



# **Holy Ghosts: Or, How a (Not So) Good Catholic Boy Became a Believer in Things That Go Bump in the Night**

*Gary Jansen*

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**In this remarkable true story, the haunting of a Long Island household forces a respected writer and editor to reevaluate the mysteries of life and death as he struggles with the frightening truths of his childhood home and his town's past.**

Growing up in Rockville Center, Long Island, Gary Jansen never believed in ghosts. His mother—a devoutly Catholic woman with a keen sense for the uncanny—claimed that their family house was haunted. But Jansen never found anything inexplicable in how their doorbell would sometimes ring of its own accord; or in the mysterious sounds of footsteps or breaking glass that occasionally would fill their home; or even in his mother's sometimes unsettlingly accurate visions of future events and tragedies. Though he once experienced a supernatural encounter in a Prague church as a young man, Jansen grew up into a rationalist, as well as a noted writer and editor.

Decades later, in 2001, Jansen moved back into the very same house where he had once grown up to raise a family with his wife. One day in 2007, he encountered a strange physical sensation in his toddler son's bedroom:

*As I reached into his dresser drawer, I felt something very strange behind me. Startled, I quickly turned around, but there was nothing there. I shrugged it off, grabbed the socks and, as I was walking to the doorway, experienced an odd phenomenon—sort of like an electrical hand rubbing the length of my back. I stopped and stood transfixed. "What the hell is that?" I said to myself. The pressure then seemed to break apart and, for a brief moment, I felt like I had a million little bugs crawling all over my back. Within seconds, however, the sensation was gone.*

This became the first step in uncovering a frightening, fullblown haunting in his home—a phenomenon that lasted an entire year and eventually included unveiling the identities of the spirits who occupied his house; discovering the chilling story of a century-old murder in his hometown; encountering mind-boggling coincidences between local history and events in his own family; and finally engaging in a climactic exorcism with the help of Mary Ann Winkowski, the real-life inspiration for TV's *The Ghost Whisperer*. The events of that year—in which Jansen's family was terrified of and terrorized by ghosts in their own home—forever changed how he viewed the mysteries of life and death.

*Holy Ghosts* is not only a gripping true-life ghost story but a funny and touching memoir, as well as a meditation on the relationship between religion and the paranormal, which are often considered at odds with each other but which the author shows are intimately linked.

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