishing haunts from the ship. In addition, the crew of a ship will give the body of a dead crew member





or passenger a sea burial as quickly as they can, in part to prevent his shade from haunting their decks. (This means that most of those who die aboard a ship and become ghosts never manifest to humans; by the time they have emerged from the trauma of death (p. 27), their mortal bodies – to which they have anchored themselves – are at the bottom of the sea.)

## *Ghosts in the Marches*

Many ghost hunters who know about the Marches believe that dreamshades (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 82) are the only ghostly denizens of the dream world. They are mistaken; there are corporeal ghosts, however few, who have found ways to migrate to the Marches. The most common way for a ghost to travel to the Marches is through an Ethereal Tether; ghosts might stumble onto a lost and forgotten Tether through accident alone, or might be guided there by an ethereal visiting Earth. However he finds the Tether, a ghost wishing to traverse it must meet the same conditions as anyone else (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 22; a ghost is considered to be in celestial form if he is not manifested physically). When he reaches the Marches, the ghost treats the Tether's upper locus as his anchor.

The other method of reaching the Marches is by following a celestial when the celestial goes to the ethereal plane. This can be done any time a celestial within the ghost's range of movement goes to sleep, but is an extremely risky move for the ghost: when he reaches the ethereal plane with the celestial, he must *immediately* begin making Will rolls or start losing Forces as though he were becoming a ghost all over again! This does not require two Celestial Forces on the part of the ghost, and the ghost does not lose one Force automatically. For each failed roll, the ghost loses one Force; if the ghost loses all of his Forces, or loses his last Celestial Force, he immediately proceeds to his final destination. Forces lost in this way *can* become mirror ghosts (p. 17). If he succeeds in staying coherent, the ghost treats the celestial as his anchor for the duration of his trip to the Marches; when the celestial leaves the Marches by any means, the ghost immediately returns to Earth at the point where he left it. (All of the Forces lost in the initial transition remain lost.)

A ghost in the Marches is much the same as he was on Earth, although his interaction with the dream world is governed by Intelligence and Precision instead of Strength and Agility. (See the *Rules of the Ethereal* chapter of the *Ethereal Player's Guide*, p. 86, for more details.)

Likewise, it is possible for dream-shades to descend Ethereal Tethers to Earth; like ghosts traveling from the corporeal to the ethereal plane, dream-shades must meet the usual conditions for traversing a Tether. When a dream-shade arrives on Earth, the corporeal locus of the Tether becomes the dream-shade's anchor, just as if he were a normal ghost. A dream-shade's time on Earth is limited; after a number of hours equal to his Corporeal Forces, and after each similar period thereafter (or every ten minutes, if the dream-shade has no Corporeal Forces), the dream-shade must make a Will roll to remain on Earth. If he fails, he is immediately drawn back up the Tether and into the Marches. (A dream-shade may voluntarily return to the Marches at any time.)

While on Earth, a dream-shade functions as a will o' the wisp, poltergeist, apparition, or full ghost – whichever is appropriate to the configuration of Forces that the dream-shade currently possesses. Dream-shades on the corporeal plane are treated as regular ghosts for the purposes of banishment, exorcism, and any advantages, disadvantages, or

## PAGAN GHOSTS

Many ethereal gods had Tethers at their temples, or other places where dead bodies might be taken. (It's rumored the Norse gods took advantage of transient or temporary Tethers to send the Valkyries to Earth to collect the souls of warriors.) A body-anchored ghost at such a place might be more easily brought to the gods' Domain and – it's suspected – be re-anchored there, much like a typical dream-shade.

Naturally, if a god finds a ghost at the top of an Ethereal Tether, there will be a temptation to convert the ghost to the god's way of thinking. At the least, a ghost is a source of Essence . . .





rituals that affect ghosts, with the exception of those abilities that shift a ghost's anchor (such as Spirit Harbor, p. 4). A dream-shade cannot be removed from the area surrounding the Tether he used to descend to Earth, either willingly or forcibly. (Superiors and ethereal gods may – or may not – be able to violate this rule.)

## GHOSTS AS NPCs

Although it is possible for players to take on ghostly characters, the majority of the phantoms in an *In Nomine* game will be non-player characters. Some of these specters will want to help the characters, some will be as harmful as they can, and many – especially in horror-themed games – will simply be present to set the scene. A GM can often decide whether a phantom is friendly, hostile, or neutral before the PCs encounter the ghost, but in some cases a reaction roll must be made. In these circumstances, GMs should note the “Ghosts and Charisma” box on p. 4, as well as whether any of the characters have Paranormal Charm (p. 4).

As rules of thumb, a ghost held back from his goals – even unintentionally – by one or more characters will have a -2 penalty to reaction rolls. One who is helped in his quest will have a +2 bonus. These modifiers *do* cancel each other out, if both apply.

