

MIDNIGHT FEAST

by Alicia Furness

Complexity: 4

Tone: PG



PRESENTING THE MYSTERY

The alley and park behind the Paranormal Inc. headquarters have recently become a boisterous affair. The community has started to complain, but no one has yet been able to identify the source of the racket. It sounds like a band of raccoons and their minions raid the garbage cans at night, but no one has seen anything at this point.

A concerned group of citizens approached some of the higher-end paranormal investigators but cannot get anyone to take the case seriously. When they found someone in the community who had a connection with Paranormal Inc., they started a campaign to get them to take the case.

Establishing Question: One of you has a crappy apartment that overlooks the noisy alley. Why did you hesitate to bring this case to Paranormal Inc.?

Goal: Identify the ghosts and find a way to help them move on, either to the next world or simply to another part of town.

You begin this mystery around dinnertime on the balcony of the crappy apartment one of you lives in, which overlooks the alley in question.



LOCATION PROMPTS (HEARTS)

A FIRE ESCAPE

This rickety old fire escape is definitely not up to code. Some of it is actually made of wood, which makes it a useless fire escape. A few levels have potted plants or ashtrays, and one is decorated with fairy lights.

Paint the Scene: *As you look around the fire escape, what tells you that urban creatures use it as a highway to access the various floors of the building? Which one of you ventures onto the fire escape first?*

2 THE DUMPSTER

You find a large dumpster for the apartment buildings missing half of its lid. Strange stains speckle the sides. Smells waft as the wind blows, and a line of ants marches to and from the dumpster carrying the treasures they have found in the garbage.

Paint the Scene: *What is the most potent smell that emanates from this dumpster? What tips you off that the stains might be occult symbols?*

3 RESTAURANT BACK ENTRANCE

A rusty screen door fails to mute the sounds of a large kitchen inside. Pots bang, people shout, and delicious smells waft through the mesh door covering.

Paint the Scene: *What kind of restaurant is this? How can you tell? Why have you never eaten here before?*



4 BALCONY GARDEN

A small balcony garden overflows with potted herbs and vegetables. A few gardening tools and a sun hat rest on a small bistro table.

Paint the Scene: *What about this garden tells you that the person who cares for it is lonely?*

5 EXTRADIMENSIONAL SEWER GRATE

Low to the ground, a seemingly normal sewer grate gives off a strange heat and hum as you approach. A small rodent not native to this urban centre scurries out and disappears into a hole in the wall across the way.

Paint the Scene: *As you peer into the sewer grate, what do you see that shocks you?*

6 A CRACK BETWEEN BUILDINGS

Cobwebs and leaf litter fill a small gap between two buildings in the alley. The gap is just large enough that you might fit, but you will probably get stuck. Perhaps just big enough for a child?

Paint the Scene: *What catches your eye a few feet inside the gap, just out of reach? Which one of you feels compelled to try to get it out, and why?*

7 IRON GATE

A large, ornate iron gate with a rusty lock looks distinctly out of place against the rest of the alley. The gate is likely a remnant of historic buildings that stood here before modernization efforts in this area of the city.

Paint the Scene: *In what way is the gate inconvenient to your investigation?*



8 NEIGHBOURHOOD LIBRARY

A small DIY community library was once housed in a beautifully constructed wooden box with glass doors. Now, one door is missing, there's a hole in the roof, and a creature has made a nest inside it. Rain has waterlogged several of the books and magazines inside.

Paint the Scene: *What book has multiple copies in this library? What rare find do you discover and take?*

9 MAKESHIFT PLAYGROUND

Someone cleared a spot for a makeshift playground with hopscotch created with chalk, some old tires, and a semi-deflated soccer ball on a string hanging from a crossbar.

Paint the Scene: *What evidence do you see that this is a well-loved play spot for local children despite being roughly constructed?*

10 COLLAPSING WALL

A pile of old bricks and crumbling drywall gives way to a hole in a building. Bits of rebar and metal stick out, making it tricky but not impossible to navigate. Inside, complete darkness makes navigation nearly impossible.

