

AGNES QUILL

Series Bible



By Dave Roman

STORY STRUCTURE:

The structure of an Agnes Quill story attempts to follow the format of a classic serial or Indiana Jones movie. The stories always start in the middle of some ongoing action (often a chase scene or fight) wrapping up her most recent adventure. The resolution of this event opens up an opportunity to segue into the introduction of a new mystery that is the bulk of the actual story. The adventures usually climax around some sort of distinct and unusual set piece or environment that allows for extra dramatic action. Generally you can expect a twist ending that takes something familiar and puts a new weird spin on it. The stranger the situation the better especially if it's something you wouldn't normally expect to see in the Mystery/Horror genre.

ONGOING PLOTLINES:

Although each Agnes Quill story will have a mystery that stands on its own with a beginning middle and end, there are also several continuity elements that run throughout.

How did Agnes' grandfather die?

The only thing that is clear is that he is still trapped between realms and has yet to move on completely. Agnes is obsessed with uncovering the truth behind her grandfather's mysterious end, which seems to connect to several powerful people who wish to remain in the shadows of the city.

What is the cabal that connects various gangs and business organizations in the city?

Why are ravens always following Agnes whenever she gets too close to finding a lead?

Why exactly are there so many ghosts trapped in Legerdemain? Is someone trying to control the doorway between the human and spirit world?

Why are people moving underground?

The city of Legerdemain is becoming more and more congested and unsuitable for human life. Early in Agnes' adventures she learns of the hundreds of people who have moved underground to avoid the effects of the city's increasing industrialization. Overtime more and more mutations spread throughout, effecting people in everyday life. Advances in science allow the people to live longer lives but the quality of life degenerates to practically not living at all. More and more people become dependent on the machines and technology that has been created to makes their lives easier.

THEMES:

-Trying to connect with other people in the **living world**. Agnes has a natural gift for talking to spirits, which gives her a great advantage when she is working on solving a hard to crack case. But when she isn't caught up in a mystery, she is usually less confident and often disconnected from the world around her. When she is in social situations she is out of her element, unsure of what to do. Although Agnes would like to make more friends with other flesh and blood people, she finds herself usually at a loss for words. Agnes would love not to attract too much attention to herself, but her tendency to dive headfirst into hot water, makes her stand out from the crowd.

-Choosing a career path and finding a place where you belong. Agnes is constantly learning to overcome her own self-doubt and coming to grips with the responsibilities that come with growing up and making the best with the talents you have. Running her own business forces her to constantly reevaluate what she wants from life.

-Protecting your home and family heritage. Agnes uses her unique gifts not only to help the people and spirits who hire her, but also to preserve the things she holds dear. Before Agnes arrived in Legerdemain The New Curiosity shop was in danger of going out of business without the earnings once brought in by its owner Ages Quill (Agnes' grandfather). Mr. Lorik, growing old and sick found it harder each day to maintain and resist the offers of outside developers who wish to buy the old building. By following in her Grandfather's footsteps and continuing the family business Agnes has managed to keep the building in her family's name.





SETTINGS:

Agnes' setting is Gothic in nature but is not necessarily locked in any specific time period. It is a STEAMPUNK world, meaning the groundwork for everything should be 19th century Victorian England-but with distinct elements of modern technology like computers still being available, although ALWAYS with a unique fantasy twist. Additional influences include old horror movies, specifically those produced by the Hammer Films of the 70's.

Legerdemain:

After the death of her parents Agnes moves to the city of Legerdemain where her famous grandfather once lived and worked. The city itself is almost regarded as a living being with its own unique personality traits. A chaotic melting pot of new and old, its buildings are stacked on top of pre-existing structures and castles that have fallen to ruin. There is an eclectic mix of influence from different time periods all stacked on top of a Victorian era foundation. Cobblestone streets and immense steel pipes run throughout the city, which is usually dense with thick fog. There are countless alleys that seem to lead to nowhere and plenty of creatures that lurk in them. In the center of the city there is a large cemetery the equivalent of Central Park. Many people claim that the Legerdemain started as a graveyard and then everything else was built around it.

