

Well Haunted

Let me paint you a picture. Life seems fine and though it may not be your best of days, it's certainly no bitch. Night falls and suddenly you find that the ground you happen to be standing on is some sort of magnet for ghosts. This ground can be anything, a gas station, nightclub, or even your own kitchen (trust me on this one). *These aren't just any ghosts but real people from your past.*

Confidentially, I call them "ghosts" because they are people I have cared for deeply but who chose to evacuate from my life, move on, and pass me by, whatever. It's when they show up for no good reason, long after you personally declare them legally dead, that these very real humans attain their ethereal status. You're being haunted, visited from beyond. Ghosts.

So there you are and life seems fine, but then without the slightest warning... the spirit parade begins. Whether it's a Mr. or a Ms., the shock and crushing wave of feeling is all the same. It buries you up to your neck and they get to watch. If you had even a year's worth of abandonment by this person, you've probably had plenty of time to think up something awful to say. A barrage of cute insults and comebacks to counter with sit quietly, waiting in your pocket. The irony being, you had given them up as lost by now and figured you'd never have to use them.

Cold War relics.

Worst case scenario: they appear magically in front of you, out of thin air. Ghosts don't appear in kitchens huh? I saw one. I was getting water from the fridge and when I turned around, she was there. We are talking about four or five months of *no contact*. I had loved this one a lot too. That's what creates the most powerful ones. It wasn't that a catastrophe happened to keep us from talking, it was just that neither bothered to try. I sank and she just kept on swimming. Now though, she was going to be the bad guy and I was going to prove it with logic most skillful, backed up by the malice only a jilted lover could provide. But everyone knows: *you can't hurt ghosts.*

I was totally disarmed. There was no great battle, no one-sided tongue lashing either. This nasty "turn around type" surprise scrambled my brain in the time it took for me to swallow. I hadn't seen her since she had decided to leave me. In sector G-259 something, the ex-girlfriend department of my brain (an old dusty place in the basement), the harried clerk just grabbed the first stack of files with her name that he could find and sent them on to the main office. The stack didn't contain the launch codes for the insults. In it, instead, were memories. Those memories had the word KEEP stamped on them, containing basically whatever happy memories I had managed to salvage from the anger stage. There were even a few that I could never throw away. All I could be was passive; I couldn't hurt her with my words, couldn't attack the co-creator of those memories. I couldn't.

When you factor in love, the Don of the emotional crime family, the other side of any equation seems to be reduced to zero by its magnitude. *This is a thesis I'm working on.* I've been hard at this one for more years than ten. Though I may be lying. My anger and hate for her treatment was tempered by the fact that she had disappeared and

reappeared so suddenly, all I could remember was love. The shock as I said had also done its bit of work.

I was defenseless but I was lucky. She had come in peace to see how I was; it was all about good intentions. A last check-up to make sure the “separation surgery” healed in a fair way. I didn’t attack and she was made to comfortable. I was a good post-op patient. In so far as ghosts go, she haunted me well that late afternoon for at least two hours. There were some tears from her and some heavy sighs from me. I asked her to stay, I was being silly. Then she disappeared out my door. Ghosts use doors sometimes. That was a long time ago, seems like it anyway. I wonder if she will haunt me again someday. I wonder if she will be as powerful.
I’ve seen a lot of ghosts.