### *Ghosts as Adversaries*

Many ghosts will start off inimical to a group of PCs, especially when that group contains mortal humans. Humans remind phantoms of their own mortal lives – and of the fact that although they hung onto *Earth* strongly enough to remain, they let *life* slip through their fingers. An adversarial ghost has a number of tricks up his sleeve in order to deal with corporeal beings, among them incorporeality, an often encyclopedic knowledge of the area around its anchor, and the dread that many humans experience

upon even hearing about ghosts – let alone encountering them.


Certain types of phantoms have specific advantages that can harm their victims as well. Among these are the screaming skull's shriek (p. 13), which the skull will use if it feels that the party is a threat to its home, and the lurker's (p. 16) uncanny ability to take over the body of a living creature; such a possession may go unnoticed by an unlucky group until the ghost can strike. On the other hand, some ghosts can act in the worst interest of the party without realizing that they have done so; a will'o'wisp (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 81) might mindlessly lead characters into an ambush or hostile terrain, while unlucky adventurers who don't get out of the way of a phantom herd (p. 20) in time might find themselves in dire straits.

### *Ghosts as Allies*

Some ghosts are naturally benevolent, and will help characters out of genuine kindness, or mortal friendship, if the ghost knew any of them, or their ancestors, in life. Ghosts who discover they're *related* to characters are often very helpful (or occasionally, unhelpful, if the mortals are from the wrong side of a family feud). Others can be won over by the words and deeds of the characters, or have ulterior motives: the PCs might be able to help them, or might have something that the ghosts want. Helpful phantoms have the same abilities as inimical ghosts do, and many of them can be used to the group's advantage. Incorporeal ghosts, especially those with portable anchors, make reasonably good scouts and spies – although those who use ghosts in this fashion would be wise to keep in mind their limited Perception. Likewise, phantoms with a stationary anchor, or one that hasn't moved in a long time, often know the surrounding area very well, and can act as guides. However, like any other intelligent creature, many phantoms will want the PCs to provide something in return for the ghost's help – and refusing to compensate a ghost is a quick way to turn it hostile!

The special abilities of some varieties of spook can be used in the party's favor, as well. If their ears are well-padded, characters can benefit greatly from the presence of a shrike (p. 19) in combat, with its fearsome claws and teeth and paralyzing howl. A





friendly hungry ghost (p. 14), can be devastating if an enemy has what the phantasm needs to eat.

Some ghosts are simply benevolent without being actively helpful. Phantom cats (p. 20) and puncta mortum (p. 14), for instance, are always friendly – they could even be described as “well-intentioned” – but they simply don’t have the powers or abilities to offer much help to any characters they meet.

## Neutral Ghosts

Sometimes, ghosts are neither friendly nor hostile; they’re just there. Will’o’wisps (*Corporeal Player’s Guide*, p. 81) and poltergeists (*Corporeal Player’s*

*Guide*, p. 81) are usually ghosts of this type; although they can behave in ways that help or harm the party, they are mindless shades, and don’t do so on purpose. Similarly, ghosts such as screaming skulls (p. 12) simply won’t react to most characters unless the ghost is tampered with or a character presents an immediate threat.

Many conscious ghosts cease to be neutral toward mortals after interacting with them, and may make a reaction roll. Some, however, have long despaired of any meaning in their unlife and remain neutral under almost any circumstances. Trying to interact with such phantoms can be extremely frustrating.

## GHOSTS AND LOA

The various ethereals who make up the *loas* are fairly well-known for their relationship with both ghosts and spirits. The Voudonista belief most immediately relevant for the *Liber Umbrarum* is the concept that human souls are comprised of both a *gros bon ange* (“big guardian angel”) and a *ti bon ange* or *petit bon ange* (“little guardian angel”); the former goes on to its final reward/punishment after death while the latter stays behind, and will continue to exist if properly nurtured. According to these beliefs, as time passes the *ti bon ange* will become less specifically the person from which it was formed and more of an archetype. Eventually it will merge with an existing (and much larger) archetype; the most powerful of these archetypes are the loa.

Loa are certainly both able and willing to communicate with ghosts, and they have demonstrated the ability to temporarily “plug in” mirror ghosts (p. 17), “reading” whatever fragmentary memories are associated with it. This *only* gives the loa access to the mirror ghost’s memories; the loa does not gain the other benefits of having an additional Force. There are few recorded instances of this happening, and none of them have lasted longer than 24 hours; it is, however, possible that a loa could keep a mirror ghost anchored indefinitely, if the loa had reason to do

so (and if there were no external influences, such as the mirror ghost’s original soul passing on to Heaven or Hell). There is also evidence that the loa can assist in ghost formation: those surrounding Voudinista strongholds are both more numerous and stronger than the average, and even the weaker ones tend to be a bit more coherent.