New Curiosity Shop:

Agnes lives in a deserted castle in the middle of the city that was once owned by her deceased grandfather. On the foundation level of the castle is a small store called the "The New Curiosity Shop" that is run by a friend of her grandfather named Mr. Lorik.

Graveyard

The graveyard is located in the center of Legerdemain and takes up a good part of the city. Of course it's haunted and also has as many legends comparable to that of the Bermuda Triangle. Every day, people walk in and never make it to the other side.

Marley's School House

Agnes attends a very old-fashioned school with only a single room and teacher. The classmates are of varying ages and grade levels. The school is made up of only about 15 kids because few people in Legerdemain can actually afford education (and the rich send their kids away for a better life outside Legerdemain). Agnes has a hard time connecting with most of the kids in her class who she fears won't ever accept her for who she is, because of her unusual abilities and profession.

The Buried Home and Garden (Mole city)

Underneath the city is a growing population of people who can no longer exist on the surface as a result of the strange elements in the city's atmosphere. Most of them are forced to wear goggles to protect their sensitive eyes and at night opt to sleep in canvas bags to protect their body from toxins. They have built a fairly elaborate tunnel system that connects to several areas throughout Legerdemain. The people buy houses on the surface so that they can pay for electricity that they then run through cables to power the fluorescent lights that are necessary for the people to survive. Although forced to live like moles, the inhabitants of The Buried Home and Garden live fairly upscale lives that one would normally associate with the rich and wealthy. Most are extremely aristocratic, preferring to wear only the most expensive clothes, dine on most exotic of gourmet meals, and enjoy the finer things in life.

BACKSTORY:

Brought about by the loss of her parents, sixteen-year-old Agnes Quill has inherited an ancient family curse. She has the ability to see and communicate with spirits that are trapped between worlds. At her parent's funeral, Agnes was visited by the ghost of her Grandfather, Ages Quill, who was once a successful detective in the far away city of Legerdemain. He explains to her the nature of specters and how he used his connections with them to great advantage throughout his career. He comforts Agnes by relaying that her parents died justly and have therefor moved onto a place where spirits can rest in peace. Agnes soon realizes that in contacting her, Ages Quill had not died in the same manner, for only specters that are still at great unrest can communicate with the living.

Avoiding a life in a boarding home, Agnes ran away to Legerdemain to find the dilapidated castle her Grandfather once called his home. When she arrived, she discovered that at the base of the castle is an old store called The New Curiosity Shop, which her Grandfather used to run his detective agency out of. It is there that she meets Mr. Lorik, the caretaker, who explains that as the last living member of the Quill family, the castle and everything in it now belongs to her.

CHARACTER:

Agnes is a teenage detective who is following in her famous grandfather's footsteps. Agnes is extremely driven and throws herself completely into her cases almost out of necessity. Experiencing the sights and sounds of the spirit world on a regular basis can drive her crazy; and only when she is engulfed by her work does she feel truly comfortable. Agnes gets excited easily and it is often hard for her to stay still or keep her mind on one subject. She is not very organized which results in her getting frantic when she can not find something.

Agnes is fairly well known throughout the city of Legerdemain, for being the granddaughter of Ages Quill who many people feel they owe a great debt too. Agnes attends school but does not feel that she truly fits in, having a hard time connecting with people her own age.

Abilities:

Agnes is completely aware of the spirits that are trapped within the physical world. She can communicate with most of them, although there are some that are too far lost for her to reach. Agnes' grandfather is trapped between worlds and has been known to occasionally help her out when she is in a desperate situation. The ghosts in the spirit world reflect all walks of life and can even include the souls of animals. Not all the ghosts in the city of Legerdemain are the haunting-type, and some are in fact quite friendly and willing to cooperate with anyone who pays attention to them. This is extremely helpful for Agnes when searching for clues and trying to get information from places most living people can't.

