

TRUNKED  
BY A SPIRIT

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# TRUNKED BY A SPIRIT

LILY'S GUIDE TO RELEASING  
ANTIQUUE SPIRITS BOOK 1

M C F





*This book is dedicated to all Catholic teenagers in the world, especially to the teens in my own family. Life isn't easy, especially for us Catholics. But, who said being a Catholic has to be boring and dull?*

*To my family, especially those who have always believed in me. Encouraging me to grow as an author. I love you all so much!*

*To a few amazing co-workers who have hearts of gold and have supported my author journey from day one.*

*To my editor, Donna, who worked tirelessly through the million spelling and grammar mistakes. You're a true blessing.*

*To my illustrator, Tanya, who has been the creator collaborator of both my books so far. Thank you for turning my sketches into amazing works of art! You are one brilliant and skilled artist!*



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# From the Author

Hey there Reader! My name is Lily Shels. I would say life is peachy, but that would be a lie. Life kind of sucks for me right now. Everything was going fine until I turned 13 years old. I found out that I can feel the presence of spirits in random antique objects. Which is really confusing and hard for me to process because does that mean I am possessed or doing something majorly wrong here? Being a Catholic and all, makes this very, how should I put it, bad? I'm not even sure why it would be bad but it just seems like it would be. I've never heard of any Catholic saints having spirit freeing powers before, so hopefully I'm just breaking new ground here.

If Mom or Dad ever found out or the priests...I'm not sure what would happen to me, maybe an exorcism or something. I love my parents and they love me, but this weird spirit thing might be something I can never talk to them about. Sometimes, being a Catholic is hard, and not what I would consider fun at all.

I've done a pretty excellent job at keeping my curse/power a secret from almost everyone, so far. There have been many close calls. Which, the last spirit I helped free, landed my butt in therapy for a few weeks. Thanks alot, Isaac





# Chapter 1



Despite the sweltering heat Lily's arms broke out in goosebumps from the jolt, shivers she usually gets when she recalls the spirit Isaac.

Looking around as Lily quickly walked past stores, she spotted her fast becoming favorite store in the entire small town. The antique store where her school crush, Patrick, worked.

Before heading inside the store to escape the humid air, Lily checked her social media account, adding the antique store location to her latest story. Then checked her hat, skirt and overall appearance.

She looked hot...and sweaty. This is why she takes pictures of her cute outfits before going outside in the summer heat.

*It's so bloody hot--not dry heat, but a soaking-wet, humid, everything--sticks--to--you kind of heat.* Lily yanked on her skirt

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that had glued itself to her upper thigh somehow. *Stupid skirt!*

Lily opened the door, basking in the cool air whispering over her skin.

Once inside, Lily stopped in front of the first thing that caught her eye.

*I don't think I've seen this before.* Lily thought. It was a big trunk, remade into a dresser/bookshelf thing. It was pretty cool looking. Feeling the smooth paint, her finger barely made contact before a familiar jolt surged through her body. "Oh man." she jerked her hand back, away from the trunk. It was happening again. Another spirit was trapped by some random, older item that Lily always found. No one else could see or connect with them, except for her. She didn't actually see them, only felt their presence and despair.



That one touch was all it took for Lily's week to go down the drain. Taking a deep breath, Lily placed her hand firmly on the trunk and closed her eyes. Once connected, skin to trunk, she whispered to the spirits' presence. "I accept your spirit and story. Show me your path."

Lily surrendered her planned week of adventure, settling for her new mission. No point of complaining, it is what it is. The trapped spirit needed her help, even if she had plans. Plans to visit her best friend Doris, plans for a fun photoshoot, even plans to hang out, doing nothing. They were gone like smoke in the wind. *Poof, swept away as if they never existed.* Lily pictured herself standing in front of the spirit, spewing a good long lecture. But, in the end, it wouldn't matter.

Lily felt her shoulders drop. She remembered from the previous missions that she would lose every ounce of energy dealing with this spirit. It wouldn't matter if she had more time and a thousand plans, she wouldn't have energy left to do anything except sleep.