Loa – and perhaps *any* ethereal spirit – with an appropriate element (see the *Elements and Initiation* chapter of the *Ethereal Player’s Guide*, p. 21) may have an ability that allows it to add its Ethereal Forces to the Will of any ghost trying to anchor itself, as long as the spirit is within its Celestial Forces in yards of the spook. Whether this is an affinity power or an obscure Song is ill-known save by the loa themselves.

Any of the advantages on p. 4 would be appropriate for a Voudon Soldier; in fact, the loa would actively encourage the development of those abilities in their worshippers. They may also be Haunted by helpful relatives or ancestors. The Ghost Lore skill is common among these Soldiers, although it is filtered through the Voudon worldview. Voudonistas often find niches as classic Mediums and obvious Exorcists, or occasionally Ghost Hunters.

For more information on loa and Voudon, see *GURPS Voodoo: The Shadow War*.



# GHOSTS AS PCS

Some players will want to play ghosts – either from the outset, or when a mortal character dies during the course of the game. This is possible, although the character might be severely limited both in mobility and opportunities for character development, and other characters – especially celestials – may attempt to convince the ghost to move on or try to destroy or exorcise him.

Despite their status as supernatural creatures, ghosts are *not* always Symphonically aware. If the human was aware before his death, he *usually* retains his awareness as a ghost; though his anchoring Force is too twisted to hold Essence, it still counts toward the six Forces required to hear the Symphony. Unaware ghosts can become Symphonically aware, but it typically takes the intervention of a powerful celestial. If a player is creating a ghostly character from the start, he should decide during creation whether or not his phantom is aware; unaware ghosts cannot spend Essence freely, use Songs, or notice disturbance. Ghosts who have no Ethereal Forces and are Symphonically aware can spend their Essence one at a time and use Songs, but they tend to do so haphazardly, and often give the appearance of being unable to do so at all.

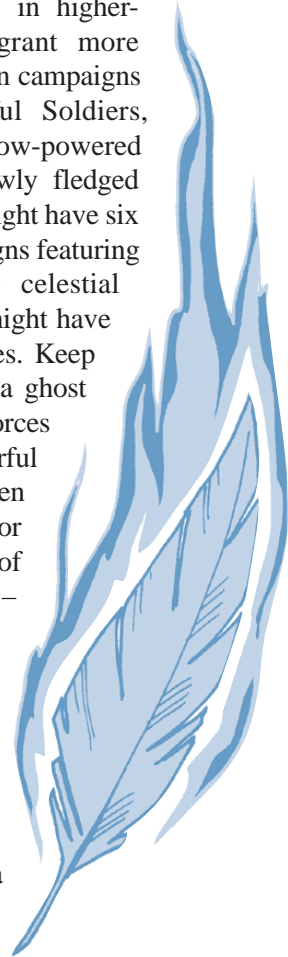
When a ghost character starts play, the GM should privately decide whether any of the ghost's Forces have turned into mirror ghosts (p. 17). This information should not be revealed to the players; after all, even the ghost from whom mirror ghosts arise does not automatically know of their existence!

## *Starting as a Ghost*

The number of Forces with which a ghost begins play is determined by whether or not the phantom is Symphonically aware. Non-aware ghosts presumably arose from non-aware mortals, and begin play with four or fewer Forces; likewise, Symphonically aware ghosts were typically aware in life, and thus begin play with five Forces. In both cases, at least one of the ghost's Forces *must* be Celestial, and no

more than five Forces *may* be Celestial; otherwise, the player may distribute Forces as he pleases – while noting that, if the ghost has no Forces in a realm, he may be merely an apparition, a poltergeist, or even a will'o'wisp (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, pp. 81-82). GMs may, in higher-powered campaigns, grant more Forces to ghostly PCs; in campaigns which feature powerful Soldiers, Saints, ethereals, or low-powered celestials (relievers, newly fledged demons, etc.), a ghost might have six Forces, while in campaigns featuring powerful ethereals or celestial characters, a phantom might have as many as seven Forces. Keep in mind, however, that a ghost with more than five Forces either was a very powerful human in life (with seven or more total Forces) or has been the subject of Superior intervention – see p. 34 for character development as a ghost.

A ghost's starting characteristics and Resources are determined by what Forces he has. At creation, a ghost gets four characteristic levels per Force, as normal characters do. He may also, using character points, purchase up to three characteristic levels in a realm in which he has no Forces, although he does not get these automatically. Ghosts receive four character points per Force to put into Resources; GMs may also choose to give ghosts the mortal starting package (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 24). At the GM's discretion, the ghost may receive additional character points at creation, representing the Forces the haunt lost during the process of anchoring himself to Earth; the ghost should not be assigned more total Forces, including lost Forces, than other human characters in the group, and it is suggested that the extra character







points be assigned to Resources which the ghost cannot currently use.

