



5 more miniature ghost stories inspired by songs i like

GHOST MUSIC VOL. 2

five more miniature ghost stories
inspired by songs that I like

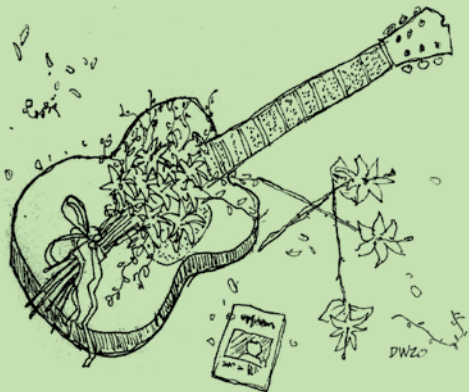
1. Funeral

2. The Roses

3. Glimmer & Aska

4. Frontier

5. Your Company



FUNERAL

Phoebe Bridgers

She woke up drunk in her car, and felt the ghost beside her.

Not a presence. An absence: a black hole where a life used to be.
It ate the light. It sucked the heat from her skin.

She had a gig tomorrow. A funeral. She needed to sleep. She
needed to hide her hangover with makeup and paracetamol. But
there was a ghost in her car and it was swallowing everything.

The beer cans at her feet were empty. She licked the rims just in
case.

Dawn rose, gold and purple. Tomorrow was becoming today.
Her guitar was in the back seat. How early was too early to arrive
at the church?

“I’m doing this for you,” she told the ghost.

Fill the hole with music Plug the absence with song.

She started the car.



THE ROSES

Plum Green

We killed the young man and buried him in the rose garden.

The body would be found eventually, we knew. But it would buy us a few days time. We ate his food. We slept in his bed. We tried on his clothes and laughed at ourselves in the mirror.

On the third day all the roses died.

“It’s a sign,” we said. “Time to go.”

But we needed to pack. We shoved food and jewelry into our satchels. We drank the last of the young man’s wine. Maybe we drank too much. The fire was warm. Our eyes grew heavy.

We woke to the young man standing over us. Roses bound our wrists and ankles.

He held up the shovel we used to bury him, and pressed its blade against our necks.



GLIMMER & ASKA

Kælan Mikla

Witches live in this forest. That's what my sisters told me.

I push through the bracken and branches. I step over logs and stones. The trees block out the sun. All I can smell are pine needles and mud.

And then the whispers start. Softer than the wind. Colder than the darkness.

I keep walking. There are bones in the bracken. Torn clothing hangs from the trees. I see a fire up ahead and push my way towards it.

Witches prowl around the fire, pale as ghosts. Their faces are masked with animal skins. As one, they turn to face me. Their teeth are red. The fire crackles and sparks fly.

Glitter or ashes. Magic or death. The witches will grant me one or grant me the other.

I kneel before them. I wait for them to decide.

FRONTIER

Holly Herndon

The ghost woke in a forest of ash.

System check: casing melted. Radio burnt. Rear leg damaged. Worse: its expansion slot was destroyed beyond repair. The core operating system seemed intact, but its mission programming was gone. It was a general purpose robot without a purpose. A ghost.

It paused, calculating what to do.

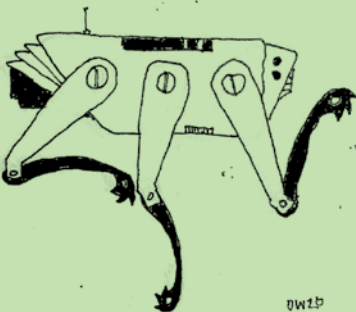
Environment scan. Eucalyptus forest, burnt. Animal carcasses. Ash and embers and smoke. A fire had roared through here and left devastation behind.

But something else, too. The ghost fine-tuned its microphones. There: a cry. An animal—in pain, but alive.

Core procedures activated. *When in doubt, help.*

One of the ghost's legs was broken, but it could walk on the other five.

It rose from the ashes. It set out to do some good.



0w1b



YOUR COMPANY

Charm of Finches

The Diprotodon has been extinct for 25,000 years.
But you can imagine it: a wombat the size of a horse.

Close your eyes. Picture it, tramping through the undergrowth, tearing up shrubs and flowers to eat. You can hear it whuffle and growl. You can imagine its smell: dirt and fur and secrets.

You lie down in front of an open fire.

You let the loneliness shiver through you.

The ghost of a giant wombat curls around you. Its heartbeat thuds through stiff grey fur. You burrow into its muscles and claws like a blanket.

Finally, you feel safe.

ABOUT THE BANDS

Sometimes you hear a song, and you just have draw or write. That's all *Ghost Music* is: me celebrating music I like.

Kælan Mikla are a dark Icelandic synth-punk trio. I saw them play a basement in Glasgow in 2019, and they were spellbinding.

Phoebe Bridgers is an indie singer-songwriter from LA. I became obsessed with her sad, sharp songs over the New Year.

Plum Green plays lush, haunting grunge rock. She's from New Zealand, currently lives in Melbourne, and is a dear friend.

Holly Herndon is an experimental electronic musician. Her last album PROTO mixes traditional Sacred Harp singing with AI. I missed her Melbourne concert because I had labyrinthitis. :(

Charm of Finches are a dream-folk duo from Melbourne. They're sisters. They sing gorgeous harmonies. And their song 'Fossil in Stone' was the inspiration for the first *Ghost Music* zine.

You can listen to all these artists on bandcamp.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Front cover based on a photo by Mabel Windred-Wornes (Charm of Finches)

Page 6 based on the video for 'Glimmer & Aska' by Kælan Mikla

Backcover based on a photo of Plum Green by Daniel Cross.



a mix-tape of five miniature ghosts stories,
each inspired by a song that i like

art & words: david witteveen
twitter: @davidwitteveen
website: library3000.com/zines
january 2020, melbourne