Only Lily could see and feel the spirit dwelling inside this trunk. *This one is restless, wanting to be released, to be free. Which means I need to work fast.* Accepting her weird little talent, there is no going back after making contact with the spirit.

Lily made up that "I accept" speech, when these spirit incidents happened more often than she liked. Like superheroes have iconic last words or a great quote. That one is hers. *Sounds kind of cool, I think. Sometimes I need something to get me in the mood--to solve these things. Le sighhhhhhhhhhhhh. It was her favorite expression, but It wasn't working. I wish I never came into this store or that my hands had an on/off switch.*

The temptation to ignore it and walk away was always there. *Trust me I've tried. Nothing works.* Lily couldn't ignore a spirit no matter how far away she was from the object. Once contact was made, Lily was bound by some invisible contract with the spirit.

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*It's like the spirit had a rope wrapped around me, that they tugged on, every day, all day--until I had their story finished and they were free.*

"First things first, how much is this trunk?" She muttered to herself.

Looking for the price tag, Lily caught the attention of an employee working at the front desk nearby. It was Patrick, her long-time crush coming toward her.

"Hello there, Miss? Can I help you?"

Lily pushed her large hat back, revealing her face. "Hey Patrick. It's just me."

"Oh, I didn't recognize you with that large hat on. Very vintage."

*That right there. Ladies and gents, is why I dress up. To hear those words "Very vintage" from my long-time crush...although he doesn't know it. And there goes my face--is it just me or is it hot in here? If she was being honest, Lily only dressed up today because she had discovered Patrick worked at the antique store, from a friend. Get it together Lily! Cool off before you start smelling like sweat. Le sighhhhhhhhh...*

Patrick offered a friendly smile, tapping the trunk. "Do you need help with this?"

*That smile-- I could only stare for a split second. It was the very one I dreamed about hoping he would focus it on me.*

"ummm? Uh yes! How much for the dresser--I mean trunk thing?" Lily grimaced, realizing how stupid she sounded.

Patrick looked for the price tag. It wasn't there. "Sorry, I'm not sure. Let me ask the manager. Be right back." He turned, heading toward the back.

*He'll think you're a weirdo, if you don't cool it, missy.* Lily waved both hands, trying to cool her flushed cheeks, watching for Patrick to return.

She stopped waving the second Patrick walked toward her. Lily noticed immediately from Patrick's clenched jaw and fists that it wasn't good news. "Hey Lily. Sorry, I think this is just for display. The manager said the family that donated it didn't say it could be sold. So we have to wait for their approval before giving it a price. There are a few others in the back I can show you, if this is the style you are looking for." He waved his arm towards the back, smiling while he led the way.

As Lily walked away from the trunk, her gut sank. *Nope, this is not going to be a fun one.* The hair on her arms stood up, covering her skin with goosebumps. The spirit trapped in this trunk was going to give her trouble if she wasn't careful. From past experience with them, they won't do anything to the object or people around them, but with each step away Lily felt the connection yanking her back. The spirit made contact with Lily and will pester her until she completed the mission. Their connection is through their collective emotions and thoughts. She could see their memories but couldn't see the physical spirit-  
-only feel their emotions and thoughts. Before they died. They communicate by sharing their memories. In collecting these memories, Lily pieced together a story line until it revealed the regret or reason the spirit was still trapped. From there she finishes writing their story in order to free them.

"Is there any way I could speak with the trunk's owner? I know it's a little strange, but this trunk truly caught my eye."

Staling while she decided on an evasive reason, Lily fiddled with the brim of her hat. "Ummm I'm doing a photoshoot and *this* trunk is perfect!" *Sheesh, nothing like overselling it.* Her voice cracked at the end sounding way too loud--causing Patrick to give her "the pity look". *You know, that look, "I knew she was nuts" one.*

Patrick chuckled, "You must really want that trunk." He smiled, trying to placate Lily. "I can ask Zoe for the owner's number?"

"Oh my gosh, thank you. That would be awesome, *please!* Do you need my cell or social media info to reach me?" *Perfectly executed there Lily.* She had rehearsed that 'reach me' spiel for an hour this morning--Polite--yet direct.

"No, I'm good." Patrick replied, clearly uncomfortable. He rubbed the back of his neck while waving away Lily's suggestion.