The player should also determine at this time whether his ghost is Symphonically aware. Ghosts who are aware can learn the Corporeal versions of Songs (but not the Ethereal or Celestial versions),

## EVERYBODY'S DEAD, DAVE

GMs and players may want to run games in which *all* of the PCs are ghosts. This doesn't require as many changes from a standard game as one might think; the key differences are the supernatural abilities of ghosts and the fact that all of the characters in the party require anchors.

Since phantoms, much like celestials, are insubstantial when in their natural state on Earth, locked vaults, barred doors, and even solid walls present little difficulty to them, as long as they stay within range of their anchors. (In fact, they are even typically intangible to each other, although if a ghost decides to become solid to other spooks, this can be done at will. Of course, in order to really interact, other ghosts have to become tangible to him in return . . .) In addition, ghosts are normally invisible, although Sensitive characters can detect ghosts even when they're not manifesting. This spectral ability is invaluable when gathering information inconspicuously or sneaking past guards or recording devices.

The issue of anchors is more difficult to handle; if even one ghost in the group has an immobile anchor, much of the action must be confined to that phantom's range of motion. GMs planning to run campaigns where many or all of the characters are ghosts might be wise to suggest that all of the PCs have either mobile or very large anchors, in order to maximize the variety of potential adventures. On the other hand, a clever GM might be able to create an entire campaign set entirely within the confines of a single ghost's range.


can spend Essence freely (unaware phantoms spend Essence unconsciously, as humans do), and can detect disturbances in the Symphony.

An alternate method for creating ghosts is to create a mortal character, with Forces equal to other starting mortal characters, or four fewer than starting celestials, and no fewer than two or more Celestial Forces, and then go through the process of losing Forces (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, pp. 80-81). While this process more closely resembles what happens when an existing character becomes a ghost, it gives the player less control over his character, and may leave a player with no character at all!

### *Becoming a Ghost*

The player of an existing mortal character may, if the mortal dies, wish to turn him into a ghost! After all, PCs tend to have goals that they feel very strongly about. First, the GM should decide if it's plausible for the character to have achieved his fate or destiny, or if any prior supernatural events or Interventions might justify bending the rules. Then, the human should go through the normal process of becoming a ghost (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, pp. 80-81), although the GM and the player may wish to agree upon a lower limit for Forces so that the player doesn't end up with a will'o'wisp (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 81). The player may also, with the GM's permission, choose to transform his character into one of the ghost types listed earlier (p. 12). Unless the type of ghost the player has chosen does not require it, the player should also choose an anchor for his character at this point.

Once a character has become a ghost (see *Accepting Death*, p. 27), he may lose access to some of his mortal Resources. Although ghosts retain their Toughness (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 27), they can only use it while they are physically manifested. A sorcerer who becomes a phantom keeps the Sorcery attunement and any rituals he might know, but unless he possesses Forces in all three realms, he cannot actually use them. (He needs Ethereal Forces to understand the rituals, and Corporeal Forces to properly manipulate the corporeal ingredients.) However, a ghostly sorcerer with Ethereal Forces can still *teach* the rituals he knows, and if the GM allows it, use any *purely* mental rituals.



A character who becomes a ghost after death may, if the group is composed only of mortals, be the PCs' first concrete evidence (so to speak) that there are forces in the world beyond mortal ken. The GM is encouraged to play this up, especially in horror-themed games.

## Dealing with Anchors

Many ghosts have anchors that are large, immobile, or both. Unless the game takes place entirely within a ghostly PC's range of motion, however, this sort of anchor is unsuited to player character anchors. When a newly created or newly dead PC ghost chooses an anchor, it should be a portable object which holds great personal significance to the character – an heirloom necklace, the gun that killed him, or the laptop computer on which he wrote his unpublished masterpiece. The ghost may also choose another person as his anchor – especially if that person has the Spirit Harbor advantage (p. 4) – although attaching to a person who does not ordinarily travel with the party of PCs may cause trouble as well. On the other hand, it may also provide the GM with fodder for adventures, as the group tries to think of ways to either keep the anchor with them or stay with the anchor. The ghost may, with the agreement of the other player, anchor himself to another character, which has the added benefit of keeping the ghost near the party at all times.

Any character to whom a ghost becomes anchored acquires the Haunted disadvantage (p. 7); the character receives points (or not) for this at the discretion of the GM. A character who has the disadvantage *must* resolve the situation through roleplaying, whether or not it was worth character points.

