

Readers of the Perfectly Proper Paranormal Museum series are already acquainted with Herb Linden, paranormal collector. He's been trying to unload 20th-century occultist, Dion Fortune's scrying mirror since book one. If you're unfamiliar with scrying mirrors, they typically have a black surface, so the magician can "get lost" in the mirror to enter trances, see visions, and even astral project to far-off places. Scrying mirrors, however, aren't really what this story is about. I just feel compelled to explain occult oddities...

Would You Like to Buy the Scrying Mirror of Famed Occultist, Dion Fortune?

Oh, so you don't believe in scrying mirrors, Madam? I suppose you don't believe in ghosts either? Or shadow people? Why, let me tell you, they don't just haunt gothic mansions. No—

Is that a siren? Excuse me, let me check the window. It's nothing you, understand, I simply don't care for police. Now, where was I?

Ah, yes. An apartment in Davis. This was back in the day, when Davis was a real agricultural town. Not like now, with its Starbucks and bike lanes.

It wasn't much of an apartment. In fact, now I'd call it a dump, but we were in college, and our standards were low. I was never able to determine its history, but it couldn't have had a long one. It wasn't more than twenty years old when we moved in, that I do know.

It was odd from the start. My roommate and I frequently saw strange shadows climbing the stairs, long, wavering forms with skeletal fingers. But we pretended it was nothing. There were trees outside, you see, and shadows and lighting can be tricky.

One evening—it was October, not that that matters—I was alone in the apartment. I'd just stepped from the shower, a towel around my waist. The mirror was steamed, and the door was closed, and the bathroom was exactly what you'd expect of that era.

I was alone, did I mention that? Yes, I was definitely alone. But as I shaved, out of the corner of my eyes I noticed movement at the bottom of the door. I started, thinking it was a rodent of some sort. Instead, a small, pale hand reached beneath the door.

It held a hand mirror with pink plastic edges, an ordinary mirror, perhaps for a young girl.

This was quite impossible, you understand. I attempted the feat later, and not even a child could slide their hand beneath that door. But it wasn't the impossibility that paralyzed me with fear. It was the cold chill that slid beneath the door with that tiny hand.

I leapt atop the commode and crouched there until I heard a door opening downstairs – my roommate returning from class.

That evening, as he carved pumpkins in the cramped kitchen, he laughed as I related the story. Could you blame him? I see the look in *your* eyes. And the hand mirror had disappeared as if it had never existed. Of course, later I came to understand it was an ectoplasmic emanation, which is why...

Ah. I see you're not impressed by ectoplasm either.

I finished telling my roommate about the ghostly hand beneath the bathroom door. He finished carving. My roommate, clearly skeptical, leaned against the stove and wiped his hands with a dish towel. And at that moment, an inexplicable shadow moved swiftly across the card table he'd been working at and sent the pumpkin rolling. Stunned, all we could do was watch as the jack o'lantern spun across the table and crashed to the linoleum floor.

Ghosts, shadow people, whatever was occurring, that apartment was haunted. We moved as soon as we could without losing our deposit. He got a new roommate. I moved in with Mother. But that experience started my career as a paranormal collector.

Now, about Dion's scrying mirror...

Author's Note:

Everything ghostly that happened in the above story really happened, it just didn't happen to fictional character, Herb Linden. It happened to one of my sisters. Like Maddie in the Paranormal Museum series, she still doesn't believe in ghosts. But she admits that apartment was haunted.

Damsel in a Dress, book 5 in the Paranormal Museum Mysteries

Bridesmaid duties can be deadly...

Maddie Kosloski has more than wedding cake on her plate. She's managing her paranormal museum, helping her best friend Adele with wedding plans, and trying to prove that Adele's vintage wedding dress is most definitely not haunted.

But when a bridesmaid turns up murdered, Maddie has to solve the crime to save the wedding. As her bouquet of suspects grows, and everyone's alibis have the ring of truth, Maddie begins to doubt this wedding will go off without a hitch.

If you love laugh-out-loud mysteries, witty heroines, and a touch of the paranormal, you'll love *Damsel in a Dress*, book 5 in the Perfectly Proper Paranormal Museum series of novels. Read this twisty cozy mystery today!

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