

World of Darkness: “The Golden Watch”

by Dawn Prough

- Ghost-Whisperer: “Madeline”

Quote: *“Do you really know what you’re doing?”*

Virtue: Temperance.

Madeline is a moderate woman, a trait her car accident didn’t change.

Vice: Pride.

Madeline is very proud of her skills as a ghost-whisperer, and is likely to take offense if someone suggests she isn’t good at it.

Background:

Madeline’s life appears to be unremarkable. She was born to a lower-middle-class family. She graduated in the middle of her class and went to college for three years, leaving without a degree. She was bright enough for college, but she found it hard to concentrate on a given subject. She used to work for the state in the Division of Motor Vehicles, until a car accident a few months ago that nearly killed her. Her life was average, even bland until that moment, but after the accident she left her job and sold her house, adopting a nomadic lifestyle. She’s moved around constantly since then, driven by an unknown goal.

What won’t be apparent to the characters without some occult research is the strange entity that she combined with on that fateful night of her death. Madeline did die that night; her heart stopped and she wasn’t breathing when the paramedics reached her. While she was dead, a ghostly entity joined with her, offering her life and powers in exchange for doing some favors for the entity. While hesitant, Madeline accepted the deal, and returned to life after being technically dead for three minutes. Since then, she’s found herself trapped. She’s alive and with some impressive powers, but she is tied to an inhuman entity which directs her actions. The ghostly creature has many demands, and some of them have stressed Madeline to the breaking point. Others have merely pushed her moral boundaries, making her wonder if the creature’s purpose is to turn her into a monster.

Description:

Madeline is a pale, scrawny woman; her dark hair is cut short in a style that favors ease of care rather than beauty. She is dressed in practical clothes with sturdy shoes. She doesn’t focus very well on anything other than her private thoughts – and the voice whispering to her. As such, she often has an absent-minded expression on her face. That will be less apparent when she’s on a mission, as she has learned to pay attention during dangerous situations.

Storytelling Hints:

You are driven and focused; you know where you’re going and what you’re doing. You’re not under your own direction, but



After exploring the house and finding some ghostly activity, the characters find the mother lode in the library. It is the most active room in the house, with spikes in temperature and easily recorded voice phenomena. The room is fairly large, with bookshelves taking up all the free wall space. There are no books on the shelves, but there are boxes of packed books throughout the room. Other trinkets are scattered about the room in display cases; most appear to be antiques or replica pieces.

As the characters begin to look around, they spot a stranger – a young woman who seems to be searching the display cases in the library for something. As they approach her, the library erupts with ghostly activity. This is what they've been waiting for all night – interaction with the ghosts. But who is this strange woman, and why does she seem to control the ghosts?

Storyteller Goals:

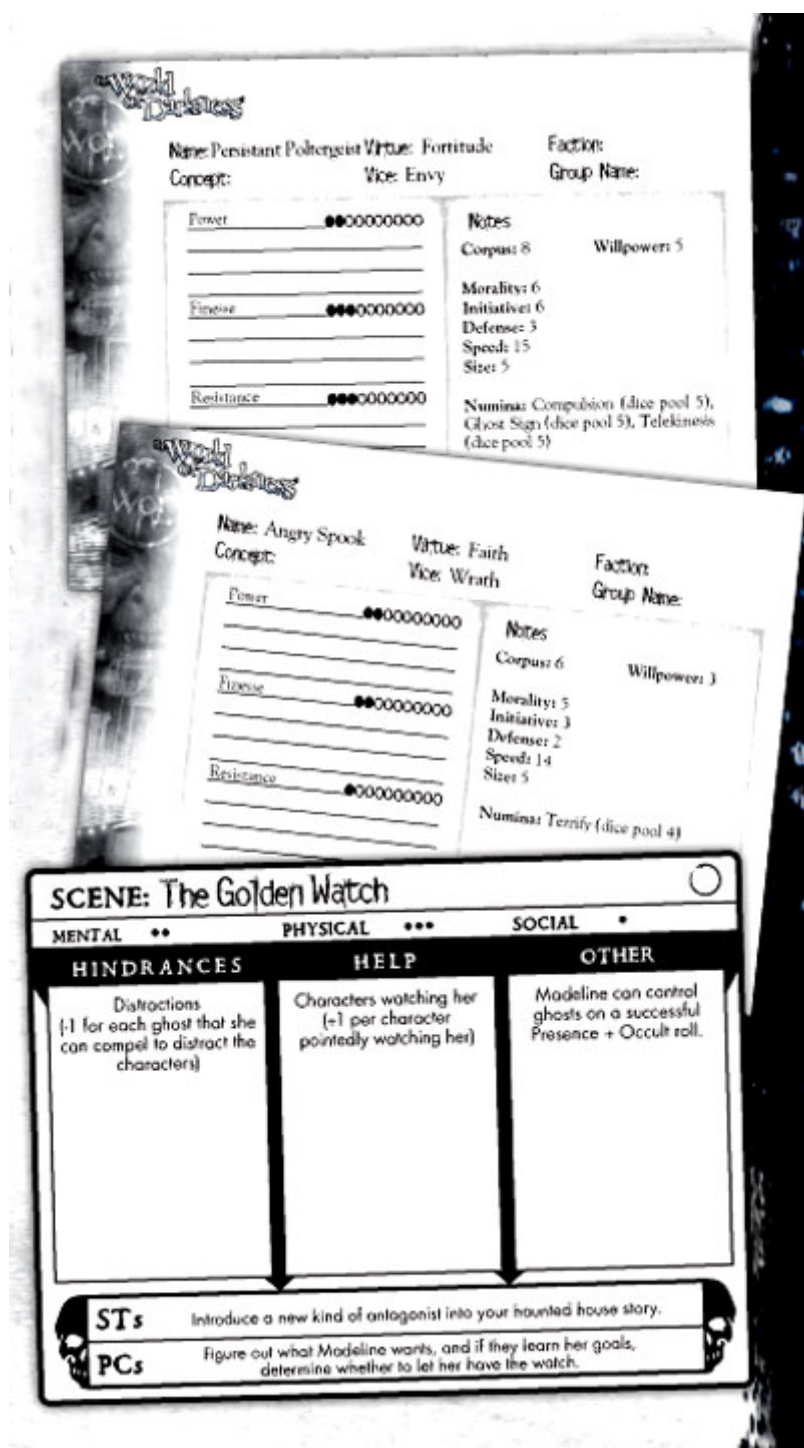
Madeline has a specific goal in the house: find and retrieve a gold pocket watch. It is the anchor for a ghost that has valuable information that Madeline needs.