## Ghosts and Character Development

Ghosts do not change quickly, if they change at all. Although ghosts earn experience at the same rate as do other characters, they are severely limited in their ability to spend what they have earned. They cannot acquire new Forces through any method short of Superior intervention, and *must* pay the full price of the new Force when it is granted. Actually, there is one other way – by reacquiring any mirror ghosts (p.

17) that he has spun off, a ghost may at least restore some of the Forces that he lost when he became a ghost. A phantom may purchase up to three charac-

## DESTINY AND FATE

In *In Nomine*, a ghost has already met either his destiny or his fate – but not both. Normally, it is difficult for a ghost to achieve the complement after death – many ghosts either can't affect the corporeal world enough or aren't intelligent enough to take the necessary actions – but it isn't impossible. A ghost *can* still meet whichever of destiny or fate he didn't attain in life. If he does so, then – like any other human who embraces both fate and destiny – he will reincarnate or dissolve into the Symphony. Unlike living humans, though, a ghost must make a Will roll *immediately* upon achieving both. If he fails, he passes on to this spiritual outcome at that very moment! Success allows him to continue his post-mortem existence as normal, delaying his soul's disposition until he releases his bond to Earth, is exorcised, or is defeated in combat (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 82).

There is a significant penalty, however, if the ghost reincarnates: any Forces that he lost during his struggle to become a ghost will remain lost and unfindable – even to Superiors – until he finally reaches either Heaven or Hell, which may take several more lifetimes. If the soul disbands at any time, the lost Forces dissolve as well; if it reaches Heaven or Hell, it is reunited with the lost Forces, regardless of where those Forces were waiting. In future lives, the reincarnated human has as many *potential* Forces (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 17) as he would normally have, but only as many as the ghost had at the time of reincarnation will emerge naturally as he grows from child to adult; the rest must come through the normal methods – hard work, dramatic events, or supernatural intervention. This will not allow any soul to wind up in the afterlife with more than 15 Forces!

teristic levels in a given realm, however – except realms in which he has no Forces, which cannot be improved until a Force is added to that realm.

A ghost may improve his existing skills and acquire new skills and, if he has the Sorcery advantage, sorcerous rituals; however, he cannot purchase or improve skills that correspond to characteristics in which he has no levels. The exceptions to this are skills which can be used with multiple characteris-

tics, such as Fighting or Lying; if the ghost has one or more levels of at least one of the characteristics, the skill may be purchased or improved normally. In addition, a ghost with no Ethereal Forces can only learn and improve skills that correspond to Strength or Agility. Likewise, a ghost can learn and improve Corporeal Songs, if he has at least one Corporeal Force and is Symphonically aware; ghosts without Corporeal Forces not only may not learn new Songs

## ALAITHEL

### *Malakite of Destiny*

#### Corporeal Forces - 4

Strength 10      Agility 6

#### Ethereal Forces - 2

Intelligence 4      Precision 4

#### Celestial Forces - 3

Will 6              Perception 6

*Skills:* Knowledge (Ghost Hunting/6, Ghost Lore/4), Language/3 (English), Large Weapon/6 (Hammer), Tracking/6.

*Songs:* Shields (Corporeal/4).

*Vessel:* Vessel/3 (Male, bruiser).

*Role:* “Kurt Winchester,” Ghost Hunter/3, Status/2.

**Attunements:** Malakite of Destiny, Past Lives.

### *Alaithel, Malakite of Destiny*      **976 points**

Alaithel is a young Malakite in objective terms, having fledged only a few decades ago. His first encounter with Simone Reed was no coincidence; his first corporeal mission was to see if Simone was Soldier material. It quickly became apparent that she was, and ever since she became a Soldier he has been assigned to her, to protect her and to help her do her job.

As “Kurt Winchester,” Alaithel is soft-spoken and imposing; he doesn’t talk much, and uses short words when he does speak. His primary function is to keep Simone safe, and to help her to identify unintelligent or recalci-

trant ghosts (through the use of his Past Lives attunement; *Superiors 3: Hope and Prophecy*, p. 106).

Nathan is not aware of “Kurt’s” celestial status, and Alaithel prefers to keep it that way until Nathan is a little more experienced. He sees promise in the young investigator, but doesn’t see any need to blow his cover quite yet.

ST 22 [125]; DX 16 [20]; IQ 10 [-30]; HT 22 [125].

Speed 9.5; Move 9.

Dodge 9, Parry 9.

**Advantages:** Alertness +4 [20], Basic Celestial Template [480]; Choir (Malakite) [35]; Choir Attunement (Malakite of Destiny) [8]; Power Investiture (Corporeal) 4 [10]; Role (Ghost Hunter) 3 [15]; Servitor Attunement (Past Lives) [18]; Strong Will +4 [16]; Vessel (Human male bruiser, Extra Hit Points 18) [120].