Paint the Scene: *What alluring smell wafts from beyond this collapsing wall that pulls you to investigate? Why does it leave you feeling unnerved?*



PARANORMAL EVENT PROMPTS (DIAMONDS)

- A**
- *A pile of ethereal rats escape from a tipped-over garbage can before disappearing.*
 - *You hear the constant sound of tiny teeth on metal.*
 - *You smell the scent of rot that follows you wherever you go.*

- 2**
- *Shiny eyes hypnotize you from the darkness.*
 - *You have the sudden feeling of bugs crawling all over your skin.*
 - *You feel the overwhelming sense that you must protect your brood of babies.*

- 3**
- *A pack of aggressive diving birds appear.*
 - *You have a sudden urge to eat from the garbage cans.*
 - *You hear an eerie corvid caw every three minutes and 33 seconds.*

- 4**
- *An avalanche of raccoons appears.*
 - *A one-eyed crow speaks to you in Latin.*
 - *A family of mice dressed like farmers skitters nearby.*



- 5**
- A piece of garbage gets closer to you each time you look at it.
 - Strange ectoplasm drips into a sewer grate.
 - A broken boombox broadcasts the words “we are here” on a loop.

- 6**
- A ghostly apparition phases in and out of view as it paces between the two alley walls.
 - Old newspapers fold themselves into the shape of pigeons and begin flying around.
 - A grate backs up, gurgling rancid water and the bones of small creatures around your feet as it rapidly fills the alley.

- 7**
- You feel a dangerously oppressive heat that you cannot escape.
 - Cage-like bars burst from the ground, trapping you in your location.
 - Plants in pots grow rapidly and begin to entangle you.

- 8**
- A cockroach sits on your shoulder and whispers your deepest fears. It reappears each time you brush it away.
 - A garbage can sprouts eight hairy spider-like legs and aggressively moves towards you.
 - The walls begin to inch closer together.



- 9**
- Someone begins to cough up a variety of feathers.
 - Your arms begin transforming into massive bird wings.
 - Day rapidly turns to night or night rapidly turns to day.

- 10**
- A literal tornado of bats rips through the alley.
 - A noxious gas creeps slowly along the alley, causing random items and creatures to disappear.
 - You see a sign that reads “Ghosts Anonymous Meeting this way.” When you read it again, it’s an old political campaign sign.



NPC PROMPTS (SPADES)

A AGATHA CHEN, THE REBEL CHILD

Chubby. Bubblegum-snapping. Rebel without a cause. Agatha Chen is the coolest girl on the block, and she knows it. Her strong anti-authoritarian vibes are intimidating even to adults.

Quote: “Yeah, the cops were poking around back here asking us kids questions the other day. I guess they figured we were the disturbance or whatever, and they thought they could push us around. Let me tell you, they thought wrong.”

2 HECTOR FRANZ, THE OBSERVER

Frail. Timid. Comically oversized glasses. Hector has lived in an apartment overlooking this alley for more than two decades. There isn't anything that goes on in the alley that he doesn't know about, mostly because he watches intently. Some people think Hector is creepy, but he's (mostly) harmless and full of secrets.

Quote: “People really need to pay attention to things more. They miss things. Not like me. I see everything. Hear everything.”

3 JANE DOE, THE FRIENDLY LOCAL GHOST

Chaotic. Ethereal. Kind of a stoner. Jane Doe has been haunting this alley for a few years. They appeared one day and don't know who they are or where they came from. They try to be helpful, but they usually aren't.

Quote: No way, folks, you think I am going to spill the deets on my ghost siblings? Undead solidarity, bros... actually, the noise is from the kids. Yeah, that's it. The kids...”



4 **JAMES FRASER, THE RETIRED INVESTIGATOR**

Towering. Kind-hearted. Perpetually exhausted. James is a retired paranormal investigator who spent the bulk of his career working for Doormart after they bought out his small investigation firm. He lives in a small apartment that overlooks the alley. Bitter about the state of the world, James prefers to eschew ghosts altogether, but he can be convinced to share his expertise for the right price or the right cause.

Quote: *"I used to love this life. The mystery. The excitement. I felt like I was helping people. Then those bastards got into the game and cared more about making a buck than doing good, and they don't even do a good job! There're unhappy ghosts everywhere these days."*

5 **JUNE HARLOW, THE GARBAGE COLLECTOR**

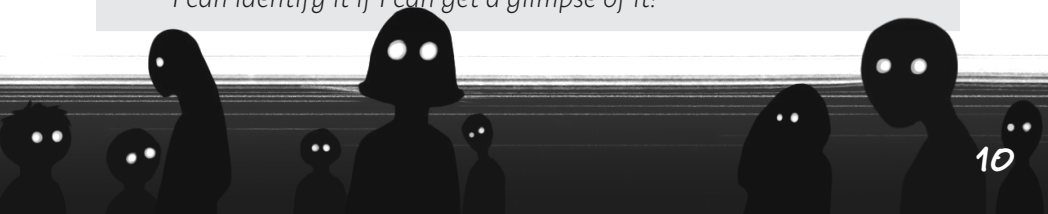
Boisterous. Friendly. Ripped. June has been this area's garbage collector for about five years. She is mainly responsible for picking up the large apartment dumpsters and depositing their contents at the city dump. She often plays games with the children in the alley when she comes to empty the dumpster.

