

**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 sox), 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.