

**From Ripon (CA) to Salem (MA), Idaho to South Carolina
Americans Are Worried about Spectral Invasions
More-or-Less Gripping New Teen/Grown-up Novel
Explores The World of Ghosts, Orbs, and Weirdness (and Takes No Sides)**

Balona, California's inimitable private investigator in self-training, malaprop-prone Joseph Oliver Kuhl, is recovering from a headache. Evil little brother Richie has assured Joe that the ache will be alleviated by the aspirins Richie eagerly provides. Having consumed the aspirins, Joe is soon commanded by a beautiful semi-transparent young woman to investigate local spectral phenomena. Assisted by Cousin Zack and hampered by journalist Patella Sackworth, Joe's search includes a hazardous ascent of Balona's famous water tower, a barbecue with unfamiliar meat and drink, a syzygy, an earthquake, and an explosive trip to the cemetery. Will the young researcher become another victim of confused orbs, ravenous ghosts, and unscrupulous poltergeists?

Here's an excerpt:

There was another huge groan from newspaper reporter Michael Flitts sixty feet above us on the tower. "There's somebody up here with a red baseball cap on," shouted Mr. Flitts. "He doesn't have any body, just a head that keeps bobbing back and forth, back and forth. I think I'm gonna be sick."

At that news we all stepped back another ten feet or so.

It suddenly occurred that there was a spectral phenomena up there. Nobody was willing to go up there and help Mr. Michael Flitts, famous journalist. It would take the Fire Brigade a long time to get here. And nobody had gone to report a need yet.

I popped another aspirin to take off the strain. Should I remove my Adidases? It seemed only a few minutes ago that I narrowly escaped becoming a blob on the Front Street pavement. Actually, it was only minutes ago that I nearly fell from Mr. D. H. Carp's roof. Should I play hazard with my life again, simply to help out a famous journalist in desperate need?

Of course I must pursue my mission. I removed my Adidases and, barefooted (being suave, I don't wear socks), I approached the ladder.

"Way to go, Joe!" went Zack.

"He's not such a coward after all," went Gussi.

"Well, we'll see," went Patella.

Jonathan Pearce, the author of *Community Spirits* as well as the new historical fiction work, *Nobody's Fault*, has written many books, most of them set in the fictional northern California town of Balona. Another Pearce work of historical fiction, *The Far Side of the Moon*, receives praise from *VOYA*, *Midwest Book Review*, the California Library Association, the Placerville (CA) *Mountain Democrat*, and others. Pearce's *John-Browne's Body & Sole*, a coming-of-age novel narrated by a talented 13-year-old youth, is cited by *Booklist* and others. Pearce's works are studied in middle school and high school English and social studies classes. An acknowledged expert on language acquisition, linguistics, school district politics, and the reading habits of teachers, the author is now a part-time member of the teacher education staff of California State University, Stanislaus. He is a well-received presenter at conferences of such professional organizations as the National Council of Teachers of English, the International Reading Association, and the American Orthopsychiatric Association.

Journalists: For interviews and review copies: Toll-free 1-877-597-6385 or JonRiis@balona.com

Summary: Community Spirits, Fiction/Ghost (Young Adult).

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