Quote: *"You find so many interesting things in the trash. Sometimes I just take things home instead of taking them to the dump. Or I'll bring things here to the children for their playground. Those tires? I brought those here!"*

6 **RUTH O'HALLORAN, THE AMATEUR BIRDER**

Grey-haired. Warm. Excitable. Ruth is the head of the local urban bird-watching group for seniors. She has been coming to the alley for the past three days to observe. She is carrying binoculars, a heavy satchel full of bird books, and birdseed falls from her pocket as she moves.

Quote: *"Someone told me that they saw something rare and unusual here, but they couldn't make out what it was. I am certain I can identify it if I can get a glimpse of it!"*



7 **DIGBY LACROIX JR., THE PEST REMOVAL SPECIALIST**

All the plaid. Bright red hair. Calm demeanour. Digby is an employee of GET IT OUT, a local pest control company. He hates his job, and it's rumoured that he prefers relocating creatures over exterminating them.

Quote: *It's just so sad, ya know? We did this to them. We took away all their land and their homes, and now we complain when they eat our garbage and sleep in our buildings. It's not right. The little fellas got rights, too, yeah?*

8 **JOEY JACKSON, THE DELIVERY DRIVER**

Bangs in his eyes. Carries a backpack with high school textbooks. Ripped jeans. Joey is the teenage delivery driver who brings fresh produce to the restaurant. When their van pulls into the alley, the children shout, "watch out for crazy Joey!" as they scatter out of the way.

Quote: *I see weird stuff all the time. This whole job is weird. But my dad says I have to pay for my own guitar, and my girlfriend has expensive tastes. Last week she made me buy her a necklace with a crow's skull on it! Like an actual real skull! That's whack, yo."*

9 **MORGAN PEEBLES, THE SCOUT TROOP LEADER**

Imposing. Brawny. Entomologist. Morgan supervises her scouts as they search for bugs in the alley to earn merit badges. Morgan is extremely passionate about bugs.

Quote: *I love instilling respect for bugs in youth. Bugs are a vital part of our ecosystem, I always say! But people don't respect them. They think they are creepy, well you know what? I think humans are creepy! Oh, so sorry, I didn't mean that. I just love bugs so much."*



10 CHARLIE, THE STRAY CAT

Silly. Grey. Well-fed. Charlie is the local stray and most of the people who live and work around the alley take care of him. He is friendly and likes to rub himself around your legs before flopping over for belly rubs as a greeting. Sometimes he play-fights with your feet. Charlie tries, often unsuccessfully, to befriend any birds that enter the alley.

Quote: "Prrrrrrrrrrrrr.....meow.....prrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr."



CLUE PROMPTS (CLUBS)

- A** • An unusual shrine to the recently deceased
 - An empty box of rodent poison
 - An abandoned nest of baby mice
- 2** • A small pile of regurgitated bones
 - A trail of birdseed
 - A sopping wet guide to urban wildlife
- 3** • Tiny scratch marks in the foundation of a building
 - Holes chewed in plastic garbage cans
 - Tire marks from a rapid exit
- 4** • A hastily discarded slingshot
 - Two small grungy black feathers
 - Evidence of a recent dumpster fire
- 5** • A pile of clothes that appear to be an abandoned superhero costume
 - A broken birdcage
 - The trash from a local greasy spoon restaurant



- 6**
- A sewer cover left askew
 - A letter to local animal control
 - Pages torn from a book about communicating with non-human spirits with notes in the margins
- 7**
- An overdue bill from a pest control company
 - An intricate maze of small tunnels
 - Half-eaten vegetables from a rooftop garden
- 8**
- Netting around a balcony garden with a hole chewed through it
 - Electrical wires snaking up a brick wall, recently chewed through
 - An old box with the words “Free to Good Home” written in marker
- 9**
- A nest fallen from a fire escape
 - A fence with a hole in it
 - Notes from a child's science project about egg incubation
- 10**
- A pamphlet about the dangers of keeping raccoons as pets
 - A bag of old cat food with kibble spilling everywhere.
 - A flyer from a recent election promising to “clean up the city”

