
REMINISCENCE

By

Janet A. Maltry

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It was one of those cool November nights, and a friend was visiting from Alaska. Viki had been a Resident Assistant in Potter Hall the same time I was, Mary Anne was the Director, and Parsley was a night clerk. We had gotten together to catch up on all the old news, but as the evening wore on, we got to talking about the old days when we were all together in Potter. We started telling our old war stories and reminiscing about the strange and unusual people that passed through the hallowed halls on the hill. Soon we got to wondering about "Casperina" ^{to} our friendly ghost, about where she lived now, and about who kept her company now that we were all gone. Then naturally we progressed to reviving the experiences we had in Potter with Casperina.

Viki started out with her experiences. She was a R.A. in the basement and lived next to the room where the girl had committed suicide about four years earlier *in 1971*. One ^(fo) the first nights we were in the building, she woke up when she felt a presence in the room. She became alarmed when she opened her eyes and saw a female figure sitting next to her on the bed. This happened before the building opened to students and Viki never slept alone in the room

until everyone had moved in. Later that semester, she was working a weekend night, which were always boring in Potter Hall, when she had another experience. Viki was quite alone in the lobby and she was kind of bored so she started walking around. She was in the middle of the lobby when she heard someone putting coins in the candy machine, which was hidden from her view. She had not heard anyone come in the lobby, so she walked around to where the machine was, but no one was there, and she would have seen them if they had left the room. Then she heard the sound of money being dropped in the slot, but no one was standing there. Those were her disturbing experiences which we usually attribute to the suicide victim.

As a substitute night clerk, I also had an unusual experience during the late shift. It was about one o'clock in the morning, and I was doing some studying when I heard someone at the door. Our room keys fit in the front door, and when inserted, it made a distinct sound. I heard that sound twice, but each time I looked to see who was there, no one was. The third time I heard the sound, it was followed by the sound of footsteps across the linoleum floor, and where the carpet began, the footsteps stopped. Then the floorboards in front of the desk started creaking like they do when someone walks by. I looked around in case someone was elsewhere in the lobby and I had missed them, but no one was anywhere around.

Parsley said that kind of thing happened all the time

when she was working. She said Casperina always had trouble getting her key in the door, was always hungry, and did all the crazy things just to bug her. The night that I worked, I was filling in for Parsley, and we believe that Casperina had come to visit Parsley as usual. One night when Parsley worked, she had a very disconcerting experience. Since she worked late, Pars had the job of being our resident sign-maker, and during one of these sessions Casperina thought she would be real cute, and since the drawer was open, she made everything in the drawer start jumping up and down. Nothing on the desk moved, just everything in the drawer. Parsley has always considered this her worse encounter, to the point where she does not talk about it.

Mary Anne on the other hand lived in Potter alone during holidays and in the summer months. Her encounters with Casperina lead one to vow never to live in a building alone. The Director's apartment had two doors to it, but one was always locked and never used. One day the cat's hair stood on end, and the locked door swung open. The building was closed for the summer, the lock was still in position, and no one was in the hall. During one Christmas holiday, Mary Anne and her mother were in the building alone, and suddenly they heard a stereo start blaring. When they investigated, the room door was locked and shut, and no one was in Potter. No one had a key, and no one was there. They never saw anyone when they heard footsteps walking

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down the hall to the shower, when they heard the shower door open or when they experienced any of the other strange noises.

Other residents felt a very tense feeling one night when they began to play with a Ouija Board. Parsley was a witness as one guy and two girls "contacted" the other world. They contacted one spirit who was a female from the 1700's, and she was looking for her children. But they could not get much else from this woman so they went on to the next "visitor". This was a man from the 1800's and he was just passing through the area. Finally, these students contacted the girl who had committed suicide. They found out the girl's name, and she said she had been very lonely when she died. The next day the people playing with the board asked one of the housekeepers what the suicide victim's name was and it was the name they had been given the night before. Needless to say, these people did not touch a Ouija Board for a long time.

These stories are true and as close as I could remember them. This type of story telling gathering seemed to be the thing to do on a dark, cool, rainy night. It was a way

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of reliving our similar lifestyle and experiences. It was something that kept us bonded to a certain time when we were good, close friends doing the same thing, and it may be one of the few things that we have left in common after living apart. As often happens, close friends who once had everything in common, graduate, move apart and experience different things. By talking about our past encounters and life with Casperina, we are reliving our old ties and trying to have something that we are all familiar with to discuss and laugh about. It is also almost a desire to scare each other all over again, and revive our forgotten fears.