Agnes has learned how to cast some basic spells from Mr. Lorik and other shady people she's encountered in her adventures. This is something she has a long ways to go before perfecting.

Even though Agnes can communicate with the spirit world she still a human being and therefore can be killed and easily hurt.

Fashion:

Agnes is a bit of a tomboy, but has been known to be pretty stylish when called for. Mostly she loves wearing her grandfather's old duster, jacket and black "stomping" boots. She would never be caught dead in heels or anything she couldn't go dumpster diving in.

ADDITIONAL CHARACTERS:

Mr. Lorik

The Alfred to her Batman.

Mr. Lorik is the caretaker of The New Curiosity Shop an old fashioned antique store built on the ground level of the castle that once belonged to Agnes' grandfather.

Mr. Lorik appears to be just a strange old African-American man in his mid-sixties but is in fact somehow immortal as long as he never leaves the curiosity shop. He can survive no longer than a month from the sacred grounds without falling ill.

Mr. Lorik was a close friend and employee of Agnes' grandfather. Mr. Lorik acts as Agnes' guardian and direct connection to her grandfather. He is always there to offer advice, although usually in a cryptic manner that leaves Agnes asking more questions. Mr. Lorik is almost always calm and reserved especially when Agnes is at her most frantic. Agnes is extremely protective of Mr. Lorik and the curiosity shop she now calls home.

Abilities: Mr. Lorik is fairly experienced in several forms of magic and voodoo, which is often useful for Agnes who is still learning to handle the supernatural.



Ages Quill (Agnes' grandfather)

Mr. Ages Quill was a famous detective who helped many people during his lifetime. He was always a dapper fellow with a quick wit and warm smile. In his youth he was very handsome and the object of much affection from both women and men. Though, he never settled down he did manage to have a son named Oliver, with whom he'd often argue.

His death is still shrouded in mystery and constantly resurfaces throughout Agnes' adventures.



Agnes' parents

Oliver and Katrina Quill.

Oliver moved out of Legerdeman when he was old enough to support himself. He met Katrina during his travels and soon settled down in Calico Creek. Katrina was a student from the Orient, who traveled the world before meeting Oliver and having a child, Agnes. Town records state that they passed away from a form of influenza that had spread through much of the area. According to Agnes' accounts, no ghosts or remnants of her parents have ever turned up in any of her adventures. It was upon her parents' death that Agnes first became aware of her unique abilities and her grandfather's legacy



Harland Hecks

A ghost who haunts the back corner of Agnes' schoolroom. Harland died over fifty years ago when he was sent to the back of the class for misbehaving and was accidentally left there over winter break (during one of the worst winters in recorded history). Although dead, Harland hardly ever seems to acknowledge it, as he usually is more concerned with keeping up his role as the class clown year after year.



Beatrice Osteri

A kindly old woman Agnes helped out early on in her careers as a detective. For some reason Agnes can't seem to find exactly what it is that keeps her tied to the human world, but is grateful for her continual assistance over the years. Beatrice was once a woman of high society with many, many lovers. She still has several apartments from her various rendezvous that are located in and out of the city and have come in handy to Agnes.

Niel

A hero to the people of the underground city known as the Buried Gardens, Niel is openly infatuated with Agnes, constantly trying to win her affection. Agnes is admittedly attracted to his good looks and elegant style but is equally put off by Niel's arrogance and forward nature, which often gets him in on her bad side. Agnes feels pity for his people's inability to live above the ground and continues to help Niel as a result.



Stealth Spirits

Fast moving ghosts that are able to physically dive into people and cause them harm.

Scarecrows

Ghosts who attach themselves with spirit thread to various pieces of junk used as makeshift bodies for physical activity. There is a specific group of scarecrows that Agnes meets who are master swordsmen and teach Agnes to fence.



Agnes Quill was created by Dave Roman
© David Roman 2000.
www.agnesquill.com
yaytime@gmail.com