*POP!! Annnnd there goes that dream.* Not only did Patrick say no, but he even frowned when he said it. Lily could feel her heart falling, smashing into a million tiny pieces. *Why wouldn't you want someone's info? Even if just to check them out.*

"The Manager, Zoe, can call you once she speaks to the owners. Zoe knows your sister, so she has your home number." Patrick finished as new customers came into the store.

Patrick stilted, evasion-trailed off when new customers entered. Pasting a smile on her face, to hide her frustration, as they finished with a quick "See ya", Patrick hurried to greet his customers.

*Stupid spirit! Stupid skirt! Stupid, dumb trunk...Not only did they ruin my week, But now Patrick HATES ME!*





## Chapter 2



Once safely in her own bedroom, Lily threw herself on the bed, princess style. Closing her eyes, she laid her arm across her face. *I swear, it's like an invisible force field surrounds me when I'm near boys. Like my freakiness is felt by all boys, the second they get close to her. Once they sense it, they run! LE SIGHHHHHHhhhhhh* An overly dramatic groan escaped Lily. *Why does this always happen to meeeeeeeeeeee?* Smacking down her skirt, Lily's frown deepened. *Stupid skirt...I look better in pants. I thought, if I wore something modest and cute, like Mom keeps insisting I do, he would notice me more. But noooo! One more reason I hate these stupid skirts!*

Lily turned over, rolling up in the blanket. *That's better, my nice, cozy, blanket burrito.* Thinking back to when she first noticed Patrick, her mind grabbed onto those amazing possibilities. *He was the only boy who noticed me. Once, I was left alone at school.*

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*Ok... I actually had stupid math tutoring after school, and my mom was late for pickup. Patrick was waiting for his parents to pick him up, too. He walked over and we talked about school the entire five minutes--until my mom, with her bad timing, drove up, and honked. Parents always show up when you wish they'd be late, or in my case a little bit later.*

*It was so nice talking to Patrick. Most of the time, we stood awkwardly, watching everyone else leave. I always feel so alone and embarrassed. I'm not allowed to have my cell with me at school--Which is totally not fair. I barely got a cell phone in the first place, it's another one of those strict catholic parent rule things. **No cell phones until you're old enough to have a job.***

*Other kids at my school are allowed to have them without a job. Heck, I even saw a first grader with one.*

*Anyway, Patrick is so smart. He did most of the talking. He told me he is good at math, and that he really likes sports--like football. Except this year he might not make the team.*

*He had said "My parents want me to focus on getting my grade average higher for college." Patrick said with a slight smile.*

*That smile. The one I have been dreaming he would beam my way! Man, is he cute. Le Sighhhhhh.*

*Wow, where was I? Unraveling from the blanket, Lily felt the humiliation all over again. "No, I'm good" his response circled through her thoughts and mind like a fidget spinner.*

*Painful and blunt. His blunt response reminded Lily of her older sister, Mina. Mina would have said "OUCH! That stings." teasing me, out of my self pity party, like always.*

Mina enjoyed letting Lily humiliate herself, especially with strangers. Mina always got a kick out of Lily's most embarrassing moments.

The absurdity of it caused Lily to suddenly giggle. Recalling Mina chasing her through the house, trying to get the tv remote back. When Mina tripped over her own two feet, falling flat on her face, the face-plant was hilarious! Like a slapstick scene right out of Lily's anime shows. When Mina tripped, she tried to save herself, but failed. *SMACK!* Lily Laughed so hard she ended up with hiccups, while Mina groaned from the floor.

Feeling slightly happier, Lily realized she wasn't the only person to make mistakes. *Take that Mina! MUAHAHAHHAAAAA!* Lily added a raspberry to top it off.

Lily's mind turned to her spirit curse. *Is this some sort of punishment from God? Had I done something so bad that deserves this? Lily wondered, trying to recall every bad thing she had done in the past few years.*

Her list was interrupted when Mina's voice came up the stairs, loud and clear. "Lily, supper is ready."