With it, she can coerce the ghost into doing as she wishes. At first glance, the watch is just another trinket among those in the library. It has no value to the characters, unless they can somehow determine what ghost is using it as an anchor and attempt to extract their own information from it. But determining that ghost might be difficult, unless they can convince Madeline to tell them. If they intimidate her into revealing the information, the prideful young woman is just as likely to feed them misinformation as tell the truth. Due to her special status as a human bound to a more powerful creature, she's also more likely to be arrogant with the characters. Madeline has compelled the ghosts to manifest and distract the characters so that she can steal the pocket watch unnoticed. If the characters aren't giving her the time to do so, she'll compel her dead companions to create the distraction she needs.

You have a variety of goals you can achieve with this scene. Madeline's gaining the pocket watch could lead to future conflicts with her, in search of more information she may be hoarding. She could also develop a more personal interest in the characters, depending on the confrontation.

Should the characters not see her swipe the watch, then she might have a passing interest in them. If they see her take the watch, but after some conversation let her keep it, then she will feel as though she owes them, and would be willing to return the favor later. If they cross her and deprive her of the watch, they will earn a powerful enemy.

If she loses her chance at the watch, she'll likely be very angry with the characters and may seek revenge. Worse, she'll need to reclaim the watch from them later, so it will be nearly impossible for the characters to avoid encountering her again. Given her abilities with ghosts, Madeline can make life hard for anyone who crosses her. Even characters who are well-prepared against ghosts and spirits will find a determined onslaught from many ghosts to be too much to handle.



Character Goals:

Figure out what Madeline wants, and if they learn her goals, determine whether to let her have the watch.

Actions:

Madeline has a specific goal in the house; find and retrieve a gold pocket watch. The watch itself isn't that valuable, though it is an antique.

While the characters may not instantly attack Madeline, they are likely to be suspicious of her. If they don't jump her for just being in the wrong place at the wrong time, they might get to see her make her attempt for the watch.

Catching Her Red-Handed

- **Dice Pool:** Wits + Composure versus Madeline's Dexterity + Larceny (dice pool 5)
- **Hindrances:** Distractions (-1 for each ghost that she can compel to distract the characters)
- **Help:** Characters watching her (+1 per character pointedly watching her)

Roll Results:

- **Dramatic Failure:** Madeline picks up the watch and hides it on her person where it won't easily be found on a search.
- **Failure:** Madeline successfully picks up the watch and hides it in a pocket.
- **Success:** Madeline fails to get the watch without being seen by the characters.
- **Exceptional Success:** Madeline drops the watch as she tries to pilfer it, causing it to land close to one of the characters.

Consequences:

This scene will determine what Madeline's feelings for the characters are when it is done. If she is befriended and treated well, she will work with the characters after this encounter. Tricking or thwarting her will create a formidable enemy, one who can get ghosts to do her bidding.

What information Madeline is seeking by obtain could have a direct impact on the characters themselves. One of them might be linked to this ghost, who may have been a relative or childhood friend. It could be the ghost of an enemy who has dirt on the characters. Even if the ghost's identity doesn't relate to the characters directly, they may have attracted the attention of Madeline or some of her dead friends. The results may vary based on the needs of your story or chronicle.