**Disadvantages:** Power Investiture (Ethereal) 2 [-10]; Reduced Hit Points (Mind) -1 [-2]; Reduced Manual Dexterity -2 [-6]; Servitor of Destiny [-7].

**Quirk:** Doesn’t talk much, and not wordy when he does [-1].

**Skills:** Occultism-11 [4]; Professional Skill (Ghost Hunter)-13 [8]; Tracking-17 [8]; Two-Handed Axe/Mace-19 [16].

**Songs:** Shields (Corporeal)-13 [4].

*Alaithel is a somewhat experienced Servitor of Yves, with a few years of Earth duty (and an advanced Servitor Attunement) under his belt.*



or improve any that they already know, but also may not *use* the Corporeal Songs in their repertoires. Like mortal humans, haunts cannot learn Ethereal and Celestial Songs without the appropriate Ethereal or Celestial Connection (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, pp. 27-28).

Ghosts are not subject to many of the disadvantages which can affect humans, such as Crippled or Addiction, and lose these disadvantages when they become ghosts. Even though a ghost may *appear* to be missing limbs, for instance, this does not actually affect the ghost's capabilities. However, they become subject to some disadvantages which normally do *not* affect humans, such as Discolored and Pallid.

***Past Lives:***  
***GURPS Conversion***

The full text for this attunement can be found in *Superiors 3: Hope and Prophecy*. In *GURPS*, the attunement is Symphonic Knowledge (Past Lives), with no roll required (+66%), must touch subject (-20%), and does not work through any media (-66%). It only works on humans (-5%), and requires 3 Essence if used on immortal humans (e.g., Saints and undead), which is not terribly limiting *except* in a high-spectral campaign, so is halved to a -15% limitation. 18 points.

# ADVENTURE SEEDS

*“Hello, Ghostbusters . . . Yes, of course they’re serious . . . You do? . . . You have? . . . No kidding. Just gimme the address . . . Oh sure, they will be totally discreet. Thank you.” [Hangs up phone.] “We got one!”*

– Janine Melnitz, *Ghostbusters*

Ghost hunters, exorcists, and skeptics, by definition, are looking for supernatural events to investigate. Mediums have trouble *avoiding* at least a tenuous connection to weirdness. They may stumble across ploys by ethereal spirits, plots of Soldiers of God and Hellsworn, or even the activities of angels and demons. Children of the Grigori may gravitate to the occupations that bring them into contact with specters and haunts – or may be the targets of investigation as their celestial heritage manifests unconsciously!

Even if the “ghosts” are the result of imagination, swamp gas, or other mundane sources, attempting to

determine causes will lead explorers into odd situations.

Here are some ways to make them a little odder . . .

## THE COLLECTOR

Thomas Keyne is a private investigator with a tremendous rate of success; not only is he persistent, perceptive, and very good at finding needles in haystacks, but some of his targets claim that he knows information that he couldn't possibly know. This has, until recently, been dismissed as disbelief and hysteria, especially since he's been acquitted of





several charges of wiretapping and invasion of privacy. However, recently one of his subjects said that she saw someone lurking in her bedroom, and managed to get a photograph of the lurker before he noticed that she'd seen him. The photograph is blurry, and – to the astonishment of everybody involved – the man she photographed appears to be translucent, but one of her lawyer's assistants claims to know the person in the photograph – and also claims that he's been dead for two years. On a hunch, she has called in some ghost hunters of her acquaintance to investigate Keyne himself.

Anyone who digs deeply enough will find that Keyne is not only a Spirit Harbor (p. 4) but an accomplished alchemist (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, pp. 46-48) who has managed to create a number of Ghost Catchers (p. 11). He uses these to collect phantoms, whom he then employs to assist him in his investigations. This not only allows him to get information to which he might not otherwise be privy, but grants him a remarkable amount of plausible deniability; he can be anywhere, as long as his helper's current anchor is within range of the subject under investigation. Proving that Keyne is, through a proxy, invading his subjects' privacy is going to be difficult – as is confronting Keyne himself, who has a veritable army of ghosts at his disposal . . .

## CROWDED

There have always been rumors about the old church on the corner of Vine and 12th being haunted – of strange things roaming the halls at night, lights and shapes in the windows, and bells ringing at unusual hours – and the clergy do seem to be keeping some secrets, but none of the parishioners seem to mind. Ever since the church was the site of a major showdown between a local gang of white supremacists and the clergy, who defended, almost to the point of sacrificing their own lives, a group of African-American children, the sacred building has been held in a kind of reverence by the locals.