"K" Lily replied. Pausing for a second...*You know what, maybe Patrick was just having a really bad day and that's why he said that? Yeah! Like maybe his parents told him not to take anyone's number or info because he was supposed to be focused. I heard a few girls say his parents are super strict on things like cell phones. So he had refused, in order to not get himself in trouble. Yep. That's it! That makes sense. That Patrick would snub me for his parents' rules.*

With a better attitude, Lily strolled into the kitchen to find out that her bad day was not over yet--Her nose bristled at the

odor wafting out of the kitchen. *Ughhhhh. Stew again with mashed potatoes, again!?! Lily hoped dessert would be worth gagging dinner down. Le Sighhhhhh...*

The kitchen was crowded, her two brothers, Theo and Max were carrying plates into the dining room while Mom finished the cooking. "HHEHEHEHe" Lily snickered, as one brother walked past. Max had mouthed off yesterday. Now, he has to do Lily's chores, plus the floors, this weekend.

*You might think that I am being mean, but 99.9% of the time when "the brothers" do anything. **It-is-always-stupid.** Plus, it usually gets them into a ton of trouble. So in My personal, sisterly opinion...*

***HE-- <clap>DE-- <clap> SERVED-- <clap> IT <clap>!***

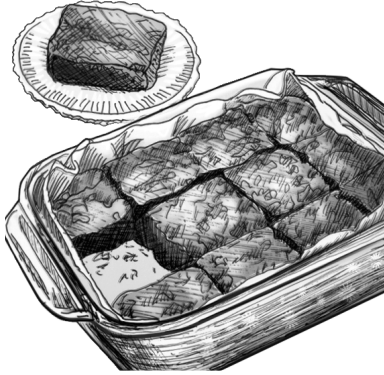
Shooting her an evil glare, her brother hurried past, shoving Lily into the door frame. Lily's smile morphed into a sneer before she stuck her tongue out.

Mom's admonishment was totally expected. "Lily, leave your brother alone--otherwise I'll make **you** do someone else's chores."

Lily immediately dropped her smile. Mom's threats were never taken lightly.

Spotting the dessert on the kitchen island, Lily felt joy and peace flood her body, *There it is.* The dessert that will make the awful meal tolerable. *Box brownies!!! Soft and warm in the middle, while still chewy around the edges.....Oh man, I need to be fast or the boys will get all the best pieces.*

MCF



As Lily's mouth watered at the thought of enjoying the lushious brownie, she could hear her Mom's words echoing through her memory. "You could make a sacrifice." The constant reminder about being Catholic and the graces you can receive from little sacrifices was always there. Sometimes Lily found the reminder annoying. Little sacrifice? As if giving up the best part of the brownie dessert, to two little impish brothers, was just a little sacrifice.

Lily recalled a rather long conversation she had with her mom not too long ago about sacrifice and what it meant for her.

"What's the point of these 'sacrifices' anyway? From what you just said a sacrifice is something you can give up in thanksgiving to God or as an atonement for a sin against God. So, unless I'm making up for a sin, I technically don't have to unless I want to right?"

Mrs. Shels smiled, shaking her head slowly at her daughter's clever remark. "True, God only wants you to make sacrifices, whether that be in thanksgiving or in repentance, on your own accord. But, before you decide that all small sacrifices

are not worth your time, just remember, a sacrifice offered up to God of any size, earns you a special grace. And graces are opportunities to obtain favors for yourself and others. Think of them like brownie points." Mrs. Shels grinned. Lily could tell she was proud of her analogy. Brownie points, now her Mom was speaking her language. If only graces were really brownies points that you could eat every time you earned one.

At least her Mom took the time to explain some of these Catholic practices. Now that Lily was older she had more questions about her Faith and did not feel comfortable asking some of her teachers since their answers were always "the answer is in your catechism book.". Which does not help. Why was she asking more questions? Curiosity? Maybe it was because of the spirits? Or was she just more curious about it all since she was growing up? Lily shrugged, realizing the long tangent she had taken was distracting her from the real problem at hand. To beat Max and Theo for the brownie? Or to go at a normal eating pace and let the brownies pieces fall where they may?

Lily decided to eat dinner and let the chips fall where they may. If she beat her brothers then she did. If Max and Theo finished first then Lily would accept her defeat and offer up not getting the best brownie piece.

