

## Ghost — Tanraq

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**TANRAT ALINGNARTAARTUT. – GHOSTS ARE ALWAYS SCARY.**

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In the Alutiiq universe, ghosts are the physical manifestation of human and animal souls, and they are associated with death and reincarnation. When a person or an animal dies, their soul is released from their body to return to life. A person's soul is in their breath and can be reincarnated five times before reaching eternal rest in the sky world.

In contrast, the reincarnation of animal souls perpetuates the supply of game and depends upon respectful treatment of the animal's body after death. Animal souls look like small animals and reside in specific places in their owners' bodies. The soul of a bear, for example, looks like a small bear and lives in its owner's head. Before reincarnation, some souls may turn into ghosts.

According to traditional beliefs, a human soul that wants to be reborn pulls a boat up onto the shore. The soul then enters a pregnant mother's womb and waits. The womb is thought to act as a house, protecting the soul as its new owner grows. When an expecting woman gets sick to her stomach, it is said that the soul inside her did not like something she ate. When a soul is ready to die, its owner dreams of taking a boat trip. When the fire cracks, it means the souls of the dead are hungry, and a piece of meat should be thrown into the flames.

Ghosts—the souls of the dead—should not be confused with spirits. Spirits are a type of being who live in the wilderness. Although some people who live in solitude can turn into such beings, they are visible only to shamans, who recognize them by their pointy heads.