



## October Inspiration... Tales from the Crypt

Halloween and Day of the Dead - this is the time of year for all things **creepy**. Believe it or not, we interior designers aren't exempt from the macabre or the unexplainable. In fact, given that our work often revolves around houses that often fail feng shui tests and have formally been occupied by unknown people - (a lot of whom are dead), it only makes sense that we might be privy to a scary tale or two. There are many stories from the design crypt. Here are just a few of them.



### The Boy on the Brass Charger

A few years ago, I received a call from a client who wanted to know where we purchased the brass charger that hung over the sofa in their family room.

Strange things were happening in that family room. Their dog would whimper when he was in the room and before he would step over the threshold, he would bark incessantly at the wall above the sofa where a large charger hung. Their baby had similar reactions and between the hysterics of both the baby and the dog, they were convinced that there was something amiss with the charger.

The wife called me as she knew that we purchased most of the accessories in that room, and wanted to know if it came from Showroom X. I have to admit the first thought that passed through my mind was...are we liable for an accessory if it is possessed? If so, would the dealer take it back? I have to admit that was one scenario my office hadn't been through before.

The situation continued and after a few days our clients did what any other family in their situation would do - they called in a **ghost buster**.

A few days later, our client called to let us know the results of the clearing. First of all, I was happy to find out that we did not purchase the charger, rather, our client purchased it on a trip to Bhutan a few years before (Whew! That was a relief!).

The medium found a small Asian boy who was clinging to the charger and was unable to release it to move on. After the boy was released, things returned to normal.

Baby and dog were once again playing happily in their respective family room corners.



### The Tale of the Creepy Cottage

Designer friends of my husband and me bought a small house in Dutchess County, New York. This house was the quintessential charmer, complete with shutters, a white picket fence, and even a grape arbor. As "cute" as it was, for some reason, I always got a **creepy** feeling when I pulled into the drive.

The shingles had been painted a dark chocolate brown which I thought was an odd choice for such a house and so I attributed my reaction to the fact that it was dark and dreary. However, even with its chic furnishings and accessories, smartly decorated and appointed rooms, when I was inside the house, I would get a sinking feeling that never completely went away.



Fast forward to a dinner party my husband and I attended that was given by our friends who owned the house. At that dinner, libations flowed, so in the interest of safety first, we decided to spend the night. We slept in a small guest room on the first floor. The room was very narrow, so a double bed would fit only when pushed against one of the long walls. I quickly called the "wall side". I didn't want to sleep on the outside of the bed in case there were any things that went "bump in the night".

There may not have been anything that "bumped" in the night, but there was a strange occurrence. Sometime around 3:00 AM, I awoke with the distinct feeling of a heavy weight pressing on my legs. It was so heavy I couldn't move - not my legs, or arms or hands. I also couldn't scream because as hard as I tried, my mouth would open but nothing would come out - not a peep. It was terrifying.

After what seemed like an eternity, but what was probably only about 3 minutes, the weight on my body miraculously lifted. I could then move but I was still so terror stricken that even if I could speak, I don't think I would have been able to string a sentence together. I closed my eyes and after some time passed, I went back to sleep.

What I discovered the next morning was this: prior to my friends moving in, an old woman lived in the house with a menagerie of at least 20 dogs and cats. When a neighbor noticed he hadn't seen much movement around the house for quite some time, he checked in and found the old woman and her dogs and cats all dead in the downstairs guest room! How creepy is that?

### The Case of the Crashing Chandelier

It was the beginning of a project. An old house was to be leveled and a new one built in its place. The architect had designed the footprint and it would soon be time to dig the foundation.

In order to come up with the perfect placement for their new home, our clients hired a feng shui consultant to locate the chi of their site. They didn't hire just any feng shui consultant, they hired a feng shui master who, with his compass and bagua, sited many hotels the world over in order to attract the most auspicious energy to a building.

The clients' first meeting with their consultant took place in the original house which at that time had not been torn down. Although all the furniture was gone, the previous owners had left a few light fixtures and window treatments.

When the consultant arrived, he climbed the steps, found the door bell and pressed the button. At that very same instant, the dining room chandelier that was still hanging in the dining room came **crashing** down and scattered in hundreds of pieces across the floor.

As you can imagine, there was a bit of confusion inside the house as our clients tried to figure out what the heck just happened. When they finally opened the door, the feng shui master smiled and said, "Don't be alarmed, things like this happen frequently when I arrive". It was the beginning of a beautiful relationship.



As you can see, Interior Design is not for the faint of heart, or for disbelievers and scaredy cats. We never know what strange things we might find or stumble across, and the more we hone our intuitive skills, the more open we are to witnessing encounters. We think of it as just one of the many aspects of our job.

**HAPPY HALLOWEEN!**

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