Usually no one rushes to finish dinner quickly, however when Brownies are included, the forks flew faster than the speed of light. Lily wondered if this was something mothers did on purpose--choosing a hated meal together with the best dessert--ensuring that they ate the dreaded vegetables?? In the end, gagging down the stew and mashed potatoes would be totally worth the chocolatey gooey goodness.

Cutting a generous brownie, Lily placed it on her plate. *I'm going to enjoy every last crumb of this brownie. Magnifique, or whatever French people say. She beat her brothers and didn't have to sacrifice anything after all. Ha! Take that you bane of my existence!*

After cleaning up, Lily grabbed her pen. It felt like it weighed about 50 pounds. Clearing the kitchen counter, Lily began her homework, which ensured more doodling. Opening one notebook, she flipped through to see how many doodles she added to each page. *I don't understand how anyone can get through all their homework without a single sketch or doodle. Non-doodlers puzzle me. My notebooks are filled with notes, scribbles and sketches. But, some of my teachers insist on checking our notebooks. Why? They instruct us to complete assignments in our notebooks just so they can riffle through them? Let me tell you. I use up an entire white-out® pen before handing in my notebooks. I've had a few who find my sketches amusing, but most don't. They knock down the grade points for every scribble found. Feeling slightly peeved, Lily stuck her tongue out, imagining her teachers. Some of them have no imagination and are boring.*

With that thought, Lily touched pen to paper. With that simple motion, the trapped spirit's thoughts rushed forward. "F...Fr something.." Lily closed her eyes, trying to connect to the spirit. "Fredrick, Ahh that's it!" Lily quickly wrote the name in her notebook.

When she recalled touching the trunk, the rush of memories flooded her mind. Those memories were as clear as day--as if Lily was present when they were created--only through the eyes of Fredrick.



## Chapter 3



**t**he old stuff or antiques, have more soul due to them not being mass produced. Made a few at a time, they were made to last for years. Which is why I think antiques have more spiritual possibilities and I've noticed, over the past three years, I find more missions in antique stores than any other place. I can freely touch anything in a drug store or other modern shop, but in an antique store, I feel like I'm playing some kind of russian roulette, where trapped spirits can grab me and not let go.

Lily's mind wandered as she sketched out details about her newest Spirit stalker. Fredrick is an older man who died suddenly for some reason a few years ago.

According to the memories Fredrick shared with Lily, life was peachy until around the 50 years old mark.

His memories were really blurry and indistinct during



that time. Lily felt Fredrick's pain. Her whole body felt heavy, exhausted, like his intense thoughts were too much. She worried what was to come next as she continued to sketch out his story.

Looking down at her notebook, she tried to link some of the details together.

*What the heck does this bird mean?*



In the past, when a spirit shared memories with Lily, they came in a specific order. First, a hint of where they are from-- a country or a state. Then, a little about themselves-- name, age and random things that made them happy. After that, comes bad memories, things that they regret, depression, illness. Then, the broken memories, like a canvas splattered with unwanted feelings. *Those are fun.* Most of the time, listening to music helps Lily deal with that rollercoaster of emotions.

The last spirit was a bad one. So much pain and depression-- he nearly committed suicide. Sometimes the feelings overwhelm her, making Lily's life miserable. Being a teen was an emotional journey already, adding this to her life was another level of misery.

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Lily's trial with the last spirit, Isaac, scared her best friend.

Doris recounted the horrible semester to her occasionally. "You randomly disappear after school and then found later in the woods by yourself, you'd burst into tears periodically throughout the day, and in the saddest voice ever, you once told me *-A gunshot marks the start for some, but the end for others.*"

*I don't remember saying that. Which is slightly concerning. I can't forget that feeling though--complete despair. That was a rough month.*

Thankfully her sister thought Lily was having a rough time at school--bullies and such. She took her out to dinner and rollerblading twice that month to pull her out of her funk.

*My sister can be a real pain, but she's awesome just the same.*

Slapping her hand on the counter, Lily yanked her thoughts back to Fredrick's story.

*The bird is a little weird looking... **To be Continued***