Unfortunately for the Seneschal of this particular Tether of Protection, the rumors are true. Unlike most Tethers with similar reports of hauntings, which are typically caused by humans witnessing celestials in celestial form and hearing the Symphonic effects of

Songs, the church at Vine and 12th actually does have ghosts – and if the number of haunts continue to increase as it has been, the dead residents of the church will soon outnumber the live ones. The Seneschal is at his wits' end; he was pretty sure he knew how the ghosts were getting in – their anchors were being delivered through the postal service, in boxes with seemingly random origins and appearances – but even though he's stopped all delivery of packages, the number of ghosts continues to increase.

PCs aligned with Heaven will be tasked either with figuring out where the ghosts are coming from and stopping the source, or with figuring out what to do with what are literally dozens of ghosts roaming the halls of the church – ghosts of all shapes, sizes, and personal philosophies. So far the Seneschal has been able to keep them out of the nave (the central part of the main sanctuary), but he feels that it's only a matter of time before one slips through. When that happens, the rumors and nervous murmurings about the old church will turn to out-and-out panic, and the Tether's very existence could be in danger. Characters who are neutral or aligned with Hell, on the other hand, might be interested in finding out where these phantoms are coming from, out of curiosity, so that they can help whoever's sending the ghosts, or for other, more individual reasons.

In fact, the source of the ghosts is a local herself – a Habbalite of Dark Humor who lives in the area. As an EloHITE of Creation it was a witness to the act of courage and willing self-sacrifice that formed the Tether; having Fallen in a separate event (involving finally getting fed up and openly mocking a prat-fallen comrade), she decided to begin a campaign to drive humans away from the Tether, replacing faith and courage with fear and uncertainty. She started out by going around the country and kidnapping ghosts with small, portable anchors, sealing them inside boxes that functioned as minor, single-use Will Shackles to prevent the ghosts from appearing until the boxes were opened, and mailing them to the church. Now that the Seneschal has begun refusing mailed packages, she has been recruiting mortals (using Fast-Talk and Songs) to deliver the anchors in person – still encased in the boxes, until the courier gets within the walls of the church, at which point the anchors are left in inconspicuous places throughout the public portion of the building.





Stopping the Habbalite will be difficult; nothing short of soul-killing her or showing her something that will be more fun (and funnier) over the long term will be enough to dissuade her from targeting the church. (Even killing her vessel will only give the Tether temporary respite – and when she comes back, she might bring friends to help . . .) If she *isn't* stopped, it won't be long before the church has to close its doors to the public – maybe even permanently . . .

## MIRACLE

For 50 years, a church in the south of Spain has been experiencing what they call a miracle: every year, the flower gardens are planted and tended by the hand of no living man. The church itself has been renamed *La Iglesia de los Flores Milagros*, and pilgrims filter in every year from April to September to see the miraculous flower gardens. The bishop has stated that this is the work of a priest, Padre Luis Zachardo, who worked in the church until his death half a century prior; in fact, those observers who stay past nightfall during the spring and summer months can often see a glowing figure in robes wandering about the gardens, planting the flowers in the spring and tending to them throughout the summer.

Investigators with Ghost Lore will note that the figure – ostensibly Padre Zachardo – seems to actually be a ghost; apparently the priest felt that tending the gardens at his church was more important than going to Heaven. Perceptive hunters, however, will notice two *other* figures, shadowy and unassuming, on the grounds. These are the ghosts of a pair of nuns who have stayed on Earth through both the desire to reveal their secret and sheer terror at the punishment they believe awaits them. During the Inquisition, centuries past, these women harbored a fugitive who had been branded a witch; as punishment for refusing to give the “witch” up, the Inquisitor who discovered them had the nuns executed. They went to their graves without revealing the whereabouts of the so-called witch, however, and this is the secret which they remained to keep.

Unfortunately, they have not noticed that it is several hundred years too late to rescue their charge; they also did not notice when the “witch” escaped on her own. The two nuns will, if those who approach them do not seem affiliated with the church, point out their



hiding place – now long empty – and implore investigators to watch over the girl they hid away. Even with this promise extracted, however, the nuns still remain out of fear, and it may take the intervention of an honest-to-goodness angel – or, if the PCs play it right, the ghost of Padre Zachardo – to convince them that their actions fulfilled not their fate, but their destiny . . .

## SINS OF THE FATHER

At Holy Cross Elementary School, some students are reporting that they've seen a girl whom they don't recognize playing in one of the sandboxes. The school's administration has confirmed that the child is not enrolled as a student at Holy Cross, that she seems somehow sinister – and that she vanishes when adults approach, although she seems perfectly content to have other children playing with her in the



sandbox. One child in particular, a fifth-grader named Danielle Roberts, has been seen playing with the unfamiliar girl on a regular basis, although she refuses steadfastly to give any details when pressed.

