

HAUNTED HOUSE

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We live in the century of digital electronics, new technologies and discoveries. Still, scientists cannot explain the origin of preternatural phenomena. There are a lot of anomalous zones around the world. People are afraid of and avoid such areas. Not many of us know that Kherson has its own abnormal place. It is called the «Haunted House».

There is a mansion which is located near the corner of the abandoned cemetery in Zabalka district. Strange sounds of a child crying and a wild sound of claws can be heard inside the house. According to the residents of the neighbouring houses, the spirit of the Gypsy Witch lives there – and she wants revenge because that house was built on her grave.

The two-storied mystical house was built near Zabalka cemetery more than two decades ago. Since then, five or so owners have changed. Some of them ended up in the psychiatric asylum. Others remembered their nights in that house with horror.

According to the legend, which is known by all Zabalka's residents, in post-war years there was a Gypsy Camp. There lived a black witch – a woman who could bewitch a boy to a girl and put the evil eye. Her life was very tragic. One night her two sons killed their old mother because of money. The killers absconded and were never found. The corpse was buried outside the cemetery, where victims of suicide were buried. People used to bypass that sinister place. Over time the burial ground became derelict, and people forgot about the grave.

In the 1990-s this part of the cemetery was demolished, and houses were built on the land. One of the houses was constructed right on the bones of the «black-witch»: the builders did not make sure they had removed all human remains from the area before building the house.

On the first night, the ghost disturbed the owner of the uncompleted house in his dream. A woman rushed through the rooms, threatening, howling and

scratching furniture. In the morning, the owner checked the house and was shocked by what he had seen. He couldn't believe his eyes. The furniture was scratched, the chandelier was broken and the sofa where he had slept was in another corner of the room. The owner decided to attribute all the events of the previous night to his wild imagination. However, the builders had the same dream that night. After a while, the owner decided to sell the house because strange things continued without end. Every night the doors and windows were opened by the power of the «dark witch», tableware was broken, the floor squeaked and there was a feeling that somebody was following you. Neighbours said that none of the owners lived there for more than three months. People just couldn't control their emotions, and became so nervous and stressed that there were scandals in their families. Kids couldn't sleep well and became weak.

A journalist asked if the current owner experienced any anomalous things in the house. The latter replied that he didn't believe in superstitions and he never saw ghosts there. He suggested that people who wanted to buy this house at a lower price could have made up fake stories. Generally, Kherson's residents have different attitudes. Some people deny the existence of paranormal phenomena; others stay as far away from this house as possible. The current owner smiles and says that alcoholics would have been worse than any ghost.

The condition of cemeteries reflects the condition of a society's conscience. We should always keep in mind those who have faded away. Not so long ago people used to destroy thirty-year-old cemeteries and build houses instead. The same story happened to Zabalka cemetery in Kherson. On the other side of the cemetery, which is close to Zaporozhska street, politicians built cottages in the 1990-s. No one lives in those houses now. The reason is simple: mysterious things happen there. The cemetery's negative energy is felt not only inside the haunted house described above, but in the surrounding buildings, where, though to a lesser extent, supernatural things take place. Meanwhile, the abandoned cemetery is being dug for new burials on the sites of the old ones. This is an indicator that we are on the way to degradation.

There are many cemeteries like this around the world. It is a shame to build houses on top of bones. The government should control such moves. Also, it might be better to avoid haunted houses and other anomalous places around the world. On the other hand, religious people say that the deceased need our prayers, regardless of whoever they were in their earthly life. Our compatriots, both alive and dead, deserve our sympathy and respect.

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