The Spooky Story

The moon hung in the sky like a pale, glowing eye as Johan and Rig walk down a lonely road. The wind blew through the trees, making their branches scrape together like bony fingers. It was a cold Friday night, and the only light came from the moon and the really strange flicker of a streetlamp.

Johan was a 5 '8 Spanish 18 year old with black hair and a serious love for soccer. He was quick on his feet and could dribble past almost anyone on the field. Besides him Rig, a chunky 5 '6 kid with brown hair who also plays soccer. Rig is funny but he scared easily, especially when it came to horror stories.

I'm telling you, Johan Rig said, pulling his jacket tighter, we should have taken the other road. My mom said this place is haunted.

Johan laughed. Ghosts are not real, Rig you're more likely to get scared by your own shadow than by a ghost.

Just then, they passed a rusty iron gate. Behind it stood a huge, ancient graveyard. The headstones leaned at strange angles, and dead leaves covered the ground like a blanket. A weird sign hung from the gate.

Before either boy could say another word, a bloodcurding scream burst from somewhere deep inside the graveyard.

AAAAAAHHHHHH!

The sound echoed through the trees.

Rig grabbed Johan's arm. TELL ME YOU HEARD THAT!

Johan swallowed hard. For the first time that night, he had nothing funny to say.

The boys stood at the entrance, staring into the darkness. Johan could smell damp dirt and rotting leaves. A strange fog crawled between the gravestone, moving even though the wind had stopped.

Maybe somebody needs help, Johan said.

Or maybe somebody is trying to lure us inside so they can eat us! Rig whispered.

Johan rolled his eyes and pushed open the gate. It groaned like an old man waking from a nightmare.

Come on, he said. We'll look around for a minute, then leave.

Rig followed, although every step seemed to make him regret his decision.

Neither of them knew that something was watching them from behind a tall, cracked tombstone.

Something tall.

Something hungry

Something named Mr. Bullock

As the boys walked deeper into the graveyard, the gate slammed shut behind them.

BANG!

Rig jumped so high that he nearly tripped over a gravestone.

That's it, we're leaving! he shouted, running toward the gate.

He grabbed the bars and pulled, but they wouldn't move. Johan joined him, pushing with all his strength. The metal felt icy on their hands.

Suddenly, a deep voice rumbled through the fog.

WHO DARES DISTURBING MY GRAVEYYARD?

It was Mr. Bullock

He stood nearly eight feet tall, with gray skin, glowing yellow eyes, and long twisted fingers. His torn black coat dragged along the ground. His mouth stretched into a horrible grin, revealing rows of sharp teeth.

Johan delta tangible fear settled into his chest, as if somebody had placed a heavy stone inside him.

Mr. Bullock sniffed the air.

Fresh visitors, he growled. I haven't had company in years.

Rig's knees began to shake. Well, that's nice! We should probably let you get back to whatever you were doing!

Mr. Bullock laughed. The sound was like thunder rolling through a tunnel.

Nobody leaves Blackthorn Graveyard once I have chosen them.

Mr. Bullock charged.

Johan grabbed Rig's sleeve, and both boys sprinted between the gravestones. Behind them, the monster smashed through a stone angle as if it were made of paper.

WHY DID YOU SAY GHOSTS WEREN'T REAL? Rig yelled.

I DIDN'T KNOW WE WERE DEALING WITH A GIANT! Johan shouted back.

Rig sprinted behind Johan, screaming like a little kid on a roller coaster. He was running so that he didn't notice the giant tree root sticking out of the ground.

WATCH OUT! Johan yelled.

Too late.

Rig's foot caught the root, and he went flying forward like a bowling ball. He landed face first in a pile of muddy leaves with a loud SPLAT!

OH, COME ON! Rig shouted, lifting his muddy face. I JUST ATE CRAP!

Johan turned around, trying not to laugh. Bro you literally just ate dirt!

IT TASTES LIKE CRAP, JOHAN Rig yelled, spitting out a mouthful of leaves. I THINK I SWALLOWED A BUG

Johan started laughing so hard, but laughter quickly stopped when a huge shadow stretched over them.

Having trouble getting up, little snack? The monster said with a mad voice.

Rig's eyes widened. He scrambled to his feet so quickly that he nearly fell over again. NOPE I'M GOOD!! NEVER BEEN BETTER!

He took off running, leaving muddy footprints all over the path while Johan followed close behind.

LAUGH ALL YOU WANT!! Rig shouted. WHEN WE SURVIVE THIS, YOU'RE BUYING ME A NEW SHIRT!!

Then Mr. Bullock roared, and both boys remembered they had a much bigger problem than muddy clothes.

They ran as hard as they could toward a small chapel at the back of the graveyard. Its wooden doors hung crookedly, and broken stained old windows glittered on the floor.

Inside, the air smelled of dust and candle wax. Johan shoved a heavy wooden bench against the door.

For some time, everything went quiet.