By the time the principal contacts investigators, the strange girl has stopped appearing on the playground and is now being seen *inside* the school. These glimpses are always fleeting and uncertain . . . but they all happen around the fifth-grade classrooms and common areas. By questioning the students and teachers, investigators can establish that the sightings always occur when Danielle Roberts is nearby. In addition, Danielle's friends will mention that she has acquired an expensive-looking new locket – and she isn't telling anybody where she got it.

Danielle, if questioned, will be as steadfastly silent about the girl and the locket as she is to everybody else, although she is more than happy to talk about the rest of her life, including a new friend, Claire, who is in kindergarten – and some strange gaps in her memory, mostly occurring on the walk between school and home. (“It’s like I fall asleep when I leave school, and then I wake up and I’m home!”) If the questioning lasts longer than about 10 minutes, the strange girl will materialize in the back of the room (if the questioning is outdoors, she appears about 20 feet away and as far

away from any humans as possible), give the investigators a long, baleful look, and then disappear again; at this point, Danielle will close her eyes, start humming tunelessly, and stop giving up any information whatsoever.

If the investigators try to question Claire, they will find that this is an exercise in futility; Claire not only is even more distractible than the average five-year-old, but has a strong aversion to talking to strangers. (The Impudite resonance, or sufficient Charisma, might get through the aversion, but it will be difficult or impossible to get the girl to focus on the questions.) Even highly successful interrogators will learn only that Claire has become good friends with Danielle lately; Danielle's nickname for Claire is “dear sister.” Some of Claire's teachers, if questioned with some sensitivity and skill, may reveal that they suspect Claire is being abused, although there's no solid evidence to back it up.

Investigators who talk to all the teachers will discover one or two who can identify the phantom girl. If any of the characters have seen the girl, a quick survey of old student files will turn her up as well. The girl's name is Abigail Gentry, and a quick internet or newspaper search will do the rest. (After hearing her name, sharp-witted investigators may remember the story.)

## ABIGAIL GENTRY

### *Lurker (Ghost)*

#### Corporeal Forces - 0

Strength 0 Agility 0

#### Ethereal Forces - 1

Intelligence 3 Precision 1

#### Celestial Forces - 1

Will 3 Perception 1

*Skills:* Artistry (Painting/1, Piano/1), Emote/1, Fast-Talk/2, Knowledge (Area: Hometown/2, Ghost Lore/1, Video Games/2), Language/2 (English), Lying/1, Running/2, Swimming/1

Abigail has lost two of her four total Forces – but one of them (her second Celestial Force) is actually in her father's house as a mirror ghost (p. 17). If Abigail encounters her missing Force, she *will* try to recapture it, unless it means missing an immediate opportunity to exact her revenge on her abuser.

### *Lurker Ghost*

*134 points*

ST \*; DX \*; IQ 9 [-10]; HT \*

Speed \*; Move \*

Dodge \*

*Advantages:* Lurker Ghost [139]

*Skills:* Acting-9 [2]; Artist-6 [1/2]; Fast-Talk-9 [1]; Games (Video)-9 [1]; Musical Instrument (Piano)-6 [1/2]; Occultism-7 [1/2]; Running-\* [1]; Swimming-\* [1/2]

*Quirks:* Wants her lost “soul-bits” (Forces) back; Wants to protect her little sister. [-2]

\* Abigail must use a host-body to have physical stats, and while her skills are her own, they will be based on her host's physical abilities.



Abigail was a Holy Cross fifth-grader who disappeared five years ago. It was the media frenzy story of the year for about a week, with unfounded and unproven allegations thrown at everyone, including the father, an uncle, and several members of the clergy on the school staff. The case was never solved.

Investigators who think to excavate the sandbox (where Abigail first appeared) will find the plywood base has been clumsily pried out and replaced; beneath it is Abigail's mostly skeletonized body, with several impact fractures at the back of the skull. If there's any doubt, dental records prove the body is Abigail's.

It should be obvious at this point that Abigail is a ghost; investigators with Ghost Lore (p. 11) will be able to piece together that Abigail is a lurker (p. 16), although she has the unusual ability to manifest as something other than a black cloud. If they can keep the ghost in one place long enough to question her,

Abigail will reveal the identity of her killer, who is . . . whoever the GM wants. There are plenty of viable suspects, so pick whoever works for you.

They will discover (either from Abigail's ghost or from subsequent investigation) that after that the locket was a gift the abuser gave Abigail to "prove" his love, and on the night he killed her, he ripped it from her neck and threw it into the heavy woods surrounding the school playground. As a symbol of the betrayal, the locket became her anchor (p. 16). The locket lay beneath a bush, covered by leaves and undergrowth, for five years until it was discovered by a hide-and-seek-playing Danielle. Abigail not only discovered that her killer was still here five years later, but her baby sister Claire was also attending Holy Cross – at the same age Abigail was when her abuse started. And Abigail would do *anything* to protect her sister, even reveal her existence and risk banishment.

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