

THE GROUNDSKEEPER'S SECRET  
*a tale from the Haunted Mansion*  
by Christopher

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EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

From a distance we see the five singing busts in the cemetery outside the Haunted Mansion. The mansion can be seen in the distance as ghosts swirl above it. In the foreground is the silhouette of a tree with a raven perched on a branch. THE SINGING BUSTS are just finishing singing GRIM GRINNING GHOSTS.

BUSTS

...arising spooks of every size  
Grim grinning ghosts come out to socialiiiiize!  
Mwahahahahaha!!

Camera zooms in as the Busts pause and look at each other for a moment. Then they begin singing a new song. THE GROUNDSKEEPER'S SECRET.

UNCLE THEODORE (BROKEN BUST)

When the moonlight shines and the air grows cold  
you'll see a strange routine unfold

ALL BUSTS

(joining in)

the graveyard gates creak open wide  
the groundskeeper stands petrified  
and begins to slowly inch his way inside

THE GROUNDSKEEPER stands at the entrance to the graveyard with his lantern held high. He is frightened beyond belief and so is his skinny dog BONEY who stands beside him. Even as we are looking outward we see ghosts swirling near the entrance and other creepy sights. We can only wonder what other horrors they see.

UNCLE THEODORE (V.O.)

Even as a child he was very meek  
they say he was born with a yellow streak

BUSTS (V.O.)

he was quick to shriek at any sight  
and a night owls hoot would give him fright  
so why would he work in a graveyard every night?

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The groundskeeper is now walking through the graveyard. He walks past a mummy sitting up from it's coffin drinking tea. Boney stands quivering trying to sniff the mummy, but still sticks close to his master.

UNCLE THEODORE (V.O.)

Filled with dread and wrought with fear  
he continues his trek with his skinny dog near

Still moving forward, the pair pass a trio of skeletons dancing about, bats flapping in the air and still more ghosts swirling around.

BUSTS (V.O.)

as ghastly specters swirl about  
and undead ghouls sing and shout  
the shivering pair continue on their route

The groundskeeper and Boney walk along a path lined with gnarled trees that not only seem to be alive, but almost appear to be reaching out at them.

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He has now stopped and is shoveling dirt back into an open grave that seems to have been dug up. His hands are shaking so bad that the dirt is falling off of the shovel.

UNCLE THEODORE (V.O.)

Despite the overwhelming dread  
he's done his job and never fled

Walking again they now pass the singing busts.

BUSTS

and there's one stop he always makes  
even when he has the shakes  
to sit and take his nightly dinner breaks

The groundskeeper and Boney are standing at the base of a hill full of tombstones. At the top is one lone headstone. The moon shines big and bright behind it.

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The groundskeeper is at the top now. His lunch box is open, with a sandwich that he splits with Boney and tea set for two.

UNCLE THEODORE (V.O.)  
He earns much less than other chaps  
living on his meager scraps

A hand reaches for the other tea cup. A woman's hand.

BUSTS (V.O.)  
but he finds that quite all right  
when he dines with his wife on her gravesite

We see now that he is having his dinner break with a ghostly woman sitting atop a grave. Boney is happy as she pets him and the groundskeeper is happy to be in her presence. Her ghostly arm obscures the name on the headstone but we can make out the line below it, which reads "Loving wife"

The busts are now on the bottom of the page singing...

BUSTS  
And that's why he works in the graveyard every niight!

THE END