Then came three slow knocks.

BOOM BOOM BOOM.

Little boys, Mr. Bullock whispered from outside. Come out, Come out, wherever you are.

Rig covered his mouth to keep from making a sound.

Johan searched the church. Behind the altar, he discovered an old book covered in dust. Its pages describe Mr. Bullock, a graveyard keeper who had become a monster after stealing a mysterious silver key from a buried tomb.

According to the book, the key held the power that kept Mr. Bullock alive. If the key was returned to its original tomb before midnight, his cure would end.

Johan checked his phone.

11:42 p.m.

We have eighteen minutes, Johan whispered

Rig started at him. Eighteen minutes? That's barely enough time to order pizza!!

Johan pointed toward a narrow staircase leading to the basement.

The book says the tomb is underneath the church.

They hurried down the stairs. Each step creaked beneath their weight. At the bottom, they found a stone room with a skeleton shaped carving on the wall and faded pictures of Mr. Bullock wears a silver key around his belt.

But the real key wasn't in the room.

It was still on the monster.

A loud crash shook dust from the ceiling, even cob webs.

Mr. Bullock had broken through the church doors.

TIME TO PLAY he yelled.

The boys rushed back upstairs. Mr. Bullock filled the church doorway, his yellow eyes burning brighter than ever.

Johan spotted the silver key hanging from the monster's belt.

Rig, distract him! He shouted.

WHY AM I ALWAYS THE DISTRACTION?

Because you're good at running!

Rig didn't argue. He snatched a dusty candleholder and threw it across the church.

HEY, MR. BULL-BEATH! OVER HERE!!

Mr. Bullock turned toward with a furious roar.

Rig ran in circles around the pews, dodging the monster's swinging arms. His shoes squeaked against the floor, and sweat dripped down his face.

Meanwhile, Johan moved like he was on the soccer field. He ducked beneath Mr. Bullock's arm, slid across the dusty floor, and leaped toward the monster's belt.

His fingers closed around the key.

But Mr. Bullock caught him by the back of his jacket.

GOT YOU!! The monster said.

Johan struggled, kicking his legs as the monster lifted him off the ground.

For one terrifying second, he thought it was over.

Then Rig did something nobody expected.

He grabbed a loose soccer ball that had been left beside the church wall. With all his strength, he kicked it straight at Mr. Bullock's face.

The ball struck the monster's nose.

OW! Mr. Bullock bellowed, dropping Johan.

Johan landed hard, rolled across the floor, and scrambled toward the basement stairs. He clutched the silver key tightly.

Mr. Bullock charged after him, but Johan was faster.

He reached the stone room just as the church clock struck midnight.

With trembling hard, Johan shoved the key into a small opening in the carved tomb.

A blinding white light exploded through the room.

Mr. Bullock screamed as cracks spread across his grey skin. His glowing eyes faded and his enormous body began shrinking into the fog.

NO! MY POWER!!

The monster reached for Johan, but his fingers dissolved into black smoke.

Then, with one final roar, Mr. Bullock vanished.

Silence filled the graveyard.

Johan and Rig stood in the basement, breathing heavily.

Did we just defeat a giant monster with a soccer ball? Rig asked.

Johan looked at the ball lying near the stairs.

Technically, the key did most of the work..

They hurried outside. The fog disappeared, and the graveyard looked almost normal. The gate swung open without a sound.

For the first time that night, Johan felt safe.

But something about the silence seemed wrong.

There were no crickets. No wind. Not even the rustling of leaves.

Then Johan noticed something carved into the church door.

THE KEEPER IS GONE, BUT THE GRAVEYARD REMEMBERS.

Rig, Johan whispered, we need to leave. Now.

The boys sprinted down the country road, not stopping until the graveyard was far behind them.

When they finally reached the streetlights, Rig bent over, gasping for air.

Next time, he said, we are watching a comedy movie at my house.

Johan laughed nervously. Agreed. No more haunted places.

They started walking home, joking about how nobody would ever believe their story. The night seemed peaceful again, and Johan almost convinced himself that everything was over.

Almost…..

The next morning, Johan woke up and found something lying on his bedroom floor.

A rusty silver key.

His stomach dropped.

He had left the key inside the tomb.

Beside it was a small scrap of paper with three words written in dark ink:

THANK YOU, JOHAN.

Johan stepped backward, his heart pounding like a drum.

Then his bedroom mirror fogged over, even though the room was warm.

A message slowly appeared on the glass.

SEE YOU TONIGHT.

Johan stared at the words, unable to move.

The terrifying irony was that he had entered the graveyard to prove monsters weren't real, only to discover that defeating one didn't mean he was safe.

He suddenly understood something about fear: sometimes, the most dangerous thing isn't what you can see. It's what you believe you've already defeated.

And somewhere beneath Blackthorn Graveyard, a familiar laugh echoed through the darkness.

Mr. Bullock was coming back.